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Vygotsky and sociology

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REVIEW SYMPOSIUM

Vygotsky and sociology, edited by Harry Daniels, Abingdon, Routledge, 2012, 248 pp., £90.00 (hardback), £25.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-0-41-567821-6 (hardback), ISBN 978-0-41-567822-3 (paperback)

Reviewed by Gemma Moss, Romuald Normand and Paul Dowling

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This edited collection is the latest in a series of volumes on Vygotsky that Harry Daniels has produced, exploring the scope of his work and its continuing relevance for education. Vygotsky is worthy of this level of attention and his contribution to a social theory of development remains crucial in many areas of educational research. This volume has a tighter brief than some of its predecessors by setting out to forge closer links between Vygotsky's social psychology and the sociology of knowledge more broadly, with Bernstein's work on pedagogic discourse often acting as the central resource bridging these two fields. How the theoretical frameworks of Bernstein and Vygotsky overlap in their accounts of the social regulation of the classroom and the social formation of the mind has been an absorbing question for a generation of thinkers, many of whom have found reason to cross the boundary lines between psychology and sociology. Recording the potential synergies that have emerged and been exploited as these traditions meet is an interesting endeavour, and this book presents a range of contributions in 13 separate papers.

Vygotsky and Sociology is not for the beginner, however. There are few concessions to those not already acquainted with the work of both authors, and anyone who comes to the discussion without some sense of their respective chronologies, theoretical antecedents and distinctive contributions within different traditions will not find this an easy read. The brief introduction does set out some aims for the collection: to 'expand and enrich the Vygotskian theoretical framework' and 'illustrate the utility of such enhanced sociological imaginations and how they may be of value in researching learning in institutions and classrooms' (2). Beyond this, links between the papers rests with a distinction between contributions with a more theoretical or more empirical emphasis. In the absence of any clearly defined orientation or sustained dialogue between the authors on topics of mutual interest, the reader must find their own way through a diverse collection.

There are contributions that make the effort worthwhile. Gordon Wells, who began an extensive longitudinal study of the development of children's

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language in naturalistic settings in the early 1960s by recording children's interactions with caregivers in the home, provides a useful overview of that work and how it evolved in personal communication with Bernstein, and later through his reading of Vygotsky. The account nicely elucidates the interaction between the data and the theoretical constructs that might explain it, and shows how his own encounters with both Bernstein's and Vygotsky's concepts turn the analysis in different directions. From Well's perspective, this is in part a contrast between structure, represented in Bernstein by code theory, and agency, represented in Vygotsky by the concepts of appropriation and semiotic mediation. He closes with questions about whether and how these contrasting perspectives resonate in the contemporary classroom.

Panofsky and Vadeboncoeur link Vygotsky with Bourdieu to explore social class differences in how parents navigate relationships with their children's schools. The interview data they review come from a range of studies collected by different scholars. Bringing this material together enables them to contrast the ways in which middle-class and working-class parents intervene on behalf of their children, their relationship to the specialist language of the school, and how they respond to the judgements passed on their children's ability. Using the term 'triadic zones of proximal development', Panofsky and Vadeboncoeur adapt Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) to demonstrate that middle-class parents orientate towards an imagined educational future for their children, setting the terms of the discussion beyond the present and its immediate parameters, in ways that work to their advantage in their dealings with the school.

Shotter and Lock reconsider the role language plays alongside other mediational tools in directing children's attention to their social and cognitive world. They explore theoretical synergies and contrasts in the units of analysis that Bernstein, Vygotsky and Bahktin employ, illustrating these in a brief account of different empirical research studies. Amongst the examples they consider are a study of mothers' attempts to teach their children to accomplish a structured task in an experimental setting, which reveals social class differences in how this problem was addressed; and an experiment conducted by Leontiev, recording how children modified their use of a range of props to help them solve a complex cognitive task. Shotter and Lock tease out from this how implicit orientations to context and situated understandings of the possibilities for action influence the ways in which children grow 'into the intellectual lives of those around them' (76), including how they incorporate new language into their existing repertoires.

