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Anthropology of
Education

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A Companion to the Anthropology of Education

Edited by
Bradley A.U. Levinson
and Mica Pollock

 **WILEY-BLACKWELL**

A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication

This edition first published 2011
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Blackwell Publishing was acquired by John Wiley & Sons in February 2007. Blackwell's publishing program has been merged with Wiley's global Scientific, Technical, and Medical business to form Wiley-Blackwell.

Registered Office

John Wiley & Sons Ltd., The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ,
United Kingdom

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A companion to the anthropology of education / edited by Bradley A. U. Levinson, Mica Pollock.

p. cm. – (Blackwell companions to anthropology ; 18)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4051-9005-3 (hardback)

1. Educational anthropology. I. Levinson, Bradley A., 1963– II. Pollock, Mica, 1971–

LB45.C653 2011

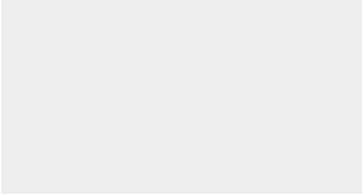
306.43–dc22

2010049390

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

This book is published in the following electronic formats: ePDFs [9781444396690]; Wiley Online Library [9781444396713]; ePub [9781444396706]

Set in 10/12.5pt Galliard by SPi Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India

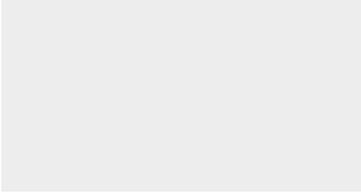


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Evangelicals in East Africa (Stanford University Press, 2009), and *Lessons from Mount Kilimanjaro: Schooling, Community, and Gender in East Africa* (Routledge, 2000).

Gregory Starrett is Professor of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He is the author of *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (University of California Press, 1998) and co-editor, with Eleanor Doumato, of *Teaching Islam: Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East* (Lynne Rienner, 2007).

Joseph Tobin is the Nadine Mathis Basha Professor of Early Childhood Education in the Fulton Institute and Graduate School of Education at Arizona State University. An educational anthropologist, Tobin is the author of books including *Preschool in Three Cultures: Japan, China, and the United States* (Yale University Press, 1991); *Good Guys Don't Wear Hats: Children's Talk about the Media* (Teachers College Press, 2000); *Pikachu's Global Adventure: The Rise and Fall of Pokémon* (Duke University Press, 2004); and *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited* (University of Chicago Press, 2009). His current projects are "Children Crossing Borders," a study of children of recent immigrants in preschools in five countries, and "Learning to be Deaf in Deaf Kindergartens in Three Countries: Japan, France, and the United States."

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Gail Viechnicki is interested in the linguistic analysis of scientific discourse and science instruction. She is particularly concerned with the linguistics of evidence,

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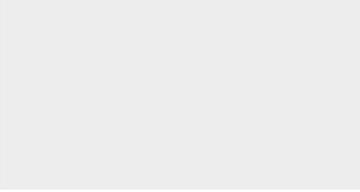
Harry F. Wolcott is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and Education at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, where he has spent his entire career. He had the good fortune to meet George Spindler when he went to Stanford to study for his doctorate. He realized that “anthropology and education” was the right field for him, although there really was no “field” as such at the time. Under Spindler’s direction he did his dissertation study among the Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia and he has been doing and teaching about ethnography ever since, from a study of urban African beer-drinking in Bulawayo, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) to a study of a school principal across town. He is a past president of the Council on Anthropology and Education and was the fourth editor of its journal, the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*.

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Action (Teachers College Press, 2001), *Education in the New Latino Diaspora* (co-edited with Enrique Murillo and Edmund Hamann; Ablex, 2002), *Linguistic Anthropology of Education* (co-edited with Betsy Rymes; Praeger, 2003), *Learning Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2006) and *Bullish on Uncertainty* (with Alexandra Michel; Cambridge University Press, 2009).

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Introduction

*Mica Pollock and
Bradley A.U. Levinson*

The anthropology of education sits at the crossroads of anthropology as a discipline, schooling as a professional field, and education as a perennial human endeavor. As anthropologists of education, we attempt to offer the insights and concepts of anthropology to educational theory and practice, and conversely, to enrich the discipline of anthropology by offering deep inquiry into educational processes.

The larger series of Companion volumes into which this volume fits is organized around named subfields or regional specializations of the discipline of anthropology, most of which correspond to a named section of the American Anthropological Association. The “anthropology of education” has been a self-conscious subdiscipline since the 1950s (see McDermott and Raley (Chapter 3), Wolcott (Chapter 7), Schensul (Chapter 8)). At the same time, we remain anthropologists, of course, and “education” is hardly a mere subset of cultural practice. Educational processes pervade the everyday conduct of social life. Anything related to teaching and learning, anywhere, at any age, “counts” as fair game for “anthropologists of education.”

So how is the “anthropology of education” any different from “anthropology” writ large? In Chapter 3, McDermott and Raley write of often false struggles in anthropology to distinguish cultural “parts” from cultural “wholes”; they note that any “part” of cultural activity and the cultural activity “writ large” are mutually constitutive and in a sense not separate at all. The same could be said for “the anthropology of education” and “anthropology” (for a related argument, see also Levinson, 1999).

At the same time, the very existence of this book reinforces the notion of the “anthropology of education” as a separate subfield. Some of us literally have degrees in the subfield. More specifically, perhaps, anthropologists of education inquire more than many other anthropologists into the fate of young people, about their enculturation

and socialization, and about habits of human behavior and relationships of power that are taught and challenged in schools as cultural sites. But we also care more broadly about “education” – about how people of any age learn and teach others to organize behavior, in any setting. Like anthropologists throughout other subfields, we care about how identities and identifications are taught and shaped, anywhere, at any age; we care about how people learn and use language; we care about everyday negotiations over the effects of past histories; we care about dynamics of control, power, and inequality that shape everyday lives in societies.

Further, we are as internally varied as any set of anthropologists: differences of generation, of theoretical orientation or epistemological premise, of national tradition, and of personal commitment and experience provide a vast range of positions from which to think and speak about “education” as anthropologists.

Thus, in producing this book, we explicitly invited our authors to help define (or contest) “the subfield” of the anthropology of education. We also set them free to do so. As we explained in an invitational letter, the guiding questions for the book were these:

Where and what and when is “education” to anthropologists? What educational processes, interactions, and settings have we examined, and what do we know about them?

Then, we gave them the following instructions:

We assume that you will explain one core set of educational/education-related processes examined and understood in the field; one core set of key educational interactions that demand anthropological analysis; some key educational setting that demands anthropological analysis; and/or some key set of interacting stakeholders (e.g., youth, adults, parents, children, policymakers) you and others have studied.

So then, the guiding questions for your chapter should be: Which authors and streams of scholarship have you found most centrally illuminating for understanding the “educational” processes or issues you explore in your work? Which scholars might you call the key “intellectual community” on this core issue in the anthropology of education? How does your own work exemplify an important approach to studying these educational processes? And how do any of the insights generated reach out beyond “anthropology of education” as typically framed, and shed light on major human processes?

The results of these initial queries are now in your hands: 32 chapters, by 56 scholars (often intergenerational pairs or teams by design), which together help to define and re-define the core knowledge and contributions that constitute the anthropology of education.

The parts of this book represent one of many possible formats we could have chosen for organizing its chapters, but they do reflect close kindred with the broader discipline. In Part I, “Histories and Generations,” the chapters tend to explore the history of our subfield and that history’s many ramifications – across different nations (e.g., Chapter 1, Anderson-Levitt), into different disciplines (e.g., history, Chapter 5, Rockwell), and “beyond the academy” (e.g., Chapter 8, Schensul). In Part II, “Education via Language,” chapters explore the sociolinguistic foundations of much of the best work in our field. Among other things, authors show how the field has explored literacy (Chapter 10, Bartlett *et al.*; Chapter 14, Alim), language policy and socialization

(Chapter 11, McCarty and Warhol; Chapter 12, Baquedano-López and Hernandez), media as education (Chapter 13, Tobin and Henward), and classroom argumentation (Chapter 15, Wright, Kuipers, Viechnicki). In Part III, “States, Identities, and Education,” authors explore the complex relationship between political order, subjectivity, and educational process. Domains of inquiry include nationalism (Chapter 16, Benei), citizenship (Chapter 17, Levinson), development and post-colonialism (Chapter 18, Stambach and Ngwane), childhood in civil society (Chapter 19, Anderson), and the action of state policies and proposed educational identities in China (Chapter 20, Fong and Kim), the Middle East (Chapter 21, Adely and Starrett), and Colombia (Chapter 22, Miñana and Arango), respectively. Part IV, “Roles, Experiences, and Institutions,” takes up the subfield’s work on how particular actors and institutions constitute one another in interactions over schooling; subjects of analysis include teachers (Chapter 25, Jewett and Schultz), immigrant children in schools (Chapter 23, Gibson and Koyama), bureaucratic school systems (Chapter 24, Díaz and Jiménez), and institutions of higher education (Chapter 26, Shumar and Mir). Hamann and Rosen (Chapter 27) point us toward the uniquely anthropological contribution of studying education policy as an institutionally located, concrete form of cultural activity. In Part V, “Interventions,” we present examples of the applied and action-oriented work of our field. With strong theoretical grounding, the authors show us how to open transformative spaces through identifying family “funds of knowledge” (Chapter 28, González, Wyman, and O’Connor), developing a methodology for intercultural research dialogue (Chapter 29, Dietz and Mateos), engaging participatory action research with youth (Chapter 30, Cammarota), and documenting the public policy process (Chapter 32, Lopez, Valenzuela, and García). Hurtig and Dyrness (Chapter 31) demonstrate that parents can be – indeed often are – both critical educators and ethnographers themselves.

