Sign, frame and significance: studying student teachers' reading of the particular

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The orientation of the grammar of vertical discourse is
Towards the future on the basis of an invisible past,
And the invisible past is a whole re-contextualising apparatus. . .
So there is a vast invisibility behind
Any sentence in vertical discourse, vast invisibility.
                    (Basil Bernstein, Cape Town, 1997).

Bernstein uses the logic of 'oppositional forms' to describe the various ways in which pedagogical practices can work. According to Bernstein, his specialised conceptual tools help to generate descriptions of how 'power and control relations' constitute educational practices inside and outside the classroom. He calls these tools "internal language of description" (1975, 1990 and 1996). Power and control relations are key concepts in Bernstein's internal language of description. 'Power relations' refer to the form of boundaries between educational structures in the school, between its social agents (management, teachers and learners), between the various teaching subjects transmitted in the school, and within a teaching subject between the contents of the syllabus. Bernstein uses the notion of 'classification' when he describes the strength of a boundary. Relations of power in education are determined historically by various types of social struggles (political, economic, and epistemological). These struggles create dominant forms of power relations. The challenge to and the maintenance of dominant forms of power relations in a social environment are enacted through different kinds of interactions which are structured by what Bernstein calls "relations of control". Bernstein uses 'frame' to describe the form of control that regulates the mode in which social agents, located in a classified domain of activity, are able to communicate socially.

What intrigues me about Bernstein's internal language of description is the notion of 'oppositional forms' with which he describes how to connect opposites to each other. Bernstein draws a distinction between reading

'opposites' via the logic of simple dichotomy and reading them relationally, via the logic of differentiation. In a (very) few places in his work (1975, pp.3-4; 1996, p.4 and p.26; 2000, p.156) Bernstein stresses that he does not relate the poles in a binary (e.g. implicit/explicit, intimacy/distance, visible/invisible, positional/personal) through the logic of simple dichotomy, but rather through the logic of differentiation. A reading through logic of differentiation can show how a highly ritualized communication between teachers and learners (i.e. the discipline form in the school environment is highly controlled and so the relation between teachers and learners is very formal) can co-exist alongside a fairly open approach to, for example the pacing of the content taught in the classroom. And so a highly *stratified* learning environment (with clear status boundaries, clear demarcation of content knowledge, and positional forms of control over learners' behaviour) could require teachers at the same time to recognise differentiation of learners' needs and to relax their pace accordingly (so that learners can influence the pacing of their expected acquisitions). This kind of description is a relational reading of opposites; it allows for co- existence of oppositional forms – a *personal* form of control over acquisition time alongside a *positional* form of control over social behaviour.

In 2001 I gave my post-graduate school-based students a portfolio task which required them to select a school practice and use Bernstein's analysis (*Ritual in Education*, 1975) of different learning environments to describe the ways in which their school constructs a culture of learning and teaching. Although I thought that my teaching emphasized an alternative mode of description to the common binary mode of description, I found that students largely remained within the binary mode of description. Clearly the students found it very difficult to specialise their texts. My specific aim in this paper is to examine how 4 student teachers selected 'contextually specific meanings' (or meanings that they acquired during school practice, in tacit relations of acquisition) and generalised them into an academic text, characterised by specialised, discipline-based criteria. My broad aim is to understand the difficulties which school-based student teachers' experience in acquiring educational theory. Linked to this is my aim to contribute to current thinking on alternative modes of teacher education.

The central claim that I want to make through this investigation is that school-based teacher education programmes need to take seriously the discursive gap between disciplinary knowledge (the general) and experiential knowledge (the particular). I see the main pedagogical project of teacher education programmes in 'filling up' the discursive gap with generative languages of

description. Without doing this, I believe, it is quite likely that school-based learning will function as undifferentiated social spaces from which student teachers will produce descriptions with a very weak grammar and with not much educational significance.

The paper investigates how 4 school-based student teachers interpreted the mode of interrogation that informs Bernstein's theory of the social (1975); how they used it to produce a specialised text in which they describe an empirical object in their school. My investigation employs Bernstein's conceptual tools of 'recognition' and 'realization rules' (1990). These are key conceptual tools in Bernstein's internal language of description of educational evaluation. In short 'Recognition' refers to the student's ability to classify legitimate meanings, that is, to know what goes with what and what may not be put together. 'Realisation' refers to the student's ability to produce what counts a legitimate text (Bernstein, 1990, pp.29-32).[1] I use these notions to evaluate the extent to which the students managed to grasp Bernstein's mode of interrogation – his logic of 'oppositional form'. So my investigation is informed by Bernstein's internal language of description, in particular, his notions of classification and frame, his logic of description ('oppositional form') and his notions of 'recognition' and 'realisation'. But, in order to describe the quality of the students' productions, I needed to develop an external language of description or a coding scheme. My external language of description draws heavily on what Bernstein calls the discursive rules which frame the instructional context of teaching ('selection', 'sequence', 'pacing' and 'evaluation criteria'). My use of these rules to construct my coding scheme could create confusion between the theory (Bernstein' internal language of description) and the tool of my analysis of students specialised productions (external language of description). I am aware of this. Nevertheless, I decided to use Bernstein's discursive rules (with a slight difference and more specification) with a subtle turn. Bernstein offers the discursive rules to describe the specialisation of a teaching practice. I use these rules to describe my students' acquisition and production of a specialised academic text, with special reference to their recognition and realisation of the conceptual challenge embodied in the logic of description of 'oppositional forms'.

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[1] I am indebted to the excellent examples of external language of descriptions and their relationship to internal language of description in Morais et. al. (1992); Morais and Antunes (1994) and; Morais and Neves 2001. I also learnt a lot from Ensor's recent work on pedagogical modalities in teacher education (2002).

My analysis aims to respond to three questions:

- Does the student recognise 'oppositional forms' and if not, what form does the student recognise instead?
- Are all the discursive rules of framing equally important for the production of a specialised text?
- Can the coding scheme be used to measure degrees of recognition and realisation?

Although the analysis can be used indirectly to map backwards the success of the course to provide access to the recognition and realisation rules, this is not its main purpose. The data that reported here is used mainly to demonstrate the instrument of description I developed for my investigation of students' production of specialised text. The investigation here is not conclusive. It does, however, offer implications for some of the problems which school-based teacher education courses, learnerships in particular, can run into.

I begin the analysis by looking at the some of the pedagogical difficulties that emerge in educational courses that draw on disciplines of knowledge with 'weak grammar' (Bernstein 1996). I use this part of the discussion to reflect on my attempts to transmit the criteria of 'oppositional form' in my course. I then move on to examine the task that I gave the students as part of their portfolio-work for the course. I believe that the difficulties the students experienced are also related to the complexity of Bernstein's analytical style. I therefore decided to examine how he introduces 'oppositional forms'; this being the main conceptual challenge of the specialised knowledge I am trying to transmit in the course. In this analysis (third section) I try to clarify Bernstein's logic of description but also to suggest that the concept operates somewhat invisibly in Bernstein's internal language of description. The last two sections of the paper describe the coding system (external language of description) and demonstrate how I used it to evaluate the students' recognition and realisation of the task, analysing six examples of the students' work.