Singh, Brown and Martsin take this discussion another way by considering the application of the ZPD to interview data in which a researcher and interviewee reframe each other's questions and answers in a tussle over the meaning of the subject of the interview – the educational experience of pupils who have been taken out of mainstream schooling and placed into non-traditional educational contexts. The researcher invites the

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interviewee to reflect on how they understand their role as teacher in a non-traditional education setting and what this means for their practice. The interviewee responds by focusing on the everyday habits and behaviours the setting fosters in pupils, ignoring the more abstract and disciplinary knowledge it might help them acquire. The researcher's attempts to lift the conversation, by drawing on a different set of values that might ask more critical questions of the setting and the teacher's priorities, are rebuffed. The interview acts as a case study of two incompatible points of view that do not engage. The tension points running through the interview raise questions about how it is possible to grow out of and into someone else's frames of reference, and what might be the conceptual triggers for moving backwards and forwards from everyday to more abstract formulations in the way in which the ZPD describes. These are leads worth following. The richness of Bernstein and Vygotsky's work needs testing afresh against new empirical data. This collection highlights the reasons why.

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Harry Daniels has a long-standing dialogue with the work of Lev Vygotsky. In his new book, he brings together researchers from different countries to illustrate how the concepts of the famous Russian psychologist can be used for research on learning in institutions and classrooms. At the same time, he opens up a more theoretical space of discussion between the conceptualisations of Vygotsky and Basil Bernstein. The book can be divided into two parts: the first deals with the relationships between the epistemology and the theory of Vygotsky, and the sociology developed by great theoreticians such as Marx, Durkheim and Bernstein; the second part is focused on the deployment of some concepts inherited from Vygotsky and Bernstein to think about the modes of knowledge and the forms of socialisation in different teaching and learning environments.

In bringing together Durkheim and Vygotsky, Michael Young argues that the sociologist and the psychologist, despite a different intellectual training, have contributed to a social theory of knowledge (Chapter 1). However, Durkheim lacked a theory of activity, partially explained by his opposition to the pragmatism of William Jams but also by his adherence to founding his theory of knowledge on a distinction between the 'sacred' and the 'profane', whilst being interested in the building of collective representations. From this perspective, the work with Marcel Mauss on the schemes of classification lays the basis of a social theory of the differentiation of knowledge but it remains prisoner of a rationalistic and

positivist thought that ignores the social experiences of human beings in their environment. By contrast, the theory of Vygotsky, even if he shares with Durkheim the same criticism addressed to individualism, emphasises the importance of tools and experience in the development of logical thought. These differences are extended to the relationships between knowledge and society: Durkheim separates the foundation of knowledge from the lived world while Vygotsky, in giving it a historical dimension, considers that knowledge stems from collective activities embedded in the world, from a transformation between scientific and daily concepts.

This historical and teleological dimension should be viewed alongside the influence of Marx and the dialectical conception of the intellectual training of Vygotsky. In investigating the key ideas of this tradition, at ontological and epistemic levels, Seth Chaiklin explains that his conceptions of freedom and human development, which were themselves embedded in the philosophy of the Enlightenment inspiring Hegel and Marx, were of great importance in the elaboration of Vygotsky's psychological theory of human activity and also in the way he considered the relationships between research and practice (Chapter 2). However, the Russian psychologist develops an interesting reflection on the building and regulation of social relations within institutions, discursive practices and interactional activities that structures the institutional division of labour. This attention to social modalities of the formation of the mind allows a parallel to be drawn with the social theory of Basil Bernstein. As demonstrated by Harry Daniels (Chapter 3), while Vygotsky gives a particular place to language, he fails to provide an analytical framework to describe the social dimension of those activities and the way culture, pedagogical discourse and structures of the society shape discursive practices. However, Bernstein, in analysing relationships of power and control, argues that they provide different classifications, codes and regulative functions of the mind and learning. Daniels identifies a tension affecting Vygotsky's legacy among sociologists. The ethnomethodology and interactionism were focused on interactional contexts and the negotiation of social order through discursive practices, but these sociologists excluded structures of power and modes of specialisation of knowledge from their analyses. It is therefore Bernstein's theory that links the level of interaction to other forms of social relationships, which structure pedagogical practice in terms of control, categorisation and classification. In shaping dispositions, identities and individual practices, by the voice and the message, Bernstein accounts for the ways in which subjects are positioned and position themselves in relation to their social context. Thus, the theory of Bernstein allows us to rethink the conceptions of human agency.