The chapters in this book also tap vital debates that have shaped our field in the past and continue to shape it today. Indeed, in back and forth with our authors, we have often prodded them to delve more directly into these debates. We wish to challenge any perception of our field as simply recycling formulaic notions about “education.” Points of agreement are quite broad – about the importance of ethnography, certainly, and about the legitimacy of inquiry into the concepts and activities of “culture” and “education” – but beyond such generalities, agreement quickly breaks down. One example of such debate – even over the interpretation of a key figure in the field – can be discerned in two of the chapters that nearly bookend this volume. Harry Wolcott provides us with an early history of the subfield’s development in the United States, recounting George Spindler’s emphasis on cross-cultural fieldwork and “objective” interpretation. Wolcott uses this earlier history to caution today’s generation of anthropologists of education against making the “problematic leap” into conducting action-oriented ethnography that explicitly pursues social justice. Yet Julio Cammarota, now (with others in this volume) an influential practitioner of this new kind of activist scholarship in our field, similarly cites George Spindler as theoretical inspiration for his approach.

Perhaps what binds us together most as a subdiscipline is that we engage *both* core tensions of the field of anthropology, *and* core tensions of the interdisciplinary field of “education.” That is, we engage core tensions that span both fields. Schools of education, where many of us work, are notorious for the same core tensions named below.

CORE TENSION: WHEN AND WHERE IS “EDUCATION”?

Many of the chapters in this volume take up a core tension in the “anthropology of education”: defining the word “education.” While many outside our subfield assume that “education” equals “schooling,” and that anthropologists of education only study schools, anthropologists of education know perhaps best of all that schooling is just a subset of the education that occurs throughout everyday life (see Friedman Hansen, 1979; Varenne, Chapter 4). At the same time, anthropologists of education study schools more than most other anthropologists. Many of us are deeply engaged in efforts to improve or transform schools, even as we question their efficacy or superiority as sites for learning and try to break down the barriers of theoretical orientation or educational practice that separate schools from other sites and modalities of learning.

Thus, in our subfield at the moment, many of us are attempting actively to remind ourselves and one another that education is far more than schooling alone – that “learning,” “teaching,” and even “pedagogy” happen everywhere (see, for instance, Varenne (Chapter 4), Erickson (Chapter 2), Tobin and Henward (Chapter 13), Cammarota (Chapter 30), González, Wyman, and O’Connor (Chapter 28)). Baquedano-López and Hernandez (Chapter 12) note that adults’ “language socialization” of youth occurs everywhere, not just in schools (or homes); as they write, anthropologists of language socialization seek to understand “how linguistic and cultural competencies are acquired through routine and moment-to-moment interactions, expanding in this way our understanding of education in its broadest sense.” Alim (Chapter 14) describes how language socialization *of* youth and *by* youth of everyone else occurs via popular media as well as within classrooms. Bartlett *et al.* (Chapter 10) note that “literacy” practices, too, occur throughout everyday life. Relatedly, in Chapter 21 and Chapter 22, respectively, Adely and Starrett and Miñana and Arango all indicate that schools are sites where cultural dramas get enacted particularly forcefully and explicitly. Issues of “diversity,” gender, or religion get played out in schools because they are key sites for controlling young people and thus shaping the future of communities, but not because schools are the only place where these pervasive issues exist. Schools are simply containers and conveyors for culture, period.

CORE TENSION: GROUP CLAIMS VERSUS ANALYSES OF THE COMPLEXITY WITHIN GROUPS

Which claims about “groups” are warranted, and which are oversimplifications or even stereotypes? This question has been core to anthropology for decades. It has played out particularly heatedly in the anthropology of education, since many (but not all) of us study schools, and schools are themselves locations where simplistic ideas about “types of people” get reified (Pollock (ed.), 2008; see especially Díaz and Jiménez (Chapter 24)). Analyses of how elders raise young people are also ripe for oversimplified or stereotypical representations of how “cultures” reproduce themselves (for commentary, see McDermott and Raley (Chapter 3), and Erickson (Chapter 2)).

Indeed, many outsiders assume that anthropologists of education ourselves promote simplified analyses of how different “groups” interact with schools, approach

“achievement,” and “achieve.” Chapters in this volume, however, demonstrate our more nuanced analysis. Dietz and Mateos (Chapter 29) observe how a politics of identity that gave rise to the “multiculturalism” movement, subsequently institutionalized in educational programs worldwide, runs the risk of essentializing presumed racial and ethnic differences. They counsel us as anthropologists to avoid falling prey to such categorical identities in our work, and they propose an intercultural methodology for navigating difference with more nuance. González, Wyman, and O’Connor (Chapter 28) note how the “Funds of Knowledge” approach, designed to send teachers directly to children’s homes to appreciate and learn from the complexity and wisdom there, ironically has been used in the education field to justify simplified analyses of groups’ “home lives” for curricular inclusion. They make a call to reclaim the “Funds” project for truly nuanced analyses of actual home lives – in a sense, reclaiming the original ethnographic project of “Funds.” Gibson and Koyama (Chapter 23) indicate what a nuanced analysis of immigrants’ experiences in US school settings can look like. The experiences and behaviors of immigrants are too varied to simplistically “type” by immigrant “group,” as some have done in the past in our field (and continue to do in the field of “education”). At the same time, some key ways of navigating the immigration experience can be analyzed and named, even if such behaviors are distributed widely across varied “groups.” In Chapter 20, Fong and Kim ask perhaps most directly: Which claims can really be made about a shared “Chinese” culture or cultural stance toward “education” and childrearing worldwide? Which claims should be made only about the particularities of specific members of Chinese or Chinese-descent populations in particular places and historical periods? Again, ethnography can find patterns in everyday life without stereotyping, and anthropologists of education have a particular responsibility to keep asking and showing how this can be done.

CORE TENSION: DISTRIBUTED VERSUS FOCUSED ATTENTION TO VARIOUS ASPECTS OF DIFFERENCE

In producing this book, we made some strategic decisions about the classic question of whether to separate attention to dynamics of “gender” or “class” or “race” or “nation” into separate chapters, or to distribute attention to those central concerns throughout the book. We went with the latter because it better reflected our authors’ work, which examines such dynamics across varying domains. For example, Alim’s take on Hip Hop (Chapter 14) demonstrates that young people who are typed as members of “races” circulate texts across lines of nation, struggle with received and chosen identity categories, navigate the use of multiple languages, and live complicated lives in which racialized experiences are often, but not always, central. Rather than organize their chapter analyses around codifying “Latino” or “Latin American” experiences in “education,” for another example, authors embedded complex considerations of Latino and Latin American participants’ lives in analyses of participatory research (Cammarota (Chapter 30)), parent–school relationships (Hurtig and Dyrness (Chapter 31)), language socialization (Baquedano-López and Hernandez (Chapter 12)), policy activism (Valenzuela, Lopez, and García (Chapter 32)), immigration (Gibson and Koyama (Chapter 23)), and post-colonial migration, in settings where no

“national origin” group from Latin America acts as expected (Díaz and Jiménez (Chapter 24)). We similarly considered it better to distribute an attention to gender throughout the volume (e.g., in Adely and Starrett’s chapter on education in the Middle East (Chapter 22), in Shumar and Mir’s chapter on higher education (Chapter 26), or in Jewett and Schultz’s chapter on teachers (Chapter 25); cf. Hurtig and Dyrness (Chapter 31)), even while we also believe that focused attention to specific dynamics of difference in some pieces (e.g., Foley on “class” (Chapter 6)) offers important insights.

This tension (focusing or isolating attention to specific forms of difference and inequality, or distributing that attention) is central to the field of education itself. Indeed, it suffuses the course catalog in nearly every institution of higher education in which we work. In the end, we believe it is more commensurate with human experience to have analysis of various negotiations over difference and inequality distributed throughout the book, rather than isolated in single pieces.

Authors distributed the globe, too, throughout this book, rather than capturing single regions or nations solely in single chapters. Appropriately, our authors themselves come from around the globe. As Kathryn Anderson-Levitt makes very clear in her opening chapter, the anthropology of education has a worldwide purview. In this volume, we attempt to take stock of this purview, and include authors who represent multiple national traditions. Yet we also recognize that our view of the field still remains somewhat parochial, and strongly rooted in the anthropology of education where it developed earliest and most broadly: in the United States. The reasons for this are both pragmatic and personal: this is where our professional networks are strongest (we drew heavily from the Council on Anthropology of Education, a unit of the American Anthropological Association), and this is also where a Companion volume on the field will get most use in graduate education. (Also influencing our choice of authors, topics, and regions to cover was the knowledge that Anderson-Levitt’s own book, *Anthropologies of Education*, was well into production. Knowing its contents, we see that book as a kind of complementary volume to our Companion, and together they provide a more comprehensive global view of the field.)

CORE TENSION: “EDUCATION” AS DEVELOPMENT VERSUS EDUCATION AS DOMINATION

Work in our subfield has also engaged the core tension between a view of education as developing – and even liberating – the modern citizen and his or her full potential, and a view of education (particularly schooling) as a tool of state or capitalist control, inculcation, and domination. As Levinson notes in Chapter 17, states and their associated policy elites may develop and reform schooling systems to prepare young people as docile, conforming workers for a global economy, or as “citizens” for robust democratic “participation.” Chapters in this volume by Benei (Chapter 16), and Miñana and Arango (Chapter 22), suggest how public education systems in India and Colombia, respectively, inculcate strong nationalist sentiment or neo-liberal subjectivities. The chapters by Anderson-Levitt (Chapter 1), Rockwell (Chapter 5), and Stambach and

Ngwane (Chapter 18) show a more ambiguous landscape, in which the goals of personal/social development and superordinate domination are interwoven in complex ways in national education systems.