On the 'Particular' and the 'General' in teacher education

Recent studies on teacher education which have investigated the complex conceptual base of teaching (Darling-Hammond et. al., 1999; Darling-

Hammond and McLaughlin, 1999; Shulman, 1992; Ball and Cohen, 1999) insist that teacher education programs should give students access to "the codified and yet-to-be-codified maxims and understandings that guide the practices of able teachers" (Darling-Hammond et. al., 1999 p.32). Ball and Cohen, for example, argue that teaching practice "cannot be wholly equipped by some well-considered body of knowledge, as teaching occurs in particulars – particular students interacting with particular teachers over particular ideas in particular circumstances" (1999, p.10). Hence the need to add new discursive contexts of acquisition like 'internships' and 'extended cases' to discipline-based formal knowledge of teaching (Darling-Hammond et. al., 1999; Shulman, 1992; Doyle, 1990; Liberman and Miller, 1990; Teitel, 1997). Internship, Darling-Hammond et. al., argue, "will offer prospective teachers the opportunity to put theory into practice and to exercise complex decision making under the supervision of experienced expert practitioners" (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 1999, p.126). The method of extended cases or narratives, Doyle suggests, will expose student teachers to 'stored meanings' or to the knowledge that is "richly imbued with the specifics of the contexts in which teaching occurs" (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, p.33).

Explored largely from a psychological perspective, these studies attempt to bridge the gap between principled knowledge and experiential knowledge or between what I call specialised texts and contextually specific meanings. What the studies, ignore, however, is that each type of text is acquired in a different site of acquisition (university and school internship respectively) and is structured, conceptually, very differently. What is missing therefore is a sociological engagement with how students transfer educational knowledge from one site to another. More recently, Ensor conducted intensive sociological investigation into the ways in which knowledge about teaching gets "disembedded from one social context and inserted into others" (Ensor, 2001, p.298) e.g. from a pre-service course into its context of application. With specific reference to a secondary mathematics teacher education method course, Ensor's examination maps what Bernstein calls the process of recontextualising (Bernstein, 1975, 1990 and 1996). She does that by looking at how the pedagogic discourse of the course is structured, transmitted and acquired. The investigation in this paper attempts a modest version of this kind of sociology of teacher education.

Recent research has shown that the horizontal structure of the discipline of sociology with its weak grammar presents conceptual difficulties for students (Bernstein, 1996, 2000; Moore and Maton, 2001; Moore and Muller, 1999, 2002; Moore and Young, 2002, Shalem and Steinberg, 2002). Very often

students of sociology fear that they do not know when they are speaking sociology and when they are speaking common sense. In Bernstein's words,

> . . . If the social sciences are considered, then problems of acquisition arise particularly where the grammar is weak. The acquirer may well be anxious whether he/she is really speaking or writing sociology (Bernstein, 2000, p.164).

These studies show that students struggle to position themselves pedagogically. Courses in teacher education are located in regions like philosophy and sociology of education which have been re-contexualised from relatively weakly classified disciplines (philosophy, sociology, anthropology etc.) or from a mix of them (e.g. cultural studies).[2] This web of re-contextualised weakly classified knowledge makes it very difficult for students to access criteria of selection and organisation of knowledge. This difficulty is compounded in a school-based teacher education program where students move, regularly, in and out of their sites of practice. In these pedagogical contexts there is pressure on the pedagogue to attune the focus of the instructional discourse of the course on to what the text can say to students in her/his specific sites of practice ('reading for') and to create opportunities for them to share experiences ('reading in the context of'). In my experience I found that students often do not know what is appropriate to say, when and at what level of detail; they often struggle to demarcate between issues of interest to them and the specific message of the text.[3]
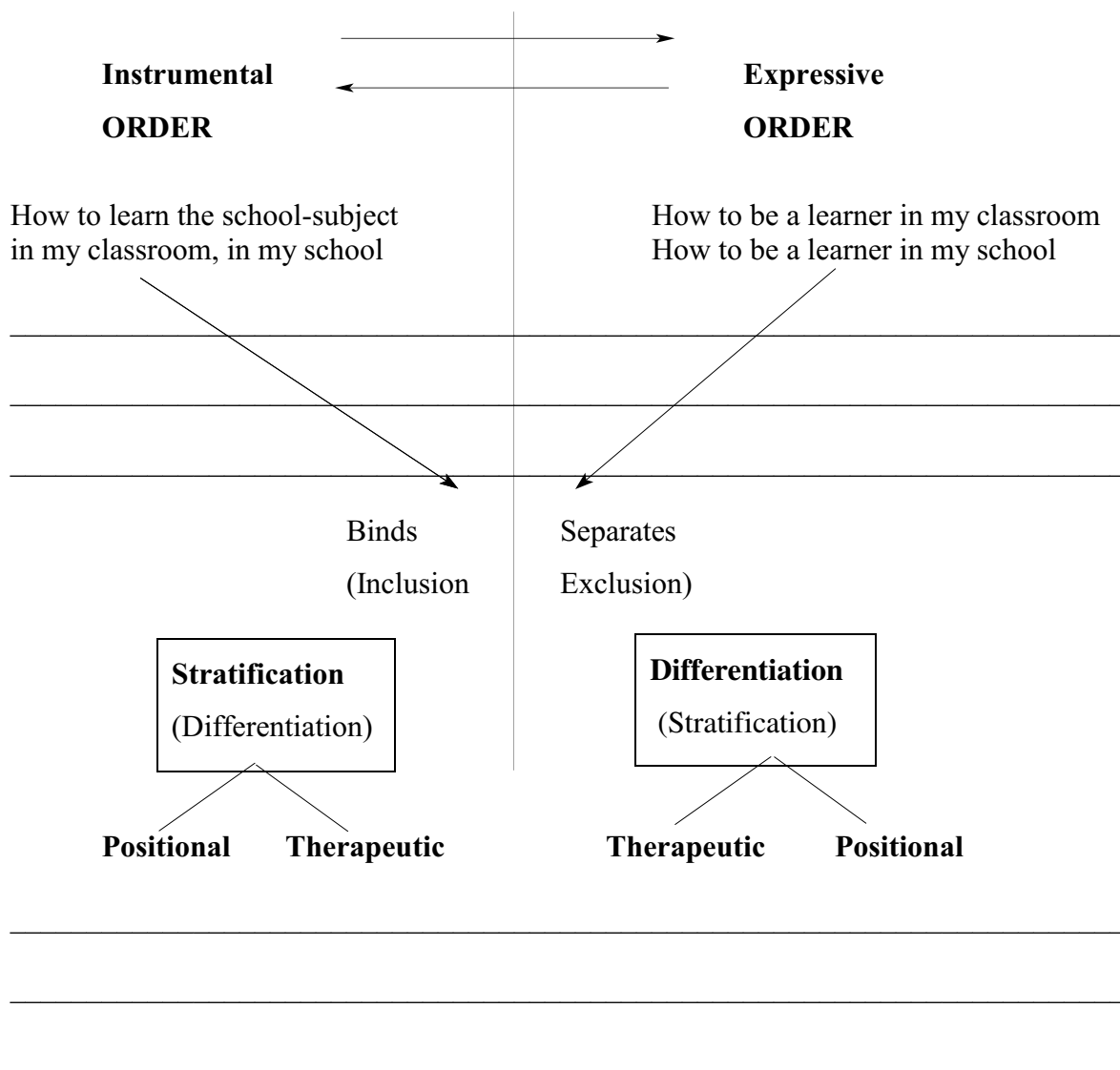
Let's look at this more closely. In her analysis of the relays of specialised knowledge, Ensor shows how variants of knowledge and pedagogical resources (teacher expositions and tasks) are selected at different points of the pedagogical process, and how the ordering, pacing and the transmission of evaluative criteria construct a privileged teaching repertoire (Bernstein, 2001, p.300; 2002) which is aimed at supporting learners' acquisition. A teaching repertoire, Ensor says, is "the set of symbolic and material resources that teacher educators (and teachers) select and configure in order to shape their classroom practice" (Bernstein, 2001, p.300). the repertoire is 'privileged' because teacher education courses select and combine knowledge that is

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[2]   Or what Bernstein calls horizontal knowledge structures with weak grammar.