This agency is explored further in Chapters 4 and 5. John Shotter and Andy Lock, in bringing closer together the modes of thought of Vygotsky and Bernstein, and in showing that they were sharing the same interest in codes of language in the analysis of interactions and the explanation of

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cognitive operations, consider that neither was greatly concerned about the moves of the body in the environment. Inspired by the 'corporeal turn' after the 'linguistic turn', and particularly the work of Gibson on 'affordances', the two authors argue that cognitive development can be also based on non-verbal interactions and that it is necessary to study the shift from non-verbal communication to more codified and symbolic representations and knowledge in order to explain the different opportunities offered by a local environment. However, in Chapter 5, Ruqayia Hasan reminds us of Vygotsky's interest in the education of attention and the stimulation of psychological functions by a cultural environment. In borrowing the notion of gendered discourse from Bakhtin, he emphasises the dialogic and embedded dimension of linguistic interaction. Vygotsky's conception of 'semiotic mediation' allows us to reconsider the development of the mind and the formation of conscientiousness in their relationships with the environment and through the use of cultural and linguistic tools. And even if Bernstein did not use this concept, he also recognises different forms of semiotic interaction through operations of codification and the structuration of verbal interactions along an horizontal discourse (oral, local, specific, tacit, multi-layered) and a vertical discourse (explicit, structured, hierarchical). Different classifications and frames define a visible semiotic mediation generated through pedagogy, and an invisible mediation acting as a mental disposition and a form of conscientiousness produced before schooling.

The second part of the book carries us from the meta-theory to the complexity of teaching situations and school organisations through different social and institutional contexts. From this perspective, an introduction would have been welcome. Without it, the reader is directed to a variety of differentiated case studies and it remains difficult to retrace the genealogy of borrowings from Vygotsky and Bernstein. This difficulty is reinforced by the heterogeneity of areas of research that focus successively on pedagogy, socialisation, relationships between language and learning, and cognitive and linguistic skills by combining approaches from sociology, psychology and linguistic as well as different methodologies. That is to say that the task is challenging and exceeds the possibility of a detailed and precise review. It seems relevant to group the last chapters into three areas of research.

Some authors have a particular interest in situating the genesis of linguistic skills through the history and experience of individuals embedded in their community. Gordon Wells (Chapter 8) shows that the development of the child, and the way the language of the community is appropriated, depends as much on the quality of interpersonal relations within the family as on the attention of teachers towards the development by stages of oral skills through schooling. The genesis of language skills is also at stake in Chapter 9 by Gabrielle Ivinson, who analyses the daily rituals of young working-class adolescents outside schools in Wales. In combining multiple methods to capture different aspects of the experience of these young

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people, and in studying some mimetic references to older times in their language, she demonstrates that experiences of time and space in the community are essential to the understanding of learning and development of individual skills.

This study echoes some other works devolved to socialisation and identities. Stephen Lerman (Chapter 10) explains that the building of the self is decisive in explaining the involvement of teachers with students. Contrary to the models of competence and performance carried by official discourses on pedagogy, he provides evidence, from the narratives of the experience and career of a teacher in mathematics, that it is necessary to take into account the history and culture of the subject, but also to focus on emotions mediated through discursive practices in order to enlighten the complexity of relationships with students. Also writing at the level of the organisation and its links with the school institution, David H. Eddy Spicer argues in Chapter 7 that the pedagogical discourse and its agency have to be placed within a larger social perspective. Then, it is relevant to study the modalities of authority, stemming from bureaucratic control or epistemic legitimation, to understand the forms of socialisation and the negotiation of meanings in the formation of the professional conscientiousness and distribution of roles between the transmitted and the acquirer of knowledge.

The last contributors investigate the social conditions from which pedagogical discourses are defined and implemented in teaching and learning situations. The works of Vygotsky and Bernstein are particularly fruitful to account for the pedagogical dilemmas in the work of teachers. In examining a school network supporting early school-leavers in Australia, Parlo Singh and her colleagues analyse the interactions between a professional teacher and a researcher to explore tensions between scientific and daily knowledge (Chapter 6). The research interview, as an encounter, structures a semiotic mediation revealing some contradictory visions between a daily and local knowledge and a more abstract and scientific knowledge. Overcoming these dilemmas entails the creation of social contexts for collaborative thinking, outside ordinary rituals and routines, and also specific work on the implicit semiotic mediation and on the ZPD of learners. However, interactions between students and adults in learning are also dependent on differences between social classes because they are socially structured, which affects the way parents are involved in the relationship between the teacher and the student, and also in the way parents use their social and cultural capitals. In a similar vein, Caroline P. Panofsky and Jennifer A. Vadeboncoeur invent the notion of the 'triadic zone of proximal development' to explain the regulation of parents' discourse and their modes of communication with the teacher (Chapter 11). Likewise, Arturo Escandon, through an analysis of the instructional and regulative discourse in pedagogical contexts, demonstrates in Chapter 12 the inherent dialectic contradiction between concepts and the organisation of linguistic means.