Relatedly, different chapters in the book confront another routine paradox: “education” (in schools and throughout everyday life) can be at once an effort to enforce cultural continuity, *and* an effort to promote cultural change (Levinson, 2000). For example, McCarty and Warhol (Chapter 11) discuss the challenge of creating “innovative” curriculum and pedagogy to “conserve” Indigenous languages, and Hurtig and Dyrness (Chapter 31) discuss the challenge of working with Latina mothers to develop “new” writing skills to publicly validate existing ways of mothering.

CORE TENSION: ADVOCACY VERSUS SCIENCE

Perhaps because we pay attention to young people more than do scholars in many other fields, anthropologists of education have often been particularly committed to challenging dynamics of inequality that harm young people and their families (for a critique of research that explicitly challenges social injustice, however, see Wolcott (Chapter 7)). Some of us use ethnography to become explicit, unapologetic advocates for improvements to children’s lives (e.g., see the policy work of Lopez, Valenzuela, and García (Chapter 32)). Some of us are committed to supporting research participants to clarify and critique the circumstances of their own lives (Hurtig and Dyrness (Chapter 31), Schensul (Chapter 8), and Cammarota (Chapter 30)). In the tradition of Mead (1961), Henry (1963), and others, many of us are explicitly committed to making social critique as we do research, because the lives we join and analyze are themselves plagued by deep social problems and inequalities.

At the same time, anthropologists of education remain committed to analysis that is accurate and empirically grounded; none of us recommend “advocacy” without evidence. We seek ethnographic evidence that helps us to understand “educational” forces and experiences better, and to understand the conditions and forces that structure everyday lives; at times, we propose possible remedies to experiences that seem to participants to be harmful. In doing so, we – like other anthropologists – indeed tend to plant our flags in favor of human experiences that satisfy those living them.

Having identified some of the general commitments and tensions that bind us together, we now invite you into the vibrant conversation that keeps our field alive. There are many different ways to read across these chapters, but whichever way you choose as reader, we feel certain that this work will stimulate a broader conversation about how anthropologists can examine and improve “education.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our authors and one another for being patient throughout this editing process, which took place over a particularly hectic period in our own careers. We also thank more senior authors for honoring our request to include junior co-authors; we believe the authorship of this book represents an importantly

intergenerational slice of our field. Yet of course, any large edited project of this sort always in the end offers just a certain slice of what might or could have been. Over the course of the last two years, we have invited a number of scholars in our field who, for a variety of their own reasons, could not contribute in the end. There were others not invited at the outset only because of original length constraints or expectations that related work would get “covered.” We would like to acknowledge even non-authors’ sincere interest and input in this project. For example, though the following invited authors in the end did not author chapters, the influence of their work is abundantly on display throughout: Bryan Brayboy, Shirley Brice Heath, Silvia Carrasco, Serafin Coronel-Molina, Margaret Eisenhart, Signithia Fordham, Michele Foster, Judith Green, Linda Herrera, Dorothy Holland, Rodney Hopson and Jackie Carson Copeland, Nancy Hornberger, Mizuko Ito, Jean Lave, Carol Lee and Yolanda Majors, Ritty Lukose, Hugh Mehan, Nobuo Shimahara, Brian Street, Susan Wright ... and more!

We would also like to thank the good number of CAE members who attended our special session at the American Anthropological Association Meetings in San Francisco, November 2008, in which we first sought input for how to structure this volume and whom to invite as contributors. Many CAE members submitted written suggestions at that session, and many more emailed us after a call seeking influential work was put out through the CAE listserv. We hope that the volume represents an adequate consideration of that input.

Thanks go to Julia Kirk and Rosalie Robertson at Wiley-Blackwell for shepherding this big project through its many stages, and for bearing with us when we went well beyond the scheduled delivery date. Finally, we would like to thank our spouses and young children for bearing with us throughout the process. They can blame our colleagues for the many ideas that kept us busy.

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PART I

**Histories
and Generations**

CHAPTER

I

World Anthropologies of Education

Kathryn M. Anderson-Levitt

There is more than one tradition of anthropology and education, or more broadly of the ethnography of education, around the world. As the anthropology of education emerged in the 1950s in the United States, parallel literatures began to appear in Brazil and in Argentina (Gomes and Gomes, in press; Neufeld, in press). In the 1970s, when the US field was blossoming, ethnography of education likewise grew in popularity in Japan and in the United Kingdom (Delamont and Atkinson, 1995; Minoura, in press). Today, there is a Commission on Anthropology of Education within the German Educational Research Association (Wulf, in press), and the single largest concentration of anthropologists of education in any one institution may be the group of nine or more anthropologists in the Danish School of Education in Copenhagen (Anderson, Gulløv, and Valentin, in press).

Yet scholarship that is not produced in the United States or the United Kingdom is often little known outside its own language zone and, even when published in or translated into English, may not be widely read outside its own region, or its significance appreciated. Indeed, US scholars demonstrate only shallow familiarity even with British scholarship (Delamont and Atkinson, 1995). Within the volume you are reading at the moment, although the editors have embraced international perspectives, less than 20 percent of the chapters are written by authors employed outside the United States.

This chapter alerts readers to the need to become familiar with world literatures in anthropologies of education and ethnographies of education. The “invisibility” of the scholarship that takes place beyond one’s borders might not matter if it were merely an extension of familiar research programs into other national settings or language zones. However, although there is arguably a family resemblance (van Zanten, in press),

worldwide anthropologies and ethnographies of education vary enough in intellectual focus to merit the attention of English-language readers. For instance, some “pedagogical anthropology” in Germany, with its emphasis on human universals, strikes US readers as more akin to philosophy than to the anthropology they know. Scandinavian anthropologists pose questions about children’s lives in groups that are quite unlike the questions US scholars pose about identity and participation. The Mexican literature pays proportionately more attention to teachers than does the US literature, while in France both anthropologists and sociologists focus more frequently on higher education as a topic than do their US counterparts. Much of the extensive literature in Japan examines schools seen by the locals as ordinary and unproblematic, illustrating by contrast how much US scholars have been drawn to the story of failing students and schools.

Literatures on the anthropology of education outside the English language zone not only offer a diversity of perspectives, but are simply too vast to ignore. Admittedly, US and British publishing dominates academia; the majority of academic journals on the subject of education – about 5000 of them – publish articles or at least abstracts in English. Nonetheless, there are another 3000 academic journals on the subject of education that do *not* publish so much as an abstract in English (analysis based on Ulrich’s *Periodicals Directory*, 2009). Or to use another indicator less constrained by the international pressure on academics to publish in English, there are articles on words glossed as “education” in 85 languages other than English in the collection of non-English language Wikipedias on the web (analysis based on Wikipedia, 2010).

Even as English appears increasingly to dominate academic discourse, many academic disciplines have recently renewed their interest in cross-national exchange and translation. In 2005, scholars from Brazil, Japan, and other countries founded the World Council of Anthropological Associations, an association of associations that includes the American Anthropological Association and also the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES), an organization of individual scholars with roots in an earlier era of internationalism (Ribeiro, 2005). There have also been recent efforts at translating anthropologies across national and linguistic borders (such as Barth *et al.*, 2005; Boškovic and Ericksen, 2008; Dracklé, Edgar, and Schippers, 2003; Ribeiro and Escobar, 2006). Meanwhile, in the realm of educational research, 2009 saw the founding of the World Educational Research Association, another association of associations (AERA, 2009).

World literatures should interest us not only for intellectual reasons but also out of concern for equity. The US and British publishing industry dominates scholarship far out of proportion to the number of world English speakers, and in ways that arbitrarily constrict the global flow of knowledge. Decisions made by the keepers of bibliographical databases in the United States, such as ERIC and Thomson ISI, can affect tenuring decisions outside the United States and can render research invisible even within the researcher’s home country (Larsson, 2006: 192). Universities in Europe increasingly use English as a language of instruction, as is already common in Anglophone Africa, and as a result publishers of English-language textbooks see increased profits, while students’ ability to discuss scientific concepts in their maternal languages diminishes (Brock-Utne, 2001, 2007). Scholars from outside the English-language zone use shorthand labels to refer to US and British dominance in academia and publishing, calling it “the Anglophone world” (Boškovic and Ericksen, 2008: 10) or the “Anglo-Saxon world” (as in Meunier,

2007; Schriewer, 2009), even though the latter term would startle if not offend anyone who identifies as emphatically not Anglo-Saxon, and even though both terms collapse important differences between US and British scholarship while ignoring significant English-language publishing in places like India (cf. Hannerz, 2008).

This chapter will outline some of the barriers to the free global flow of ideas within anthropologies of education. It will consider the borders created by language zones – regions that share a common language usually because of former colonial relationships. It will note other regional variations that transcend language differences, including the difference between the global North and the global South. It will also consider national differences shaped by each country’s unique history and social organization. The chapter will not attempt to survey the literatures nor to map every region and language zone, as we attempt in a forthcoming volume (Anderson-Levitt, in press). Rather, it will simply draw on chapters in that volume and on a number of collections and published literature reviews (e.g., Batallán, 1998; Jociles, 2007; Larsson, 2006; Maclure, 1997; Osborne, 1996; Rockwell, 1998; Rockwell and Gomes, 2009; Souza Lima, 1995) to illustrate how anthropologies of education vary around the world, and why this matters.