[3]   In addition, many student teachers in South Africa enroll in teacher education courses with very little familiarity with the rich sociological tradition that informs current educational debates and the rules that specialise reading such texts. Their undergraduate studies concentrate predominantly on topics within their teaching subjects This tradition includes specialised languages that inform current debates in teaching, including the relation between structure and agency, the relative autonomy of the symbolic, the constitutive role of class relations, forms of determination of power, etc.

drawn from various fields of specialization, and 'project' (Bernstein, 1996, p.68) it on to "something other than itself" (Ensor, 2002 p.2). In a school-based Theory of Education course, the pedagogical resources that make up the instructional discourse (models of explanation, tasks and forms of assessments) are embedded within a regulative mode of communication that projects knowledge specialization on to a specific site of practice, which is familiar, mainly, to the student. In dealing with this challenge and in trying to cope with students' complaints that 'Bernstein's language is difficult to decipher'; I combined in my course two kinds of pedagogical resources – diagrams that represent opposites and conceptual narratives. Here is an example of a diagram used in my course:

Table 1: School Culture: The construction of social order in the school

Instrumental	**Expressive**
ORDER	**ORDER**
How to learn the school-subject in my classroom, in my school	How to be a learner in my classroom How to be a learner in my school
Binds (Inclusion	Separates Exclusion)
Stratification (Differentiation)	**Differentiation** (Stratification)
Positional **Therapeutic**	**Therapeutic** **Positional**

I use this diagram to foreground key sets of opposites discussed by Bernstein and their inter-relations (inward text orientation). I use these kinds of diagrams to help students understand elements of their school culture with greater subtlety and detail (outward text orientation). The narratives included matters like 'organization of time in relation to hierarchical roles', 'modes of engagement with the moral order of the school', by teachers and pupils with different 'role positions' (Bernstein, 1975), and 'fixed and differentiated social relations' between teachers and learners, with reference to conceptions of ability. The points about diagrams and narratives is that they provide pedagogical resources of strong classification of procedure (logic of opposites in description of social order), and strong framing of rules of selection (the narratives) and evaluation criteria (how to put texts together, that is elements of school culture in a narrative arranged by sets of opposites). Nevertheless, having these pedagogical resources in a school-based context of teaching very often triggers discussions in which the students appear to have more control over the instructional discourse.

When discussing problems such as 'coping with discipline in the classroom'; 'dealing with mentors and with other teachers in the school'; 'coping with classes that do not co-operate', and 'maintaining a tenuous balance between being a friend and being a teacher'(weak framing of selection), students would select a focus from the text and arrange it in a sequence of concepts that make sense to them even if it does not carefully adhere to the specialisation of the text represented by the diagram. The focus exemplifies a very anecdotal level of engagement (e.g.'what troubles me', 'a racial incident that happened in my school'). In these cases the relation within the instance, between consensual and differentiating rituals (or between other opposites) is weakly framed (weak frame of criteria). During such pedagogical time it is very difficult to hold positional authority ('I do not want you to judge this now, just describe to me what is going on'). The role of the pedagogue foregrounds a therapeutic function of listening to assertions of beliefs and to expressions of objection to perceived injustices (weak frame of hierarchical rules). The inclusion of weak frame pedagogies and the segmentation that structures localised contexts of acquisition such as school-based experience weaken the voice of the course.

The Task – 'Let the Sprit Fly'[4]

With a view to examining the differences and similarities between the schools in which the students of the 2001 programme were placed, I gave them a task in which they were required to engage with the distinction that Bernstein makes between a stratified and a differentiated school culture. The students read *Rituals in Education* (1975). The aim of the task is to see how students specialise a description of the ways in which schools construct a culture of learning and teaching. In my instructions to the task I used 'distinctions' to refer to structures of authority. I specifically referred to distinctions used by Bernstein in *Rituals in Education* (1975), including instrumental/expressive orders; stratified/differentiated types of organization of learners; and positional/therapeutic modes of control. The task instructions begin with the following paragraph:

Through this exercise we aim to get to know the differences and similarities between the schools in which the students in our class are working. We want you to paint a portrait of your school, to describe the ways in which your school constructs a culture of learning and teaching. There are many ways a school can be described, depending on what one wants to emphasise. Following the central distinctions made by Bernstein, we want to understand the sense of the social project or socialisation developed by/in your school.

By central distinctions we refer in particular to: *Instrumental/expressive* orders; *marking off* between groups/*binding*; *stratification/differentiated* types of organisation of learners; *positional /therapeutic* modes of control. . .

In looking at the classification and the frame design of the task it is important to note two things. Firstly, the distinctions above act selectively on the empirical referent both in terms of 'what to focus on' and in terms of 'what kind of information to collect about it'. They are formulated at a high level of generality, which means that the student cannot substitute the meaning of a category with common sense meanings, or simply match texts.[5] This suggests strong external classification. At the same time, the instructional discourse of the task does not order the distinctions in any particular order of importance and significance. It does not classify them into core and supportive types and their 'oppositional form' is not made explicit. This suggests an invisible

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[4]   The name of the task was borrowed from a motto of a school that participates on the programme.

[5]   In Bernstein's language of description the empirical referent and the conceptual are kept at a significant distance. The relation between them can only be reconstructed through recontextualisation.

recognition rule. Secondly, the framing of the task appears to be strong. The next (2nd) paragraph of the task instruction specifies clear conceptual boundaries – it provides the specialised meaning of concepts like 'social project' and 'transmission of order' (strong framing of criteria).

> By 'social project' we refer to the ways in which the school creates **order** in the school or continuity of patterns of legitimate behaviour between teachers and learners and among learners, and between the school and its outside environment. In order to create order, the school transmits both a common identity as well as particular ones for different learners. The school transmits a common identity in order to bind the learners. The school transmits particular identities in order to mark off groups within the school. In these two ways the school maintains collective authority – a social order.
>
> There are two things to remember about this:
>
> 1)   Every school promotes a common as well as a particular identity but, it does so in different ways.
> 2)   Transmission of order (socialisation) does not happen explicitly. It occurs symbolically. This means that when a teacher says to a child 'sit straight because you want to have a straight back as you want to be a tall and proud boy' she sends a message to the learner about his individual worth. In this little remark she contributes to a construction of a view of himself as an individual who has important needs and thus power to meet those needs. In the same way the pictures and figures placed on the walls in different (very particular) places of the school are pictures of important people in the tradition of the school. They are there for a reason and not simply for a decorative purpose. They are there to send a message about what does it mean to be a good, modern, responsible, person.
>
> Through this exercise we want to understand the ways in which your school transmits messages about education, most importantly about 'professionalism', 'teaching', 'learning', 'knowledge and citizenship'.

The strength of the frame is strong too with regard to the lists of specific empirical referents from which students can select (strong framing of selection). The next (3rd) paragraph of the task instruction reads:

> In your thinking of these issues you need to consider the following:
>
> •   The school's motto
> •   The aesthetics of the buildings (get in touch with the sensual experience of walking through the grounds of the school)
> •   The assemblies
> •   Ceremonies (religious, sports, prize giving etc)
> •   Dress code for teachers and school uniforms for learners
> •   Pictures, signs, symbols and plaques for preserving the school's particular tradition
> •   Modes of address (learners to teacher/principal; teachers to management leaders)
> •   Modes of co-operation between teachers
> •   Forms of punishment and rewards used in the school/modes of winning learners' co-operation

- Forms of differentiation between learners (age, gender, ability, house membership)
- School's routine (e.g. a way of settling the learners at the beginning of the lesson etc.)
- Modes of communication between teachers and learners, including teaching styles
- Phrases used by a teacher, principal.