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This tension requires the development of more explicit forms of instruction, particularly a better recognition of the rules of grammar and the formulation of evaluative criteria.

Harry Daniels' book has merit in establishing a true dialogue between sociology and psychology in demonstrating the relevance of the works of Lev Vygotsky and Basil Bernstein to thinking about the complexity of the social dimensions in teaching and learning, which are too often reduced to an instrumental and normative approach in official discourses and recommendations directed towards professionals. The posture adopted by the authors is based on a strong criticism of cognitivist and socio-constructivist theories at a time where their assumptions are beginning to be strongly challenged. This criticism can be explained by the fact that constructivism and cognitive sciences have very often neglected, in their account of agency and context, the social genesis of cognition and institutions in the social life and careers of individuals. This important debate could have been better located in one chapter instead of being scattered in different parts of the book. However, cognitivist and constructivist theories have also contributed to the production of evidence on the conceptions of the self, the modes of interaction between individuals, cognitive processes of categorisation and generalisation through language, and non-verbal uses of the environment, all of which freed cognitivist and constructivist theories from the grasp of the neo-Marxist and structural approaches. It is regrettable that this attempt at dialogue with other epistemologies does not give a place to a comparison between the thought of Lev Vygostky and the pragmatist theory of John Dewey, who also tried to make a connection between social theory and pedagogy. It would have been fascinating to consider the works of Basil Bernstein and those of Pierre Bourdieu, and to explain how the development of Bernstein's thought evolved in reaction to the development of some constructivist assumptions. The book could have also taken into account the development of information and communications technologies in school contexts that challenge not only the modes of meaning but also the forms of classification and framing in teaching and learning activities. Despite these regrets, *Vygotsky and Sociology* remains an essential contribution to the sociological debate and there will, no doubt, be other, future opportunities for Harry Daniels to pursue his questioning of the sociological tradition and to open new horizons of thinking.

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A review, I think, should be less an autopsy of a work than an obituary of a reading as an illustrative transaction. In any event, Harry Daniels lays out the organs of this collection in his introduction, which is freely available on Amazon. This obituary identifies some small achievements and possibilities – of the reading, that is – and is not concerned with forensics, and nor will its word limit allow it to pick up more than fragments of any of the chapters. So, not an autopsy; nevertheless, I have to make an incision and I want to start in the chapter by John Shotter and Andy Lock where they propose 'seeing the similarities as primitive' (76), as prior to the socio-cultural. I prefer 'identifying continuities and discontinuities', but much the same thing, I suppose. A key continuity in this collection is the construction of learning spaces, sometimes but not always described as ZPDs. Shotter and Lock take a 'corporeal turn' in sense-making: treating my reading as dialogic (which in at least some senses it is), I confront the anthology – including, recursively, Shotter and Lock's chapter – as a 'languaged body' – you cannot take the language out of the body or the body out of the language –before an unknown interlocutor rather than as simply an acquirer of new information; I 'need to acquire some initial embodied anticipations in the course of practical involvements with [the work], if [I am] to "go on" with exploring [its] nature further' (75). This is what I am doing in struggling with this paragraph and moving between it and the chapter; it is not just about language, but I cannot say what else it is about because language is my mediator here. As Shotter and Lock put it:

> … in moving from a relatively indeterminate to a more determinate state of affairs, from a field of possible meanings to a speaker's actual meaning, we each help to 'create' a meaning *uniquely* related to the context of its occurrence. This means, of course, that our thinking in relation to things, and our expressing those thoughts linguistically, are so bound up together that it is only as an abstraction that we can conceive of language as a pre-given system of possible signs from which a speaker can select a set of those relevant to his or her purposes. Signs as such are not the prerequisites for communication, but its products. (75)

Shotter and Lock propose that this entails that we regard ourselves as first-language learners as 'if the indeterminate "somethings" before us are new' (75). In a chapter that is both theoretical and empirical, Arturo Escandón notes the tendency in second-language acquisition scholarship and teaching practice to regard 'contradictory' top-down and bottom-up moves between spontaneous and theoretical concepts in the ZPD as mutually exclusive. It is more productive, he argues, to regard them as complementary. Escandón describes the contradiction in first-language acquisition as between subjective and social organising of the world and in second-language acquisition as 'primarily between subjective meanings and the social organising of linguistic means' (229). Now this is an interesting distinction,

but it does seem to rely on the abstraction that Shotter and Lock point to above. This for me raises the question of what might it mean – theoretically and in practice – to regard second-language acquisition not as a relanguaging of the body, but of its developing inscription.