In spite of the focus of this volume as a whole on anthropology, this chapter includes ethnographers of education who do not identify themselves as anthropologists. It does so in part because the definition of academic disciplines varies across nations, as we shall see, and partly because certain non-anthropologists (such as Paul Willis, Hugh Mehan, and Michelle Fine) have greatly influenced anthropology of education. However, it does so also because many non-anthropological ethnographers define ethnography more or less as anthropologists would. Thus, the editors of the British-based journal *Ethnography of Education* refer to ethnography as “long-term engagement with those studied in order to understand their cultures” (Troman, 2010), echoing anthropologist Harry Wolcott’s formulation that “the purpose of ethnographic research is to describe and interpret cultural behavior” (1987: 42–43). To rule out ethnographers on the basis of their disciplinary affiliation would have been premature in this initial scan of work around the world.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND EDUCATION IN TRANSLATION

Of course, this chapter would not be possible were there not some communication among scholars around the world, or at least the means for establishing it. Books and articles do get distributed beyond their home countries, the web and email make texts much more widely available, and some scholars are privileged to attend international conferences. Scholars also move from country to country in an international job market, sometimes making it difficult to make a claim about which scholars “belong” to which part of the world. (For the purposes of this chapter, I consider scholars to belong to the country of the institution in which they currently work, regardless of their original nationality, first language, or early training, on the assumption that expectations of their place of employment tend to shape the topics and form of their publications.) Nonetheless, there are barriers to the flow of scholarly knowledge, and the first of these is the linguistic barrier.

The very task of defining “education” reveals the challenges of crossing linguistic boundaries; there is no one-to-one correspondence among terms across languages. Anthropologists of education in different parts of the world seem to agree on a broad definition of our object of study, “education,” as all deliberate and systematic interventions in learning, whether the intervention takes place in schools, at home, or in other settings (as Hansen defined it in the United States, 1979: 28). However, although Danes usually translate the English word “education” as *uddannelse*, the term *uddannelse* misses the focus on personal development denoted by another Danish word, *dannelse*, much like the German term, *Bildung*, and by the French terms *éducation* and *formation* (Anderson, 2009). Therefore, rather than labeling educational anthropology with the literal translation *uddannelsesantropologi*, Danish scholars increasingly call it “pedagogical anthropology” (as do German anthropologists of education; Wulf and Zirfas, 1994). In English, “pedagogy” is an old-fashioned term for teaching methods, but in Danish the word connotes “moral, social and cultural formation of educated persons” (Anderson, Gulløv, and Valentin, in press). As we shall see in the following section, the word “anthropology” likewise challenges easy translation.

More generally, the organization of the world into languages makes some scholarship invisible outside its language zone. For example, much of the copious literature of Japan is never translated and therefore not read and cited outside Japan (Minoura, in press). Linguistic barriers may even divide single nations: Belgium and Switzerland each have two different faces, one directed toward the United States, the United Kingdom and perhaps toward Germany, the other toward the Francophone world.

Translation is a partial solution, but translations flow asymmetrically; the prestige or power of a language can trump geographic proximity. For example, although France borders Germany, French publishers translate from English six times more often than they translate from German, just as Germany translates six times more often from English than from French (analysis of data from UNESCO, 2010). In general, translations flow from world centers, particularly from the English-language “super-center,” to the periphery, and not nearly so often in the other direction. Since 1932, over a million books have been translated from English into other languages, but only about 116,000 from other languages into English, whereas for most other languages, there is more import than export of translations (UNESCO, 2010; compare Heilbron, 1999). Thus, scholars who are monolingual in English experience the largest “blind-spot” vis-à-vis literatures originating outside their language zone.

Translating more works into English would help to remedy this great asymmetry. However, translation alone cannot guarantee that the new readers will understand and appreciate a work. Even when linguistic barriers are overcome, ideas can be lost in translation. One reason is that conventions of writing unfamiliar to an audience can obscure the significance of the work (e.g., see Uribe, 1997). For example, because of different conventions for scholarly writing, to European and Latin American readers US anthropology of education may seem to lack sufficient theoretical grounding, while to US readers European and Latin American work may seem overly theoretical and to lack empirical findings and discussion of research methods. As a result, each set of scholars may fail to take the other seriously.

DISCIPLINARY ROOTS AND ALLIED DISCIPLINES

Anthropologies and ethnographies of education vary not only because of language, but also because they have evolved from multiple disciplinary sources and, hence, refer to different canons of literature and different constructions of key research topics. The term “anthropology” itself actually points to a whole family of disciplines. In the United States and the United Kingdom, it includes the study of human beings in biological as well as social and cultural terms, although few anthropologists take the opportunity to pursue the implications of human learners as primates (Herzog, 1984).

Even anthropology understood strictly as a social science includes different threads of research, each expressed in a different kind of anthropology of education. To take an example quite different from US anthropology of education, cultural historical anthropology of education evolved in Germany in reaction to philosophical anthropology, which asked how humans differ from animals or from machines, and examined culture in general rather than specific cultures. German anthropology of education also draws on the history of mentalities from France, and on US anthropology’s cultural relativism, but the original philosophical interests are still faintly visible in its deep exploration of everyday learning as a process of mimesis accomplished through ritual and performance (Wulf, 2002, *in press*). Philosophical anthropology of education can also be found in Poland, Spain, and Italy.

In contrast, an anthropology of learning that emphasizes social and cultural context – a line of inquiry once associated with culture and personality theory and psychological anthropology in the United States – is prominent in different form in countries like Mexico and Spain. It is allied with an international community that has built cultural historical activity theory on the early insights of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (ISCAR, 2009; Souza Lima, 1995). Meanwhile, an anthropology of the institution of schooling, which has roots in social and cultural anthropology, dominates in countries like the United States.

In many countries of Europe the term “ethnology” refers not to a science of culture built on comparative work, as it does in the United States, but to the study of people in one’s home country, especially of people culturally and linguistically distinct from the ethnologist – a research thread that grew out of folklore and museum studies. To this day, ethnology of education in Central Europe focuses heavily on Roma populations and rarely examines mainstream schooling or topics such as the political anthropology of schooling, according to one of its reviewers (Eröss, *in press*). Meanwhile, ethnology in France has evolved from the study of peasants into an anthropology of France that is institutionally quite separate from mainstream French anthropology, and which has generated studies of cultural transmission outside of school (e.g., Delbos and Jorion, 1984) and, very recently, of schooling (Filiod, 2007).

However, as noted above, not all ethnography of education originated in anthropology or ethnology. In France, reacting against the over-determinism of quantitative sociology, qualitative sociologists use ethnographic methods to explore the strategies of parents, students, and other actors (Raveaud and Draelants, *in press*). They have

been influenced more greatly by the Chicago School of sociology than by US anthropology of education (Duru-Bellat and van Zanten, 2006); moreover, they have had only occasional interaction with the handful of French ethnologists and anthropologists who study education. In Britain, those early educational ethnographers who were actually trained in social anthropology, as were Sara Delamont (at Edinburgh) and Colin Lacey (at Manchester, in the combined sociology and social anthropology department), did not find a disciplinary home in anthropology and hence do not self-identify as anthropologists (Delamont, in press). Many of their fellow ethnographers were educated in educational sciences or in sociology, with a focus on symbolic interaction, Marxist critique, or feminist critique.

In other countries, the ethnography of education tends to be affiliated with yet other disciplines. In Japan, it appeals to educational psychologists as well as to sociologists (Minoura, in press). In Italy and the Netherlands, we see it used in the service of intercultural education (e.g., Gobbo, in press). In Mexico and Argentina, there is a strong connection to the broader discipline of anthropology and, as in Germany, anthropologists of education are also attracted to a historical approach.

Not only do authors in each strand tend to cite distinct bodies of literature but, as suggested for the German case and for ethnologists of education in Central Europe, they are sometimes drawn to distinct research themes – a topic to which I will return.

RESEARCH: METHODS AND OBSTACLES

When they conduct research, ethnographers of education everywhere use participant observation and open-ended interviewing to capture the perspectives and practices of local participants, more or less explicitly in pursuit of cultural description (e.g., Beach *et al.*, 2004). The participant-observation is usually of long duration, although lack of time and resources can require “condensed fieldwork,” particularly in the global South (Crossley and Vulliamy, 1997). However, more specific research techniques vary. Scholars in West Africa are open to combining ethnographic methods with quantitative methods, often in work conducted by research teams (Diallo, in press). In Israel, some ethnographers define ethnography loosely to encompass a wide array of narrative and qualitative methods (Shlasky, Alpert, and Sabar Ben-Yeshoshua, in press). There also seems to be particular interest in practitioner research or action research in West Africa and Brazil (Diallo, in press; Gomes and Gomes, in press).

Ethnographers in some parts of the world face obstacles to doing research that would surprise most US or Western European scholars. Some state regimes have seen ethnographic research as threatening and have severely discouraged its use. Batallán (1998) observes that ethnography of education could not have developed under the former authoritarian regimes of Chile and Argentina (see also Neufeld, in press). Ethnography may have been similarly perceived as a threat in China (Ouyang, in press). Meanwhile, in parts of the world with poorly funded university systems, economic constraints make it difficult to carry out ethnography – or almost any empirical field research.

RESEARCH THEMES SHAPED BY CANONS, CONTEXT, AND PLACE IN THE WORLD ECONOMY

Ideas get lost in translation not only because of rhetorical conventions, but also because outside readers do not grasp the significance of the translated scholarship. They may not find the subject matter relevant because it does not correspond to research questions perceived as central in their own academic setting. This section points out some of the reasons why the most common research themes vary from place to place.