The last (4th) paragraph of the task includes a conceptual guide on how to go about the selection and the organisation of the meanings.

Here is a conceptual way to guide the construction of the portrait (discipline order)

1. Identify a practice. You need to work across a few examples of practices – taken from the instrumental order of the school and the expressive order of the school.
2. Describe the object (e.g. observe and describe an assembly, including the form in which it is managed and the message/content that is addressed).
3. What messages (about 'professionalism' and/or 'teaching' and/or 'learning' and/or 'knowledge and citizenship') is the practice aiming to symbolise/transmit?
4. Do you think that all learners (and teachers) can relate to the meanings (or to what you think the meanings are)? Who (from teachers and learners) might not be able to identify with these meanings?
5. Can the meanings be negotiated and are they negotiated? How?
6. In what ways does the practice contribute to a stratified order? In what ways does the practice contribute to a differentiated order?

The conceptual guide describes the sequence of moves. It specifies what counts as skilful selection of school practice (asking students to focus on few examples), the level of detail to be selected (the form and its content), the preferred organisation of meanings (relation between practices, drawing implications about the message of a practice), and its analytical level (differentiation and generalisation as in 'In what ways does the practice contribute to a stratified order? In what ways does the practice contribute to a differentiated order'). The description is phrased openly, which invites idiosyncratic use of the social space (the essay the student has to produce). Thus, on the discursive level the regulatory strength of the frame is opened for conceptual negotiation – depending on the selection and organisation of the practice the student focuses on, she/he can produce a relatively free variety of narratives. This is also suggested in the statement 'there are many ways a school can be described, depending on what one wants to emphasise', as stated in the opening paragraph of the task.

In short, through 'central distinctions', 'core educational idea', 'definitions' and the 'list of empirical referents' the instructional discourse of the task demarcates, in invisible as well as in visible ways, the social punctuation *of* the task – its classification, its "special quality of otherness" (Bernstein, 1996, p.24). This punctuation demarcates what should and can be included in the text and what should not and cannot be included in the text. The conceptual

guide creates social punctuation *in* the text – or frames for realisation of the social space. This dual social punctuation functions to legitimize certain levels of idiosyncratic use of the social space, mainly the internal sequence of ideas and their specific level of detail as well as the internal weighting of the issues that are offered for discussion (what should receive importance as symbolised by narrative space). Before I move on to my assessment of my students' specialisation of their experiential knowledge, I would like to engage more deeply with Bernstein's logic of description – the logic of 'oppositional form'.

'Oppositional forms' - the theoretical act of Bernstein's reading of the social (internal language of description)

In Bernstein's terms, 'methodology' is primarily a theoretical act which is concerned with two sets of concepts (Bernstein, 2001). The first consists of the principles and theoretical assumptions, 'internal language of description', that guide the researcher in identifying the text, in recognizing it as the relevant empirical phenomena sought for selection and analysis. Bernstein calls this theoretical act an act of recognition – "what is to be recognized is the result of a theoretical act which may vary in its degree of explicitness and level of generalization" (Bernstein, 2001, p.31). The internal language of description guides acts of recognition which primarily sort out relations between concepts; it forms the logic of specialized texts (Bernstein, 1996, p.136). The specific form in which an empirical referent is described is a theoretical act, which is guided by a second set of concepts referred to by Bernstein as the "external language of description" (Bernstein, 1996, p.136).

Bernstein's relational thinking of 'oppositional forms' is a constitutive recognition rule for reading the social. I read it as key to understanding his internal language of description. Bernstein's work on the social specialises a sociological analysis of the relation between the material base of society (its class relations) and the forms of relay of 'symbolic controls' (discursive ways which structure our social experiences). Bernstein prohibits treating 'oppositional forms' as a form synonymous with 'simple dichotomy' (Bernstein, 1975, pp.3-4; 1996, p.4; 2000, p.156) or with 'ideal types' (Bernstein, 1996, p.126 and p.164; 2000, p.156). In these passages he confirms the view that the structuring logic of his theory of power and control relations construes discursive forms such as positional/personal and stratified/differentiated as oppositions. Nevertheless he insists on a non-reductive reading of the relation between them. A symbolic structure that is generative,

he says, cannot be reduced to a simple dichotomy. A reading of the symbolic structure as a simple dichotomy reduces it to a simple representation, a 'relation to' a social text (gender, race or class), without dealing with its differentiated structure, its 'relation within', its voice. Bernstein admits that his attempts to show this have had little effect (Bernstein, 1996, p.4; 2000, p.156).

According to Bernstein, a simple dichotomy assembles all the features of a phenomenon that are similar and separates out those that are different, and thus evaluates the phenomenon by looking at the presence and absence of certain features of the assembly. This kind of identification uses the triple discursive actions of match, exclusion and reduction. Let's take an example of a change of the forms of power and control in a school when shifting from a stratified to a differentiated order. A simple dichotomy typification begins by *sorting* its empirical features. So when looking at authority relations, for example, it divides the features associated with the social relations in the school and then matches them to a polar opposite discursive order of authority – positional/stratified versus personal/differentiated. In this pattern any empirical feature that does not cohere with its counterparts gets excluded. A description of a stratified culture of authority would include 'strong boundaries between teaching subjects in the curriculum', 'highly ritualized set of behaviours demanded from learners', 'a strict sequencing of contents in lessons' etc. Implied absences are 'authentic pedagogy' or 'teaching across curriculum boundaries', 'open relationship to everyday knowledge' etc. The epistemic effort in this kind of description aims to exclude opposite features. One cannot have 'a strong regulation of school behaviour' along side 'collaborative open learning in the classroom'. In this way, all the relevant distinctions (fixed categories of school subjects/integrated categories of subject; insulated teaching role/co-operative teaching roles; solution giving pedagogy/ problem setting pedagogy) are reduced to their representative pole within the broader distinction (stratified/ differentiated structures of social orders).

As Bernstein says, the logic of simple dichotomy can also lead to another kind of misrecognition: reading one pole of the oppositional form as the ideal type of 'its other', the pole that typifies absence and is thus treated as lesser. Bernstein calls this "romanticism" (Bernstein, 2000, p.206). In South Africa, the politics of transition did precisely that. When the new curriculum (Curriculum 2005) was introduced in 1998, conceptions of knowledge and teaching were distributed along a binary continuum – group work and minimum teacher talk were imbued with the ideals of learner-centered

pedagogy; teacher transmission, discipline knowledge and text were associated with teacher-centred pedagogy. This binary view became very entrenched among teachers, to the extent that in the name of 'democratic curriculum', teachers, particularly the weak ones, stopped formal teaching and replaced it, inappropriately, with group work (Taylor and Vinjevold, 1999; Adler, 2002). But even theorists like A.D Edwards, in his work on classroom talk (Bernstein, 1996) conflated the logic. Bernstein criticizes the grounds on which Edwards evaluated the positional form of control used by the teachers he investigated. Edwards' critical evaluation, Bernstein says, is misguided because it fails to recognise the multiplicity of forms in which elaborated code can be realized, a key feature of elaborated code (Bernstein, 1996). Instead, Edwards selectively sorted ("rummages", p.161) "attributes of restricted or elaborated codes to show that he can find, empirically, indexes that prove teacher and students are using restricted codes" (p.161). "Selectively sorts/rummages", because Edwards imposed a "model of ideal pedagogic practice" on the classification of the features he identified (p.164):

> Edwards clearly has a concept of an ideal pedagogic act which includes 'frequent opportunities for disturbing and changing a body of received knowledge'. This concept he uses to judge classroom talk. And when he fails to find such talk he concludes the code is not elaborated (Bernstein, 1996, p.165).