Ruqaiya Hasan, as do many of the other authors in the collection, brings together Lev Vygotsky and Basil Bernstein in her chapter on semiotic mediation. Pointing to Bernstein's analysis of horizontal and vertical discourse, she argues that: 'From the point of view of language, vertical discourse represents the space where the process is entirely semiotically constituted […]; it is where disembodied knowledge flourishes' (88). Bernstein's analysis constitutes an interesting theoretical space to explore, but, for me, it encourages a move too far in the direction of the objectification of language and of knowledge that I want to resist. I want to concentrate on strategic action (for example, Dowling 1998, 2009, 2013) and, in particular, on 'discursive saturation' (DS), which opposes strategies that tend to make the principles of a practice available within language (high discursive saturation) with those that do not (low discursive saturation), but the languaged body, to recruit Shotter and Lock's expression, cannot be subtracted from either; 'disembodied language' is dead language, the dead labour of past communicative acts. Stephen Lerman, in his chapter advocating and illustrating a focus on identity in mathematics education, claims that 'what anything is or means is always mediated through language' (182), but does not even this seemingly innocuous statement effect an amputation?

Parlo Singh, Raymond Brown and Mariann Märtsin report on what might be described as attempts to open up a ZPD in the interview situation involving a researcher and a teacher in which the teacher's discourse – constituted in and by 'everyday' concepts – and that of the researcher, which incorporates 'scientific' concepts, confront each other, allowing for the possibility of the complementary, contradictory moves described by Escandón in another context. The account, however, reveals resistance to these moves on the part of both of the interlocutors at different points in the interview, raising questions for data collection as potential, but here not successful, pedagogy.

Carolyn Panofsky and Jennifer Vadeboncoeur present what is, for me, a novel interpretation of the concept ZPD in their analysis of home–school relations:

> A triadic ZPD results when parents insert their proleptic vision of their children's educational abilities, learning potential, and an imaginary but prospective educational future into the relational space between students and teachers. This vision includes intimate information about the child that reduces the relational distance between child and teacher, as well as information regarding parents' resources, including cultural and social capital. The triadic ZPD relies on parents' use of communicative capital – semiotic practices, including the speech genre(s) of advocacy, the social language of

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> educational professionals, and the discourses of parent involvement and scientific testing – to mediate, or negotiate, the relationship between children and their teachers. (206)

As Panofsky and Vadeboncoeur point out, 'Since the space for development is "relational," rather than "in the child," it *must* be constructed' (205), here, in effect, by the parents. It seems that, 'In the absence of communicative capital, low-income parents are ineffective at offering or inserting their vision of their child because they do not have the requisite language or way of being to be *recognised* by education professionals' (205). This is a sociological augmenting of a Vygotskian concept of the kind advocated by Harry Daniels in his own chapter, but with the home/school nexus rather than individual subjectivity as the unit of analysis. Daniels points out that Bernstein offers a concept of the subject as a socially structured possibility space rather than Vygotsky's singular point. Gordon Wells, reporting on his longitudinal studies into children's linguistic development in the home and in school, is, like Panofsky and Vadeboncoeur, interested in the cultural reproduction of social inequality and claims evidential support for this in general terms. He warns, however:

> that predictions of children's educational achievement based on class, where this is measured in terms solely of parental education and occupation, are not very reliable. Many other characteristics of the children and of their home environment can play a significant role in determining the outcome. (148)

Gabrielle Ivinson looks at cultural and social reproduction in the particular context of a former coal-mining community. Ivinson describes the tough and sometimes dangerous daily activities in which schoolboys were involved – biking, contact sports, and so forth – as both mimetically referencing the miner's body and the loyalties of the masculine mining community and so carrying the community forward, but at the same time 'antithetical to neo-liberal, individualistic, competitive, independent, regulative order required to achieve in school contexts' (161). Ivinson's case studies are engaging, and yet I remain just a little sceptical; the simple reliance on the term mimesis to establish a cause is a little thin and would perhaps be better supported by some empirical genealogy. After all, if, as Shotter and Lock presume, 'seeing the similarities' is taken as cognitively primitive, then it is unsurprising that we see ley lines all over the place and we need something more than assertion to consolidate our principles of legitimate recognition.