Often a research theme makes sense in the context of ongoing local conversations on particular topics. By virtue of who has trained whom, who sees whom in face-to-face meetings, who can publish easily in which venues, and who is reading whom, scholars tend to engage in research conversations with a particular group of colleagues, and their writing makes reference to those local conversations. Such conversations may point to different canons of literature that grow from historically different disciplinary roots, as noted above. Language barriers and persisting difficulties of accessing literature from other parts of the world also channel scholars into certain conversations and not others, as also noted above. As a result, for the handful of scholars who gain an international audience beyond their original publications in languages like French, German, Russian, or Portuguese, their translated work is read outside the context of the research and debates within the home country that shaped it (Larsson, 2006: 191).

As an example, the question of how human beings learn, which was originally of interest to psychological anthropologists and now to cognitive anthropologists in the United States, attracts a surprisingly small amount of attention among US anthropologists of education (for a call to arms, see Varenne, Chapter 4, below). However, it is studied in Germany, as noted above, because of the disciplinary roots of Germany's pedagogical anthropology. Learning is also a topic of great interest within the international network of scholars working on cultural historical activity theory, who carry on a conversation distinct from the mainstream of educational anthropology that crosses many national boundaries, but which seems to be particularly prominent in countries such as Spain, Mexico, and Brazil (ISCAR, 2009).

Another example is the study of schooling that local participants take to be ordinary or reasonably successful. Ethnographic work in Japan, particularly among sociologists and psychologists, often describes the kind of schooling that local participants take as the implicit norm (Minoura, in press). This is generally public schooling that serves the middle-class, urban, ethnically Japanese population – the unmarked case – as opposed to schools perceived as failing or as serving mainly under-represented students. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, where much of the ethnographic work is conducted by sociologists, the unmarked case of schooling taken as normal is an important topic of research (Delamont and Atkinson, 1995).

Research themes also vary because of the distinctive historical, social, and political contexts of different nations. It is hardly surprising, for example, that in countries of conquest like Canada and the United States, anthropology of education has always included a focus on Indigenous education. There is a similar interest in Indigenous

populations in Mexico and Chile, other countries of conquest. Given the peculiar history of slavery in the United States, it is likewise not surprising that racial differences and racism preoccupy its researchers. Canada and the United States are also countries of massive immigration, and that is one explanation for the enormous interest in differences between school culture and home culture in these countries. Not by chance, the ethnography of education in France, the Netherlands, Italy, and Central Europe has shown increased interest in immigrants as the number of immigrants to Europe rises (e.g., Gobbo, in press; Eröss, in press). In several parts of Europe and now in Japan, intercultural education is a research focus, and the subjects are both indigenous minorities like Roma and new immigrants (Minoura, in press).

US anthropologists of education are so driven by the local political and historical need to alleviate racially and ethnically shaped inequities in the school system that the US literature, seen from the outside, appears to be fixated on the topic of school failure (Delamont and Atkinson, 1995). Thus, a review of articles published by the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* from 1995 to 2005 found that 63% of the articles concerned schooling and, of those, 52%, or 39 articles, addressed success and failure; meanwhile, the 37 articles that were not about schooling tended to address culture and ethnicity, language, and identity (Jacquin, 2006). In contrast, research on social class, gender, and rural–urban inequities is less abundant in the United States, as is research on schooling that is perceived by the locals as serving mainstream populations.

The example of Denmark and other Scandinavian countries illustrates a different common theme shaped by a different political and historical framework. In the context of social welfare states concerned with the provision of “good childhoods” and socially safe environments for growing moral human beings, pedagogical anthropology in Scandinavia takes as its topic not schooling per se but rather the lives of children and youth (Anderson, Gulløv, and Valentin, in press). It is only because “over 90 percent of all children between age 2 and 15 attend state-funded nurseries, kindergartens, schools, after-school centers, youth clubs and state-subsidized sport associations” that the ethnography of children leads to studies of life in schools and other institutions (Anderson, 2009: 3). The Danish focus is on integration into the group rather than on academic success and failure.

The place of a country in the world economy also results in variation in common research themes. Whereas in the United States and Europe, educational literature sometimes compares schools to oppressive places like factories or prisons, in the global South – for instance, in Mexico – public schools can sometimes be seen as a liberating force that offers a relatively equalizing experience in the context of strong gender, class, and ethnic distinctions outside school (Rockwell, 1998, although schooling for indigenous students is viewed with less enthusiasm in Rockwell and Gomes, 2009). Given the difference in perspective, readers from the global North might mistakenly interpret approaches from the global South as naive, while scholars from the South might find literature from the North too jaded.

Meanwhile, in the global South, economic constraints make it difficult to carry out ethnography, and local ethnographers must often rely on international donors for funding. In west and central Africa, for example, international donors tend to control research topics since they fund almost all scholarship except for master’s theses.

Because of donor interest, research in west and central Africa focuses much more heavily on gender disparities than does the anthropology of education in North America or almost anywhere else (Diallo, in press).

Finally, position in the world economy seems to influence how much scholars conduct comparative research outside their home country. Whereas anthropologists from much of the global North, have historically gone “abroad” more often than conducting research at “home,” ethnographers of education more typically conduct research “at home.” However, in certain countries a significant minority of ethnographers of education conduct studies outside their home countries. In general, it is in countries of the global North with a history either of colonialism or of international aid in which one finds some ethnographers of education studying learning or schooling abroad; this includes the United States, Japan, the Scandinavian countries and, to a limited extent, the United Kingdom and France.

LESSONS

Across many parts of the world, scholars conduct anthropologically or sociologically informed ethnographic studies of learning and of schooling. These studies are similar enough that we can identify, if not a common subdiscipline, at least a set of family resemblances (van Zanten, in press). The family resemblances include a commitment to analyzing issues in local context, to grasping the meaning made by local participants, and to conducting relatively long-term participant observation to gain those insights. The researchers in question tend to offer social and cultural explanations rather than purely psychological analyses, and many of them, aware of the misuse of the culture concept to reinforce stereotypes, offer sophisticated concepts of culture as a dynamic and creative process (e.g., Neufeld and Thisted, 1998; Rockwell, 2007).

However, there is enough variation across language zones and regions that we cannot afford to ignore the literatures beyond our local boundaries. One reason is that, because languages of publication vary, anthropologies of education in different parts of the globe offer terminology and metaphors that may not translate easily into our home language, for instance, *el trabajo docente* (“the work of teaching,” Rockwell and González, in press) or *dannelse* or *Bildung* (“education with a focus on personal development”). We thus have much to learn from fresh definitions and fresh concepts. Another reason is that, because specific research techniques vary, we can look to other people’s anthropologies of education for sophisticated models of desirable methods, from narrative inquiry to teacher research. A third reason is that, because common research themes vary, anthropologies of education around the world can suggest research questions that help us break out of conversations that have become too fixated on one way of seeing a problem.

The last point is particularly important. Without the broader comparative perspective, we tend to focus too narrowly on a few nationally relevant questions, such as race and ethnicity in the United States, failing to realize that “the analytic categories used to construct ethnographic texts are not autonomous; they are rooted in the societies in which they are first used, and they reflect actual ways of constructing difference in those societies” (Rockwell, 2002: 3). Dialogue with colleagues doing related but not

identical kinds of work in other parts of the world can make us aware of our own taken-for-granted paradigms and can provoke us to ask questions we had not previously thought of asking. For example, would more emphasis on what local participants take to be normal, unproblematic schooling provide Americans with fresh models, or solutions, or templates for providing quality education for all? Meanwhile, would more attention to ethnicity or “race” be salutary in Germany? Would it be useful in France or the United States or China to reflect more on school as liberating? Would it meanwhile behoove educators in west Africa to beware the oppressive side of schooling?

Besides raising questions about the subdiscipline, this chapter also raises questions of broader significance to the study of academic disciplines, higher education, and the flow of academic knowledge in general. Further study of who cites whom and of how ideas get transformed as they cross borders would raise our self-consciousness about our own enterprise as scholars and teachers.

This chapter underlines the need for several practical steps to improve communication across linguistic and economic barriers. Beyond the need to translate more work into English, I would emphasize the importance of requiring doctoral students to establish a reading knowledge of at least one language besides English, and to demonstrate that knowledge by making use of relevant literature published in that language, because there will always be research that does not get translated. We should learn and ask our students to learn to consult on-line research reports and reviews such as the open access *Reseñas Educativas/Resenhas Educativas*, edited by Gustavo Fischman, for books in Spanish and Portuguese (edrev.info/indexs.html); Spain’s open access database to research articles, “Summarios ISOC, Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades” (bddoc.csic.es:8080/isoc.html); France’s open access link to journal articles (revues.org); and the English-language *Japanese Review of Cultural Anthropology* (indexed at www.soc.nii.ac.jp/jasca/publication-e/frame-e.html). As suggested at an open editorial forum on “Transnationalizing Scholarly Communication” at the 2009 meeting of the American Anthropological Association, we should recruit truly international editorial boards for journals and book series, and could practice the occasional acceptance of articles reviewed by panels of reviewers from the author’s home country rather than by the journal’s regular reviewers. Publication of reviews of the literatures from many regions and language zones on a regular basis, as the journal *Current Anthropology* used to do, would also be helpful. Finally, equitable indexing of articles and books in multiple languages will become even more important as multilingual bodies of literature burgeon. Anthropologists of education need to work with librarians and scholarly organizations to develop search engines and indexes that can help scholars find their way through an increasingly vast world literature (Brenneis, 2009). Ultimately, the most effective way to translate ideas across borders may be to form transnational research teams (Victor Zúniga González, personal communication), but not all scholars will find the resources to conduct such studies.