The act of match, exclusion and reduction homogenises the social order and constrains the generative potential of the analytical gaze. It prevents conceptual permutations and hence is not generative. A generative gaze shows that the accent of one category is present in its opposite, albeit in a different form, for example as a latent, potentially disruptive voice. In one of his later works, Bernstein refers to this as "differentiation" (Bernstein, 2000, p.156). Examples of relational logic of 'oppositional forms' as 'differentiation' can be found in claims like "Control may vary when a teacher is addressing the whole class, a small group, an isolated student, from class to class, from one social class of students to another" (Bernstein 1996, p.159); the performance/ competence oppositional form gives rise to "three modes of competence models, three modes of performance models *and* the appropriation of competence for the purposes of performance" (Bernstein, 1996, p.4 and p.64, my emphasis); "horizontal knowledge structures partake of verticality but still embed features of horizontal discourse" (Moore and Muller 2002, p.12); and "degrees of decontextualised language use may be identified in contextualised language use" (Cloran 1999, p.37). In its constitutive power, then, 'oppositional forms' is a relational logic that describes the composition of any social phenomenon. "Pathologies", Bernstein says, following Durkheim, "inhere in different discipline regulations" (Bernstein, 2000, p.206). This

means, for example, that although visible pedagogy was found to present a disadvantage for the children of the working class, one cannot conclude that an invisible pedagogy, which arose in opposition to visible pedagogies, has cleared the pathology (Sadovnik, 1991).

Bernstein's theorisation repeats combinations of distinctions, particularly the key ones, at every level of abstraction; it does not mirror them upwards (Moore and Muller 2002). Repeating 'oppositional forms' at different levels of abstraction is a discursive action, which aims to explode the homogeneity of a category of a social phenomenon. This action fuses opposite features within the same category and accounts for their antagonism in their mode of interaction, in their mode of expression or in the social interests that structure particular contexts of application. So a differentiated view of 'boundary' recoups 'autonomy'. From seeing a person's autonomy or creativity as potentially suppressed by boundary (as in a simple dichotomy following an ideal type), the logic of repetition re-embeds the relation between boundary and creativity as one potential form of varying degrees of boundary rather than as its direct 'other':

> There is always a boundary. It may vary in its explicitness, its visibility, its potential and in its manner of its transmission and acquisition. It may vary in terms of whose interest is promoted or privileged by the boundary (Bernstein, 2000, p.206).

To sum up, Bernstein's logic of 'oppositional forms' requires readers of the social to recognise that the stratified and differentiated modes of authority coexist, each with its specific pathology. They coexist inside a social space or across different ones, they exert their power in varying degrees of visibility and they frame communications between agents in varying degrees of control. Recognition of 'oppositional forms' entails therefore a relational reading of social meanings. This means that a student's text is fully specialised when the evidence about power and control is constructed, relationally, by 'oppositional forms', partially specialised but misrecognised when it is constructed by 'simple dichotomy', and non-specialised when it is constructed without relevance to structures of authority. These degrees of recognition are grounded in Bernstein's theoretical assumption (internal language of description) that reading the particular through a modality of simple dichotomy counts as an act of misrecognition.

'Oppositional forms'	Simple Dichotomy Simple Dichotomy + Ideal type	Simple Dichotomy (One) Simple Dichotomy + Ideal type	Non Specialised
Student identifies both structures of authority (stratified and differentiated). The structures are identified inside a social space or across different ones, in the school. They are shown to exert power and control which vary in visibility and manner of transmission of authority. They are identified in a relational way, each with its specific pathology.	Student identifies both structures of authority. The structures are identified inside a social space or across different ones, in the school. One is shown to signify forms of 'constraints'; the other is shown to signify forms of 'freedom'. In addition, if one is marked as 'negative' and the other is marked as 'positive', the recognition then is also of Ideal Type.	This is a sub sample of the one above. Student identifies only **one** structure of authority. If it is identified as 'stratified', it is shown to signify forms of constraint. If it is identified as 'differentiated' it is shown to signify forms of 'freedom'. In addition, if the structure is also marked as 'positive or as 'negative', the recognition then is also of Ideal Type.	No structure of authority is identified. The particular remains non-specialised. When the student provides a simple description of the concrete way in which the practice formally works, the recognition is positional**.** When the student interprets the concrete by means that are not specified theoretically or contextually, the recognition is therapeutic**.**

I now turn to the analysis/evaluation of the six segments.

Six Examples of Recognition and Realisation

Initially, when I was reading the students' work I felt submerged in the specifics of their data descriptions. I struggled to see the general rule that guided their descriptions. I often found myself giving very fragmented feedback. So, in order to examine realisation more systematically, I decided to look for a set of codes that would guide me similarly to the way in which assessment criteria guide criterion-referenced assessment. To this end I adapted Bernstein's discursive rules of framing and slightly modified them according to the demands of the data. The coding scheme used is outlined in the Appendix at the end of this article. I used 'selection' to code the students' selections of a relevant empirical object of analysis. I changed 'pacing' to 'weighting' and thereby I replaced time (of pacing) with 'detail', referring to the amount of detail the students' description of the particular provided. I used 'sequencing' to code the linking between a generalisable educational idea and particular descriptions. With regard to 'criteria', I used the accent of the

coding to mark the epistemic means that a student used to transmit the reasoning behind the description, with specific reference to the way she/he associated between opposites.

Here are the four codes I devised for my analysis of the segments:

Discursive Rule of Selection	Discursive Rule of Weighting	Discursive Rule of Sequence	Discursive Rule of Evaluation Criteria
The focus of realisation here is on the selection of the empirical referent – is it from the list which was provided with the task and if outside the list, is it appropriate for the type – 'stratified' vs. 'differentiated' opposite structures of power and control.	The focus of realisation here is on the amount of details included in the description of the particular.	The focus of realisation here is on signification as constructed by the sequence between the description of the specific aspects of the empirical referent and a generalisable educational idea.	The focus here is on epistemic means by which the student signals her/his reasoning of the relations between structures of authority in the description of the empirical referent.

The six examples analysed in this paper are selected from the work submitted by the 17 student teachers on the 2001 programme. I divided each student's work into segments. 'Segment' stands for a section in the student's work, which portrays one specific school practice. In this way the integrity of idea is kept. Furthermore, dividing the student's work into segments allows comparison between segments. A comparison between segments enables one to count the number of segments in a student's work that signify a particular recognition and thus establishes degrees of success in the student's specialisation of the particular. The segments were edited for grammatical errors that interfere in the reading of the segment. All names of schools and of students are pseudonyms.

Example 1
Student M: On two message systems in the school (Private, High School, Girls).
Segment A 'Oppositional Forms':
Student (female) identifies both structures of authority (stratified and differentiated). The structures are identified inside a social space or across

different ones, in the school. They are shown to exert power and control which vary in visibility and manner of transmission of authority. They are identified in a relational way, each with its specific pathology.