Seth Chaiklin situates Vygotsky's work within a 'dialectical river' of ideas, the 'dialectical tradition'. Central features of this tradition – which also includes the work of Marx and Hegel – are the production of an integrative, empirically grounded, general science in commitment to full human

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development. By lacking these qualities, a good deal of contemporary research, he argues, is effectively pre-Vygotskian not post-Vygotskian. Deficiencies, in this respect, include a fragmented, disciplinary division of labour and a focus on documenting inadequate pedagogic practice rather than concentrating on a 'direct engagement with understanding what kinds of analysis will engage with conditions of human development' (39). Michael Young is also concerned with what we should expect from educational theory, and sets Vygotsky in dialogue with Durkheim in addressing the questions of what is worthwhile knowledge and how might we conceptualise teaching and learning. Whilst Vygotsky's categories, scientific and everyday concepts, resonate to a degree with Durkheim's opposition of the sacred and the profane, Vygotsky's interest is in concepts generated in technical and practical activity, which is associated with the profane in Durkheim. For the latter:

> [t]he power of logic has to refer to factors that are a priori and external to any specific human activity. In other words, to restate a key Durkheimian point, the compelling power of logic, and hence knowledge, has to come from society as a reality *sui generis*. (11)

This reality is the origin of that which is beyond everyday sensory experience, of the sacred, of religion and ultimately of ratiocination and science. Durkheim and the post-Durkheimian work of Basil Bernstein provide the basis for thinking about the nature of worthwhile knowledge, but Durkheim's sacred and profane are oppositions and so do not address Young's second question concerning pedagogy. Vygotsky's scientific and everyday concepts stand in dialectical relationship with each other and so can begin to achieve this, as indeed the chapters by Escandón and Singh *et al*. illustrate. Described in this way (but not necessarily in other respects) I am happier with Vygotsky's contribution than with that of Durkheim. The principles of propositional logic seem to me to be appropriately described as abstractions from, rather than as generative of, what is generally presented as rational discourse; in much the same way as Shotter and Lock describe signs, logic is not the pre-requisite of argumentation, but its product.

David Eddy Spicer presents another pedagogic context in his discussion of school-to-school relationships in school improvement initiatives. He introduces a two-dimensional scheme representing 'the view from a supported school (acquirer) of its relationship to the supporter school (transmitter)' (129) in terms of 'modalities of authority'. The scheme – which is arrived at via a complex discussion involving, amongst others, Basil Bernstein (mainly), Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan – analyses authority as four modes – bureaucratic, professional, cultural, and collective – differentiated according to tenor and field of discourse. I have a small reservation here. The scheme is very reminiscent of Mary Douglas's

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cultural theory and, indeed, one of its dimensions – tenor of discourse – is scaled in the same way (personal/positional) as Douglas's (1970) scheme in *Natural Symbols*. Eddy Spicer does cite Douglas, but he refers to the 2003 edition, relating this (in the citation) to an apparent first edition in 1996. In fact, the first edition was published in 1970. This is important to readers of this collection because this publication and Douglas's scheme that is presented in it mark the seminal dialogue between Douglas and Bernstein that led to her cultural theory (see also Douglas, 1996; Dowling and Chung 2009) and to Bernstein's categories, classification and framing. I have to say that I am somewhat less than enthusiastic about both Douglas's and Eddy Spicer's schemes, which seem to me to generate categories that are rather fuzzy in terms of their conceptualisation and so operationalisation. My own authority scheme (see, for example, Dowling, 2009) aspires to more sharply defined dimensions that are scaled as binary oppositions rather than what appear to be continua in Eddy Spicer; a continuum is, of course, predicated upon the constitution of a metric, which is frequently absent in qualitative analysis (see the discussion in Dowling, 2013).

I have attempted to demonstrate the range and depth of this collection and the potential for engagement in all of its chapters. The theoretical discussions and resources and the imaginative empirical studies should be of interest and value to all of those working in the sociology of education and educational studies more generally. An obituary generally ends with those who have been left behind; that is not my intention in compiling my list of references.

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