There is no reason to fear that increased dialogue will lead to homogenization or to any more dominance by English speakers than exists already. Even as scholars share ideas, diversity regularly reappears, for when the “same” idea is adopted in a new setting, local users adapt its meanings and applications. Scholars “creolize” imported knowledge (Hannerz, 1987). For example, Ouyang reports how he has combined his

US sociolinguistics and anthropology of education training with Chinese sociology of societal transformation, Chinese psychology, Chinese politics, and Chinese educational reform history (in press). In the same manner, scholars in Mexico, Brazil, and the Netherlands borrow from the United States and the United Kingdom and creolize what they borrow to create new approaches and novel analyses. UK and US scholars creolize imported concepts, too, such as Bourdieu's ideas from France, Freire's from Brazil, and Vygotsky's and his colleagues' from Russia. Rather than leading to homogenization, increased dialogue promises fresh ideas imported and adapted creatively into English-language anthropology and ethnography of education.

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CHAPTER 2

Culture

Frederick Erickson

“Culture,” as a Western social scientific concept, developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since then it has had a variety of meanings – in the early 1950s Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) surveyed the social science literature and identified 164 different definitions of the term, with special focus on its meanings in the field of anthropology. This chapter will review broadly some developments in culture theory that have taken place since the 1950s, as well as discussing the special attention to the learning and teaching of culture that has been characteristic of the subfield of anthropology of education within the broader field of anthropology. The chapter will also touch briefly on certain everyday uses of the term “culture” by professional educators and in educational policy discourse – uses that make “culture” an invidious label. That is, to remind us that “culture” is still a term that has different meanings for differing audiences; some of the meanings can be useful and some can be dangerous. In consequence “culture” is a word that needs to be used with care.

The basic contrast term for “culture” is “nature.” The term culture originally referred to human activity that transformed the state of nature in the physical world, as in agriculture, or viniculture. Culture, as currently conceived, refers both to patterning in human activity and to the beliefs and standards of judgment by which social action has meaning for social actors. Culture can appropriately be considered as “the organization of people’s everyday interactions in concrete contexts” (Pollock, 2008: 369).

Previously, culture has also been thought of as a transformation of a presumed state of nature in human activity, that is, as the “cultivation” or refinement of knowledge and skill in the fine arts and literature, and manners that were acquired through learning. Culture, in the sense of “high culture,” resided in the museums, the concert halls and theaters, the libraries, and the drawing rooms of polite Western European society. In the late eighteenth century, European elites began to recognize the customs of ordinary

people as being artful, manifesting intelligence and skill. As the Early Romantic era began, culture moved locations, as it were, out of the concert hall and drawing room into the villages of peasants and fishermen. The rise of European nationalism further supported the interests of formally educated people in the folklore and folklife of those without formal education.

From the sixteenth century Europeans experienced increasing contact with a wide range of peoples around the world whose lifeways were very different from their own. This awareness expanded further in the mid-nineteenth century as there was rapid imperialist expansion from Europe and North America. Indigenous peoples, speaking very different languages from European ones, were ruled by colonial authorities, and it was apparent that their everyday conduct and world views differed from those of Europeans. There was a growing awareness among colonial officers and the Euro-American ruling class that if their empires were to be able to rule those “others” successfully, the Europeans needed a better understanding of the others.

Initially, the explanation for differences in lifeways was racial (see Smedley, 2007). National differences in Europe had been explained in racial terms, for example, the Teutonic race of Germany as distinct from the French race, and the Irish/Celtic race as distinct from the Anglo-Saxon race of England. It was believed that differences in behavior and belief were inherited biologically, arising as if from “blood and soil,” and this assumption was generalized from “races” in Europe to “races” around the world. There was an assumption of hierarchy in this: with the more evolved lifeways and beliefs of Europeans at the top, and the less evolved ways of sub-Saharan Africans, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders at the bottom.

An alternative to the racial explanation for difference in lifeways began to develop. This was the notion that customary patterns of action were transmitted across generations among humans by learning rather than by biological inheritance. Humans *learned to be human*, it was argued, by learning the lifeways immediately around them. Culture – as the “curriculum” of what was learned – came to be seen as a complex, internally integrated system, as in the English anthropologist E.B. Tylor’s portmanteau definition, set forth in 1871 in his monograph titled *Primitive Culture*: “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871: 1).

Tylor’s use of “acquired” in his definition implies that people learned to be human, developing differing habitual lifeways in the differing circumstances of everyday life. Acquisition was by means of learning and teaching, deliberate and non-deliberate, in families, communities, and workplaces, in traditional pre-modern societies, as well as in modern societies. In its broad reach, Tylor’s definition included formal schooling as a site of cultural acquisition in addition to including informal educational settings. Anthropologists, to the extent that they focus on processes of cultural acquisition, have tended to do so by paying special attention to informal educational settings. The subfield of anthropology of education has considered both informal and formal educational settings, with some anthropologists of education concentrating primarily on processes of learning and teaching outside schools, and others concentrating on processes of learning and teaching inside schools. In the latter case, anthropologists of education have tended to focus on implicit as well as explicit teaching of values, beliefs, and communication styles, and on the explicit teaching of subject matter. That multidimensional emphasis—

not only on subject matter, the “manifest curriculum,” but on Tylor’s “other capabilities and habits,” the “hidden curriculum” and the unintended consequences of instruction—is one of the features of research on schooling as done by anthropologists of education that distinguishes their approach from much of that which has been done by psychologically or sociologically oriented researchers who study schools and learning.

The conception of culture as universal among humans was further developed by Franz Boas and his students. They had the explicit aim of countering racial explanations for variation in human behavior. Culture was “superorganic” (Kroeber, 1917) rather than being biologically transmitted across generations through genetic inheritance. It was a matter of nurture over nature. If humans learned to be human, then it followed that teaching and learning could be thought of as the primary adaptive specialization of the human species, including the learning and use of complex systems for communicating meanings, all of which enabled the coordination of the efforts of individuals in collective social action. Accompanying this line of thinking was a sense of the “relativity” of cultural systems: one “culture,” was not intrinsically inferior to another, or less evolved, just different.

The learning of culture was seen as being total, that is, it affected and shaped the whole person, influencing the development of personality as well as of intellect and physical skills. What can be considered the first monograph in the anthropology of education, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928), was written by Margaret Mead with the culturally relativist intention of demonstrating cultural influences on temperament at a deep level. She did not find the emotional turmoil among Samoan adolescent girls that was being observed among teenagers in the United States in the post-First World War era.

At this point in American anthropology, the notion of culture combined with a perspective in social theory called functionalism (or structural/functionalism). Functionalists conceived of societies as integrated wholes whose parts complemented one another, with all parts contributing to the shape and maintenance of a particular whole. Social process was seen as being inherently homeostatic, tending toward the maintenance of a steady state. Each society had its own “culture,” that is, culture and society were seen as being coterminous entities.

Another influence on understandings of culture in American anthropology came from the child study movement and Freudian psychology. It was assumed that crucial aspects of cultural patterning happened in early childhood, and cultural transmission across generations occurred quite seamlessly. Studies of child-rearing patterns in relation to adult personality formation became widespread (e.g., Whiting and Child, 1953.) This view of culture provided a plausible counter-explanation to the racial explanations for differing lifeways across societies, and across subgroups within societies. Yet it did not account for cultural conflict within societies, and it did not account for culture change *over time*. Culture change simply amounted to culture loss.

The first crack in this established view appeared shortly after the Second World War in criticism based on differing perspectives in social theory. Proponents of “order theory” (e.g., functionalism) were criticized by proponents of “conflict theory.” Following Marx, conflict theorists saw social process as inherently involving contestation and struggle, with differing interest groups in society competing with one another over scarce resources. They saw functionalism (and cultural relativism) as an implicit apology for oppression in society, overlooking processes of domination or misinterpreting them as homeostatic.

Redfield (1930), for example, produced a functionalist account of everyday life in Tepoztlán, a Mexican village. He portrayed village life as harmonious, with a shared culture that integrated religious and economic activity. Visiting the same site less than 25 years later, Lewis (1952) saw the village as riven by conflict, and individuals as suffering from anxiety. Lewis viewed the village through the lens of conflict theory.

Another impetus for change in how culture was conceived was a growing awareness of diversity in lifeways *within* communities or societies as well as between them. Across differing interest groups in a society – whether along lines of social class, religion, or ethnicity – cultural differences were manifest, that is, a single society’s “culture” was not unitary but was a congeries of subcultures. Also, in the growing movement of feminist scholarship, gender differences in culture became increasingly salient to researchers. It began to appear that cultural difference ran along lines of power in societies, both traditional and modern ones.

In a next phase it became apparent that cultural differences among persons and small groups also existed *within* subgroups, as well as *between* them. Aggregates defined in general “social address” terms – for example, social class, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual preference, religious affiliation – did not necessarily demarcate lines of culture sharing. Not all upper middle-class families shared the same lifeways and values, nor did all families who spoke a particular language or dialect at home that differed from the dominant language of instruction in schools. Generalizations about cultural similarity within social address categories began to be considered as “neo-stereotypes” by some. And fairly early in the process of rethinking the received view of culture, some scholars began to claim that culture and social organization were not so much about the “replication of uniformity” as about the “organization of diversity” (e.g., Wallace, 1961, 2009).