> The powers that be at St C's want the public to understand that this tradition will mould their daughters into strong, law abiding citizens, the kind that have the potential to be world leaders. The most recent advertising campaign flier says it all [enclosed]. It shows a young girl who is working independently sitting half way up a spiral staircase on the way to the top, with an almost heavenly light above her. There is an order and sereneness about the photo, the square stairs create an orderly pattern and the harmonious warm colours the serenity. The girl is wearing her school uniform, which shows she belongs to the school even if she is alone. She is also a sweet looking blond girl, perhaps reflecting the type of learner in St C's traditionally white girls, which shows a distinction between the type of affluent school St C's is and a government school. This advert conveys both the stratified and the differentiated orders in the school. It conveys a stratified order message about the school's community being founded on Christian principles and the framework of tradition. This is an order that is separated from the outside world. The differentiated order is conveyed by showing the girl doing independent work with wispy pieces of hair around her face, not perfectly groomed, as if she's been playing.

Discursive Rule of Selection ++	Discursive Rule of Weighting +	Discursive Rule of Sequence +	Discursive Rule of Evaluation Criteria -
The student selects an appropriate empirical referent outside the list of empirical referents provided by the task {*advertising campaign flier*} and builds relevant descriptions around the distinction between stratified and differentiated order, foregrounding specific aspects {*young girl*} {*spiral staircase on the way to the top*} {*heavenly light*}	The two orders are identified by selecting details that seem to signal co-existence between: a pattern of fixed order {*a spiral staircase on the way to the top, with an almost heavenly light*}; {*the square stairs create an orderly pattern and the harmonious warm colours the serenity*} {*school uniform*} and the idiosyncratic – {*doing independent work with wispy pieces of hair around her face, not perfectly groomed, as if she's been playing*}.	The educational message prefaces the description {*mould their daughters into strong, law abiding citizens*}. The educational message (the strong socialisation role of the school, indicated by the term *mould*) can be (seems to be) advocated by the flier produced through *patterned order* as well as through *independent work*.	Although the distinction is explicitly stated {*this advert conveys both the stratified and the differentiated orders in the schoo*l} the use of interrelated metaphors like *heavenly light*/*play* could be misleading; it could suggest a reading of a simple dichotomy where some parts of the school are heavily regulated and others are free. More segments are needed. This is one of the examples in the study (see also example 4) that shows that weak realisation of criteria can conceal the recognition.

Example 2
Student M: On the different forms of regulation of the teachers and the learners in St C's.
Segment B 'Oppositional Forms':
The student identifies both structures of authority in the segment. Each structure is presented with its special pathology: Both exert power and control, each in a form oppositional to the other.

> I find the ringing of the bells between periods a fascinating concept. One of the staff members who has been at St C's for a long time told me that they used to have a bell ringing between periods, but stopped this because the noise destroyed the ambiance of the school. This is very ironic. The sound of a bell tells us that something is about to happen or should happen. It is a conditioned response. Taking the bells away gives the teachers more responsibility, they are not governed by outside control and are thus themselves held accountable for the learners in their class making it to the next one on time. Each teacher relies on other teachers and they all contribute to the continuity of the day's lessons in a therapeutic manner. This creates a type of binding between teachers of different disciplines. However, this seemingly differentiated type of order is masking a stratified order. The bell disturbs the ambiance and unspoken order in the school. The community of the school know the rituals and do not need to be reminded, because after all that is why they have been accepted and kept here. Another irony is that while there are no bells between lessons [or indeed at the end of the school day], there is a bell to indicate the start of the day and the end of break/lunch time. This is because whilst the teachers are responsible enough to know when to let their class go to the next lesson, the learners may not be as loyal, or responsible enough to come in from break at the correct time. The bell ensures at these times that the learners remember it is the school that is in control as they move from the freedom of break into class, as one school. This keeps the learners 'in check' in a stratified manner [the school in control], which is very different from the differentiated and therapeutic mode of control they experience from their teachers when coaxed from lesson to lesson.

Discursive Rule of Selection ++	Discursive Rule of Weighting +	Discursive Rule of Sequence + +	Discursive Rule of Evaluation Criteria ++
The student identifies an appropriate empirical referent that is not on the list and refers to particular aspects of it {*The sound of a bell tells us that something is about to happen or should happen*}{*The bell disturbs the ambiance and unspoken order*}.	The vertical relation between the two orders is analysed for the form of power and control they exert on the relevant agent. The analysis uses more conceptual means than specific empirical descriptions[6] to describe different types of controls. With conceptual descriptors {*Each teacher relies on other teachers*}; {*binding*}; {*unspoken order*}, the student demonstrates internal mode of regulation for teachers {*they are not governed by outside control and are thus themselves held accountable for the learners in their class making it to the next one on time*}; {*type of binding between teachers of different disciplines*} and external mode of regulations for learners {*this keeps the learners 'in check' in a stratified manner* [*the school in control*]}.	The description is condensed to an educational implication about the identity projected for the relevant agent. For teachers, it is about being a member of the community {*relies on other teachers*}; {*ambiance and unspoken order*}; {*they have been accepted*}; {*teachers are responsible enough*}. For the learners, it is about becoming a member of the community {*the learners may not be as loyal*}; {*the learners may not be responsible enough*}; {*learners in check*}.	The two oppositional orders are announced explicitly as 'a vertical relation between' {*this seemingly differentiated type of order is masking a stratified order*}; the form of its operation is framed much more implicitly. The student describes each form and refuses simple dichotomy: the teachers and learners are regulated through different forms of control, within which both teachers and learners experience forms of constraints. This is indicated for teachers through references to {*held accountable for the learners in their class making it to the next one on time*};{*unspoken order*}; {*kept here*}, where the order of time creates interdependence among teachers, which is regulated in an unspoken manner. Learners are controlled in a differentiated way: The learners are 'in check' outside the classroom (explicit form of control, indicated through a disturbing mechanism, the bell). In the classroom the learners appear to feel freer under the hand of a therapeutic mode, but they are regulated in fact, albeit, in a different form {*coaxed from lesson to lesson*}.

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[6] The student could have gone into detailed description of examples of teachers' experiences of binding and students' experiences inside the classroom. The point was made without this potentially laborious work.

Example 3
Student D: On boundaries between social agents (Private, High School, Co Ed.).
Segment A 'Simple Dichotomy':
Student (male) identifies only one structure of authority in the segment. The student identifies it as 'stratified', with a weak signification {*pyramid*} of the form of constraint.

> The school pyramid is structured in a hierarchal order. This is because it has got a board of trustees which is the highest body, then follows the principal and parents, the teachers, followed by learners and at the bottom of the table are the general workers. This pyramid showed that there are some stratified principles in the social order of the school. This is because the fixed attribute is taken as a basis for ordering relationships in the school.

Discursive Rule of Selection -	Discursive Rule of Weighting -	Discursive rule of sequence - -	Discursive rule of evaluation Criteria -
The particular appears to be specific. The description does not privilege a focus. The hierarchy is described at such a high level of generality {*This pyramid shows*}, which does not foreground specific aspects that could show if the hierarchy keeps the agents apart all the time and on all/some issues or not. That there is a hierarchy in the school does not discern the strength of the boundary between agents (as stratified/differentiated). {*Some stratified principles*}, is, potentially a device for further particularization.	Equal space for the particular and the general. Each set remains intact. The meaning of each set can be recovered independently of the other (no recontextualisation). In the case of the particular: a commonsense observation of the hierarchical relation that makes up the management structure of a school. In the case of the general: the reasoning for the identification ('*stratified*') is formulated externally to the observation, through another {*This is because*} theoretical selection {*Fixed attribute taken as a basis for ordering . . .*}. No reference is made to the specific aspects of the particular that can be shown to signify stratification.	No educational implications are signified. 'The general' is tagged on 'the particular'. The details describing the particular developed separately from any generalisable educational message.	The student's reasoning of what the pyramid actually shows, by reference to one pole of the distinction between stratified and differentiated order, suggests a view of simple dichotomy imposed from an ideological place of an ideal type, but the description is too thin to have a firm conclusion that this is the view. The notion 's*ome*' in {*some stratified principles in the social order to the school*} could suggest co-existence of two message systems. To establish use of distinction more segments are needed.

Example 4

Student D: On the boundaries between teachers and learners in the school.

Segment B 'Simple Dichotomy + Ideal Type':

The student identifies only one structure of authority in the segment, as 'stratified', with signification of ideal type.

> The school learners' representative council is made up of standard 10 or grade 12 pupils only. The main purpose of this council is to help with management of the school and facilitate relationship between learners and teachers. Members of this council are voted to their position by learners but the final decision on their position is taken by teachers. This is because teachers are entrusted with the responsibility to select them on the basis of their conduct in the school despite number of votes they might have won. Their elections conduct seems not to be democratic because of teachers' influence and that made me to see the council as a stratified approach.

Discursive Rule of Selection ++	Discursive Rule of Weighting -	Discursive Rule of Sequence -	Discursive Rule of Evaluation Criteria +
The student selects an appropriate empirical referent {*school learners representative counci*l} outside the list of empirical referents provided by the task and builds a relevant description around 'stratification', foregrounding a specific aspect; {*the final decision on their positions is taken by teachers*}.	The student provides more details of the empirical referent (until the words *teachers' influence*) than of the general. The detail do not show how the central features of 'stratification' are demonstrated in the workings of the particular: What criteria do the teachers use? In what case does their say override the learners' opinion? Do all council's activities stratify the relations between the teachers and the learners in the school?	The student follows up the description in a segment with some kind of generalisable educational idea {*their election conduct seem not to be democratic because of teachers' influence*}. Nevertheless, the idea is not supported; it is 'hanging' and thus is not significant.	The notions '*But*', '*only*', '*despite*' suggest a collection of features into a simple dichotomy view: {*is made up of standard 10 or grade 12 pupils **only***}; {*Members of this council are voted to their position by learners **but***}; {*teachers are entrusted with the responsibility to select them on the basis of their conduct in the school **despite** the number of votes they might have won*}. The view is associated with an ideal type of democracy: minimum boundaries between ages and between functions; social base of criteria is defined by the dichotomy between 'the marginalized' and 'the dominant' (learners should have the equal voice). This thin positional description of the particular might have been recovered from a populist discourse {*their election conduct seems not to be democratic*}.

Example 5
Student T: **(possibly) on boundaries between social agents in the school and mode of control (Public School, High School, Co Ed.)**
Segment **'Non Specialised'**
The student does not identify any structure of authority in the segment. The particular is non-specialised. The student provides a simple description (**positional** type) of commonsense knowledge regarding the workings of the empirical referent.

> Assembly is the top ritual at the school. Northern High School holds assemblies three times a week. They are held on Monday, Thursday and Friday. The assembly brings the school community together, learners, teachers, and the principal. This binds everyone into a moral community with shared values. The assembly gives the school an identity and assists in internalising the values and expressing them as a unit.
>
> The assembly takes less than 30 minutes, depending on the announcements of the day. When the learners gather in front of the hall they are expected to keep quiet. To maintain that level of discipline, the school monitors and the prefects scatter around the learners, checking and making sure that the learners are not talking. The principal will then ask the monitor to open the assembly by reading from the scriptures. After the reading, then the principal will lead the assembly with the prayer and after that he will settle the learners down and begin making announcements and giving other teachers time to make their announcements.
>
> The announcements cover every matter relating to the school. For example, they announce the sports results, new appointments on the part of the staff, welcoming of new members of the school, student teachers and the various school meetings. After the announcements the principal will close the assembly with a prayer and thank the members of staff for coming. Then the teachers will leave the assembly, leaving the learners behind. The principal will give the school monitors an opportunity to make their own announcements to the learners.

Discursive Rule of Selection - -	Discursive Rule of Weighting -	Discursive Rule of Sequence -	Discursive Rule of Evaluation Criteria - -
The student selects an empirical referent from the list (assembly) and builds a detailed description without any reference to a relevant structure type.	The student treats the empirical referent with details that could, with more analytical work, be referenced as an example for positional form of control in a stratified structure. The student, however, does not give any lead on their signification.	Although the description is prefaced with an analytical point {*this binds everyone into a moral community with shared values. The assembly gives the school an identity and assists in internalising the values and expressing them as a unit*}, the details that come after that are not marked in any way in relation to this analytical referent. Each part of the description is treated as self contained. The educational message does not produce significance.	The description ignores forms of stratification or modes of control and thus any significant reading. The student's reasoning of the description does not disclose its link with authority type and thus leaves the information not specialised.

Example 6
Student L: A therapeutic reading of a school's motto (Private, High School, Boys only):
Segment   'Non Specialised'

No structure of authority is identified. The particular remains non-specialised. The student interprets the referent by means that are not specified theoretically or contextually. The recognition is **therapeutic.**

> The motto 'take courage and be a man' has a plethora of implicit meanings. Firstly I want to look at where courage should be taken from. I would argue that it should be from God, from each other and finally from one's self in this school context. There is a fair amount of emphasis placed on prayer and brotherhood as ell as self-respect. Secondly I think we need to examine what is implied by 'be a man'. In the Christian sense it could refer to qualities such as humility, modesty, kindness and goodness that are achieved through respect for God, others and self. In a capitalist or modern sense it could refer to bravery, success, wealth, position, power, authority, rationality, logic and even superiority. Finally in a post-modern or New Age sense it could refer to sensitivity, responsibility and accountability. There is an assumption that because we are men, we are brothers. I think this helps to eradicate prejudice within the school but it sets up ideas about what men are and this could also set up ideas about women.

Discursive Rule of Selection - -	Discursive Rule of Weighting -	Discursive Rule of Sequence - -	Discursive Rule of Evaluation Criteria - -
The student selects an empirical referent (the school's motto) from the list. Although it appears that the reference to 'be a man' offers a specific aspect, the interpretation that follows constructs decontextualised possibilities that are left 'up for grabs'.	The opening up of the empirical referent defies any relation to a type of structure or even to any aspect of the empirical context of the school. Even the reference to {*pray*} defies specificity, as it is nested in a chain of signifiers without pulling specific aspects that can account for a specific type of power and control.	The segment appears to be structured logically and coherently. Two concepts are singled out: *courage* and *man* and interpretations of these are given. Nevertheless, the sequence lacks directionality, as it is not connected to any school practice that can help to tighten the plethora into a preferred direction.	The segment appears to be specialised, as discourses are recruited (religion, economic, spiritual). Nevertheless, none of the discourses is hooked on to empirical evidence, none are linked to an authority type and so their meaning is constructed independently of external signifiers. This is a case of a therapeutic identity that defies any external criteria. It constructs an open narrative by following "internal making sense procedures of the external segmentation" (Bernstein, 1996, 78)

Analysis

This study examined student teachers' modes of orientation to 'oppositional forms', the form of recognition required by Bernstein's specialised language of description. The findings show forms of recognition that range in degrees of strength of realisation:

"oppositional forms" ⟶ Simple Dichotomy ⟶ Simple Dichotomy/Ideal Type ⟶
Positional, Non-Specialised ⟶ Therapeutic, Non-Specialised.