In addition, there was the “problem” of culture change: why and how did this happen? On the one hand, if culture and social processes were essentially homeostatic, why would culture change take place over time in a given society, even without a great deal of outside influence? On the other hand, in some situations of cross-cultural contact, why would certain aspects of another culture be adopted (as in the global spread of youth culture and popular foods) while other aspects would not be adopted? Why in some instances would traditional cultural practices be revitalized? As greater time depth was achieved in studies of traditional societies, they appeared to be *changing from within* as well – and not only because of the conquest and colonial domination that had taken place. In other words, it seemed that both modern and traditional societies could and did change from within. The classic view of culture and of cultural transmission could not explain these matters.

In 1976, Goodenough published an article titled, “Multiculturalism as the Normal Human Experience.” It appeared in the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, just as that publication was being transformed from a newsletter to a journal. Goodenough noted that even in small-scale traditional societies there were slight differences in lifeways between one household and the next, and so as children grew, and their daily rounds encompassed wider and wider spheres of activity in their local community, they were encountering subcultural differences and they were developing personal multicultural repertoires. Normally these repertoires continued to develop throughout the life cycle.

Another refinement was developing among scholars concerned with issues of culture and communication. Hall (1959) distinguished between formal and informal aspects of culture – a contrast that others had also called “explicit/implicit” and “overt/covert.” Philips, in a study of the communication habits of Native American children at home and at school (Philips, 1983), labeled this distinction “visible/invisible.” The notion was that certain explicit, visible aspects of culture, such as dress, food preferences, language, religion, or subsistence activities might change, while more invisible aspects of culture, such as assumptions about appropriateness in stylistic ways of speaking (what can be said or not said, what is polite, what is rude/inappropriately indirect), or assumptions about time (being “too early” or “on time” or “late”) might continue within a local community even as the visible cultural lifeways were changing.

Finally, it was becoming apparent that certain differences in cultural practices were not equally salient in different social situations and institutional circumstances. In a given situation or institutional setting some cultural differences seemed to be framed as being politically sensitive, while others were not. Barth (1969) considered the ethnic group as an entity defined by shared political interests rather than as an entity whose members necessarily shared cultural practices in common. McDermott (McDermott and Gospodinoff, 1981) adapted Barth’s insight for anthropology of education, noting that culture difference can be treated relatively neutrally as a “boundary,” or non-neutrally as a “border.” When culture difference is treated as a boundary, there is a difference that exists between alternative customary ways of acting, but this difference does not disrupt the conduct of everyday affairs. When culture difference is treated as a border, the conduct of everyday affairs is disrupted. Persons who differ culturally are treated as having differing rights and obligations, just as they are treated at a political border between two countries. An illustrative analogy comes from the national border between Mexico and the United States. On one side of that border the cultural competence of being able to speak Spanish fluently is treated as an advantage, but on the other side of that border the same cultural competence is, in certain circumstances, treated as a liability.

Conflict over cultural difference, McDermott and Barth both argued, is not so much a matter of the difference itself as it is of the political loading and symbolism of the difference. Is that difference being framed in “boundary” terms or in “border” terms? In other words, their view is that culture difference itself does not cause conflict in society or in immediate social interaction, but if reasons for conflict already exist in society (i.e., in differing power or interests among groups), then culture difference can become a resource for conflict.

The use of culture difference as a resource for starting and continuing conflicts has unfortunately been a common practice in formal schooling. “Culture” becomes a code word for “those students who are hard to teach by the usual methods we use, and those parents who are difficult for us to engage with in the ways we usually relate to parents.” Framed in border terms, culture difference is treated by the school as deficiency: something characteristic of parents and students who are not “normal.” A large literature in conventional educational research developed concerning “cultural deficits” (e.g., Riessman, 1962). Anthropology of education emerged in the late 1960s as a named field in the United States partly as a culturally relativist critique of the “cultural deficit” view in professional education and child development research.

Yet the deficit view continues alive and well in current conventional educational practice – belief strongly persists that cultural “deficits” need to be made up for by remedial instruction in “mainstream” ways of acting, believing, and desiring. Rules for “deficit” lifeways learned at home should be replaced by rules for lifeways learned at school, and the “different” student would benefit from that.

Among sociologists, economists, and some educational policy researchers the term “culture” was contrasted to “structure.” Everyday customary actions and beliefs were considered to be the “soft” aspects of patterning in the conduct of social life. “Hard” aspects of patterning resided in large-scale economy and society, and social class position, race, gender, and market forces were major determinants of what people believed and how they acted. Those patterning factors placed strong constraints on life chances. In this view, however, culture was something that people could change readily. Thus, people could be blamed for holding on to culture patterns that were maladaptive, such as what had come to be called “the culture of poverty.” When combined with the “deficit” views of culture in professional education and in policy debates about schooling, the opposition between culture and structure became another way of blaming certain students and parents for the ways they conducted everyday interaction in settings outside schools. Following from this line of reasoning, educational policy would try to keep children away from the deleterious cultural settings that existed outside school – through the provision of pre-school programs, after school programs, and shortening of summer vacations. (This is reminiscent of the nineteenth-century educational policy applied to Native American children in the United States and Canada. Such children were taken from their families and forced to attend boarding schools year round, in an attempt to erase entirely the indigenous Native American cultural practices the children had learned in their families.)

Another shift in conceptions concerning how culture operated – culture in use – was prefigured in the 1950s and then developed during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1958, Peter Winch, a philosopher of social science, wrote a book in which he considered what “following a rule” entailed. He noted that judgment is always involved in rule-following – and in so doing one does not act as an automaton but takes into account the immediate circumstances of local social action (Winch, 1958: 25ff). This followed on Wittgenstein’s observation (1953: 185–243) that grammatical rules do not enable a speaker to produce utterances. Rather, the conduct of actual speaking requires one to enter into situationally appropriate *language games*: a whole system of making and communicating meaning, many aspects of whose organization are implicit and cannot be stated as explicit rules. In 1967, Harold Garfinkel argued that local social actors *made sense*; they used and created knowledge of how to operate so that their adaptive actions were not simply a matter of following previously learned rules (Garfinkel, 1967). Then, in 1976, Bourdieu published *An Outline of a Theory of Practice*, in which he also noted that social action involved more than literal rule following; rather, actors took into account local circumstances and made choices opportunistically. They were operating according to loose maxims – such as “act to get honor” – rather than following specific rules. Persons in cultural settings acquired clusters of habits of action – “habitus” – which Bourdieu defined as a “sense of the game,” akin to knowing how to play soccer. There are constitutive rules in such games as soccer, but being able to move on the field effectively in real-time play involves much more than

knowing the constitutive rules. The shift in understanding of culture from a tightly integrated set of rules learned in childhood to a more flexible array of principles for action, belief, and desire, which are then enacted adaptively and opportunistically in practice, became a fundamental change in American anthropology and in culture theory, as noted by Ortner (1984).

Currently, a few points of emphasis are especially salient. They all involve attempts to correct defects in earlier conceptions of culture and of cultural transmission and reproduction. First, the matter of “essentializing,” that is, assuming uniformity of culture within a named social group or social address category. Insights similar to those of Goodenough (1976) are now being generally adopted in the anthropology of education. It is now apparent that personal cultural repertoires can differ significantly – and that this has important implications for research and practice in education. Not all students who come from working-class or upper-middle-class African American or Mexican American or Irish American families grow up in identical cultural circumstances within such named aggregates. Particular individuals and households differ in their microcultures. Not to recognize this leads to “neo-stereotyping,” and that all too often is still the way culture is treated in professional education and in educational policy discourse. Discovery of individual repertoires of multicultural competence or involvement thus becomes a crucial focus for inquiry and for the development of culturally responsive teaching practices in schools (see on this point, Erickson, 2009; Gutiérrez and Rogoff, 2003; Wolcott, 1991).

Second, cultural transmission and learning is not simply an intergenerational matter – with early childhood socialization being the main locus of cultural learning within the life course. Rather, cultural learning continues across the entire life course, and cultural invention can happen within a current generation. For culture change to be occurring continuously, at individual and societal levels, is predictable and normal – and this applies to all human societies, not only to large-scale modern societies.

Third, the primary site of cultural learning and cultural innovation is the particular local community of cultural practice, for example, a specific household, a neighborhood friendship group, a school classroom, an adult work setting. Throughout the life cycle, persons encounter in their daily rounds a series of these differing local communities of practice. In some of those communities the new participant stays at the peripheral edge of participation, or they visit briefly and then leave. In other local communities of practice, the newcomer may stay and, over time, come to participate more and more centrally, more completely, in the practices that obtain there as the newcomer identifies personally with those practices. This is to say, that some subsets and identities within the overall multicultural repertoire may become primary and focal, while other subsets and identities may be held as secondary, but that no individual’s personal cultural repertoire is unitary. Moreover, the recurring initiation of involvement by successive newcomers, in combination with locally invented new habits of practice, makes some change in practices a continuing and normal process within local communities of practice. In other words, communities of practice are inherently communities of change as well as of continuity (see Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

In sum, culture is increasingly coming to be seen not so much as Tylor’s “complex whole,” but, rather, as clusters of parts, all in trajectories combining continuity with change. If we think of culture as the organization of the conduct of everyday life, then

the locus of culture as experience, as learned and enacted, is the local community of practice. It follows that to be human is to be multicultural, to be engaged continually in new culturing activity, because it appears that all humans participate in multiple local communities of practice and take action opportunistically within them. Thus, within the conduct of their everyday lives, humans develop personal repertoires of practice that are multiplex and dynamically changing, rather than participating in a single, unitary cultural entity and following passively a single system of cultural rules.