The examination of the 6 segments suggests that all four students struggled with both the recognition and realisation rules of 'oppositional forms'. Student D recognises simple dichotomy. Students T's and L's recognition is not specialised. Student M, clearly a good student (the best student in the 2001 programme) demonstrates (in one of the two segments better than in the other) recognition of 'oppositional forms'. But, even in her case this is not a clear case. Only analysis of all the segments in her work can establish that with more confidence. Examples 1 & 2 and 3 & 4 show that within a student's work, one can find segments with different strengths of recognition. The study also demonstrates that the students battle with realisation rules as much as they struggle with recognition rules.

Example 1 Student M	Example 2 Student M	Example 3 Student D	Example 4 Student D	Example 5 Student T	Example 6 Student L
Oppositional Forms (?) D*sel* (+ +) D*w* (+) D*seq* (+) D*crit* (-)	Oppositional forms D*sel* (+ +) D*w* (+) D*seq* (++) D*crit* (+ +)	Simple Dichotomy (?) D*sel* (-) D*w* (-) D*seq* (- -) D*crit* (-)	Simple Dichotomy+ Ideal Type D*sel* (+ +) D*w* (-) D*seq* (-) D*crit* (+)	Non- Specialised (Positional) D*sel* (- -) D*w* (-) D*seq* (-) D*crit* (- -)	Non- Specialised (Therapeutic) D*sel* (- -) D*w* (-) D*seq* (- -) D*crit* (- -)

The analysis here proposes a case for further investigation: the case of weak realisation that leads to concealment of recognition. The reading of the segments shows (even in the case of the 'strong' student, M) that when asked to recontextualise the particular, students' descriptions do not enclose clearly how the epistemic means is used (discursive rules of evaluation and criteria, D*crit* ++). None of the students saw it necessary to discuss the authority relations explicitly or to reason their description explicitly by reference to the logic through which the distinction between a stratified and differentiated social order demarcates a practice. The evident weakness of their realisation

can be traced, I argue, to this particular realisation rule. For a tight hold over the particular, a student needs to gaze at the specialisation of the language she/he uses to organise the particular. Students will control the "yet-to-be codified" (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 1999, p.32) object of inquiry better if they use epistemic means to organize the specific aspects selected in terms of, focus, level of detail and sequence. Lack of this engagement leaves too much room for projection. For the student weak or partial treatment of discursive rules of evaluation and criteria has a ripple effect. In the absence of explicit conceptual engagement with the epistemic means used to specialise the particular, control over details and sequence are clearly affected. Descriptions foreground aspects of the particular either with a far too high level of generality (examples 3 & 4) or with too many details, the relevance of which begs a question (example 5) or through internal projection (example 6). In these cases the specific descriptions have been left to their own device as if self-transparent and the educational idea in the message (if at all mentioned) loses its significance. Example 4 is a case where the ideological voice of the knower over-determines the epistemic means. When ignoring criteria, as in example 6, the student recruits discourses from other discursive fields, constructing an object that is totally idiosyncratic. Example 6 is a case of 'hijacking', where the space of the particular is evacuated only to let in other discursive desires. When, on the other hand, a student like student M recontextualises concrete details into conceptual descriptors, the description (particularly in example 2) is held more accountably and requires, in fact, very little of the context specific "stored meanings" (Darling-Hammond, et. al., 1999, p.33). Rather, the tight hold on the logic which constructs meaning selects conceptual descriptors such as {*each teacher relies on other teachers*}; {*binding*}*;* {*unspoken order*} to control the amount of the specific aspects and to work them into the generalisable educational idea.

As for the assessor – weak treatment of evaluation criteria (in all of the examples), makes it very difficult to establish, beyond doubt, whether a student treats the authority structure of the school as consisting of a mix of opposites which together constitute the pedagogical space of education per se. In example 2, the decision that this is a case of recognition of 'oppositional forms' can only rely on the reading of {*coaxed from lesson to lesson*} as a signifier of pathology within the apparent differentiated order of the classroom (equal to the pathology of *the bell* in the outskirts of the classroom), a reading of recognition that the assessor recruits into the description. Similarly, in example 4 '*But*', '*only*', '*despite*' are foregrounded in an effort to account for interpretation of student D's recognition of opposites as a case of simple dichotomy.

In Conclusion

Bernstein's constitutive relation of 'oppositional forms' presents a complex degree of invisibility. Models, which present categories in a form of simple dichotomy, get operationalised relationally into a matrix of combinations of 'oppositional forms'. For Bernstein, then 'oppositional forms' is a discursive tool that sorts social phenomena methodologically into oppositions that look like dichotomies but are, in fact, kept together, relationally, at each analytical level.

The analysis of the six segments of 4 students' work can be used to show that specialisation in a sociological reading of the particular can be assessed with an achievable degree of explicitness. The analysis shows that the use of a language of description can equip teacher educators with a better diagnostic tool with which to understand, firstly, the difficulties student teachers experience in recognizing the central feature of the principled knowledge they acquire and, secondly, the strategies they use to produce texts that draw their empirical descriptions from highly segmented contexts of learning. This diagnostic knowledge can help to produce productive relations between two very different discourses, between the horizontal discourse of the particular and the vertical discourse of the general.

The study draws attention to the importance of having a pronounced internal language of description if teacher education programmes wish to take the particular more seriously. While sociological research in teacher education employs recognition rules to construct models of description of various educational entities, rarely does it reflect on these rules directly as an object of study?[7] This of course has direct implications for acquisition; particularly in view of the heavy recontextualisation that characterises vertical discourses in school-based programmes of teacher education. In these courses the pedagogy is oriented, predominantly, towards 'something outside' itself and so the matrix of recognition rules and their roots in specialised languages is often backgrounded.

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[7]   In their recent work (2001) Moore and Matton have argued that too often pedagogic concerns overshadowed epistemological ones and that we should pay more attention to the epistemic device employed in different languages within the social sciences – to conditions and procedures of productions, recontextualisation and reproduction of knowledge . See also Moore, 2001.

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Appendix

Discursive rules of selection

++	+	-	- -
The student selects relevant empirical referent outside the list, foregrounding specific aspects to describe power and control.	The student selects empirical referent from the list, foregrounding specific aspects to describe power and control.	The student selects relevant empirical referent outside the list, foregrounding theoretical, non specific aspects to describe power and control.	The student selects an empirical referent from or outside the list, foregrounding specific/ theoretical aspects, with no reference or relevance to a structure type of power and control.

Discursive rules of weighting

+	-
The student describes the particular with sufficient detail needed to show how the central features of the authority type are demonstrated in the workings of the specific aspects of the empirical referent.	The student describes the particular with too much or too little detail for what is needed in order to show how the central features of the authority type are demonstrated in the workings of the specific aspects of the empirical referent.

Discursive rules of sequence

++	+	-	- -
The student follows up the description with an elaborated generalisable educational idea.	The student follows up the description with a generalisable educational idea.	The educational idea is not supported by a relevant description.	The student does not follow up the description with an educational idea.

Discursive rules of weighting

++	+	-	--
Student uses terms relationally to show differentiation of power and control in the school.	Student uses binaries to show dichotomies in the operation of power and control in the school.	Student uses both epistemic means. Transmission of the type of relations of power and control in the school is not clear. More segments are needed to evaluate criteria.	Student uses no means of description that suggest any type of structure of power and control.

Acknowledgements

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