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CHAPTER **3**

The Ethnography of Schooling Writ Large, 1955–2010

*Ray McDermott and
Jason Duque Raley*

Ruth Benedict (1948) offered an evocative image: that studying culture amounts to studying individual psychology writ large. There were few Japanese in New York City where Benedict studied Japanese culture during the Second World War, but a few would do, as if shining a light through their heads and hearts onto a large screen could deliver a holographic outline of the tensions, pressures, and contradictions of Japanese life. With just a few people to interview, Benedict created a view of Japanese culture that stood for 15 years until critiques better tuned to the nuanced realities of Japanese situations and massive social change replaced her broad speculations. Significantly, she said that if no Japanese actually conformed to the behavioral patterns she described, her account would be worthwhile if most Japanese at least worried about their behavior – and misbehavior – in ways she described. For Benedict, culture existed less in actual activities than in their interpretation. Even self-deceptive interpretations of behavior were revealing, and talk with a few people was enough for an image of the larger, whole culture to emerge.

We resurrect the writ large image to make the argument that all ethnography reaches for a portrait of everything at stake in the details of people's lives. Usual approaches to education – psychology, economics, sociology, even history – deliver important slices, but anthropologists seek the full schedule of struggles that make every moment significant, potentially treacherous, and likely political. People in cultures are incessantly put upon, and their efforts are elaborately staged for the interpretations of those who watch, assess, and report the outcomes. Ethnographers of schooling – in

ways various and partial – seek to estimate the grand scale cultural politics that inhabit and inhibit students and their teachers.

The analytic road from proposed units of analysis to a conclusion is rarely direct, and the kind and number of things examined along the way change with analytic focus and theoretical bravado. The discipline *of* anthropology gives license to look almost anywhere for something interesting, and discipline *in* ethnography supplies responsible descriptions of the patterns, contrasts, and conflicts that add up and somehow hold people together in a web of hopes, affections, mystifications, afflictions, and reinforcements enough to make every day mostly like the days before. Writ large refers to the inclusive culture of constraints and interpretations people have to deal with, avoid, worship, lie about, and desire in situations of their own making.¹ A view of anthropology as inquiry into the layers of demanding and promising situations and interpretations should set the standard for how any cultural context – including schools – should be studied.

Our first goal is to show continuities where others have seen only ruptures across three generations of the ethnography of schooling. The continuities show each generation reaching for, articulating with, and illuminating the writ large. Anthropological studies of education in societies without schools began around 1920,² but we examine only three points in the last half-century of American ethnography focused on schools: culture and personality studies (1954–1963); interaction analyses (1972–1982); and global cultural studies (1998–2010).³ The ethnography of schooling has invited a disastrous focus on schools as if they were a reality unto themselves, but it has also invited work on schools as a small, but important part of cultural constraints and possibilities. Our point is that each generation has *in its way* grasped the more inclusive forces bearing down on schools whether from inside the divided student, inside teacher–student groups divided by apparent race, class, and language differences, or inside huge populations constructing divisions of many kinds fueled by international media and market pressures.

Each generation has made real progress over what came before and proposed a new idiom of concern and method, but the purpose of this chapter is to explore their shared vision of capturing culture writ large. Their weaknesses have been decried enough to hide their virtues. Many culture and personality studies were marred by foolish psychological stereotyping. Many interaction analyses were hampered by a myopic attention to behavioral detail. And calls for multi-sited inquiries into global influences have not encouraged detailed ethnography. But at their best, they have shared a strength that makes them disruptive to the narrow concerns of educational research driven by other disciplines: *they have all insisted on provocative readings of local developments complete with appeals to the most pressing contexts of culture and social structure.* Their work is not done. We see generational progress as rough chapters in a story not yet finished.

Along with making nice among competing points of view, we push a conclusion: that the range of educational objects under analysis – from individual children and teachers to schoolrooms, testing systems, national funding policies, international employment pressures, and so on – is never as important as *how* the objects are studied and whether analyses reveal the writ large in which daily struggles of schooling are embedded. Depending on *how* they are approached, even classrooms can be made

interesting. The pressing question is whether the story is worth hearing: whether it challenges invidious points of view or reshapes our own unintended contributions to the problems under analysis. Generational foci on individual neuroses, difficulties in social interaction, or cultural tensions in global markets – on divided souls, divided roles, or divided wholes – have different strengths and weaknesses, but they are the same in being partial, bound by perspective, embedded in particulars, likely overstated, and easy to critique. We can appreciate them for their desire to expose the full play of circumstances constraining schoolchildren and teachers.

We proceed in two sections. A first answers the question of whether schools are productive objects for ethnographic work. A second offers a thumbnail history of the field with attention to continuities amid discontinuities.

Our stories about continuities have three players in each generation: cultural anthropology, the discipline; the anthropology of education, a subset discipline that studies what and how children and adults have to learn, or at least make believe to learn, in a variety of circumstances; and the ethnography of schooling, a subset of the anthropology of education that studies schools, or just classrooms, and is sometimes foolishly out of touch with the rest of cultural anthropology. The common history of culture and personality, interaction analysis, and global cultural studies displays a preference for ethnographies of schooling that highlight ties between the daily drama of education and the writ large concerns of the discipline of anthropology.

SCHOOLS AS ETHNOGRAPHIC OBJECTS

Studying the organization of people in a culture by describing life inside schools is much like studying funerals from inside a coffin. Not much happens in either place, not at first glance anyway. It takes careful attention to detail by a person already much in the know about schools to discern connections with the wider social order under such constrained and constraining conditions. An exclusive focus on the local settings of institutionalized education has encouraged accounts unchecked and unenlightened by pressing cultural and political realities. Many ethnographies of schooling have stretched only to culture writ small: small in the number of perspectives exercised, small in layers of context taken into consideration, and small in implications. Is the ethnography of schooling worth doing?

Good ethnography requires well-documented long engagements (years would be nice) with the daily round of people in layers of overlapping situations and urgent concerns. It is demanding work: more than a simple reporting of what people say in over-determined interviews or unanalyzed detail-thin transcripts, as if the secrets of the world were easily available to commonsense questions. Good ethnography, more than most qualitative descriptions, demands analyses that are methodic and self-conscious enough to reveal the hidden systematics of daily demands and desires. Results should be both surprising and difficult to dispute. Can ethnographies of schooling meet the test? Consider three contrasting, if not mutually exclusive, answers.

Quick answer: No, so look elsewhere. The easy corrective to a focus on schools is to insist that education be studied more in homes, on job sites and playgrounds, in media reports, and across the Internet (for an exciting discussion, see Varenne, 2007).

There is no sense in studying classrooms or schools when fuller realities are nearby. Go instead to where the action is: where most learning happens, where attitudes and values are formed, and where learning is not measured and exaggerated in public policy debates. The anthropology of education should never have been just about schools, and future studies should ignore schools and focus on the potent forces that organize the learning demanded by the body politic. Examples of people learning outside school are impressive, and we need more.⁴

Cautious answer: Schools are a good place to study, but the effort must be justified. Ethnographers should have to beg for permission to study schools, especially American (or Japanese) schools. Enough is enough with commonsense accounts of life in schools. Is there a promise of something politically and theoretically important? Are there methods beyond the normal chit-chat to get the job done? Again, examples are noteworthy, and we need more.⁵

Best overall answer: Schools are a great site to make explicit ties among the arts and artifices of teaching/learning situations and writ large cultural politics. By a strange twist of national and international political machinations, children in school have become increasingly a primal focus for conversations about equity and democracy. Elites and their governments have found it easier to make educational policy than to legislate change in the distribution of resources by race or class. Ethnographies of schooling are thereby about more than schooling because they engage and rework the problematic vocabulary of the policy and measurement disciplines that serve national agendas for schools. The field has been powerful for its vision of the struggles by which knowledge is produced, consumed, exchanged, legitimized, and represented.

The ethnography of schooling has sometimes missed its own karmic irony: *the problems giving the field meaning and purpose have been predefined in ways that obscure insight and limit relief.* By the ironies of hegemony and mystification, the problems we seek to analyze and reorganize are not available for easy articulation. Burdened with Cultural Deprivation theories in the 1960s or the Achievement Gap in the early new millennium, many have shown up at school doors wanting only to move children from the bottom of school hierarchies to the top, to make those failing in school into success stories. We have struggled to fix a too-limited wrong.

The problem is not that some children are on the bottom. The problem is that there is a bottom, a carefully crafted bottom, that defines a top eventually available to only a few (Varenne and McDermott, 1998). Outrage about inequalities is a workable beginning, but it offers no guarantee that analysts can get edgy enough or deep enough to form new categories or propose new programs to confront the system. No one needs more ethnographies of schooling based on received categories. Received categories serve educational institutions that in turn serve the established political and economic order. Educational institutions are, like their children, dependent variables, and reform is always a tricky business. From earliest efforts, ethnographers studying schools have been forced to re-evaluate their purposes and research categories by unpacking the economic, political, and cultural tricks foisted on them. Their efforts can inform new work. What Amy Stambach identifies as a reigning assumption of new studies in the anthropology of education applies only a little less well to work from the two previous generations: that “schools are not

Table 3.1 Dreams and wishes of research paradigms in the ethnography of schooling

	<i>Culture and personality 1954–1963</i>	<i>Interaction analysis 1972–1982</i>	<i>Global and cultural studies 1998–present</i>
Identified problems	The defended and divided self	People dividing each other across ethnic, racial, class borders	Identities dominated and limited by globalized media and neoliberal ideologies
Locating the problems	In relations between individual desire and the emotional drives and compulsions of the culture	In the face to face organization of occasions for disability, degradation, and their ties to access and mobility	In the stratagems of stock markets, corporate boardrooms, government offices, and media centers everywhere
Emotional footing of the researcher	Anger at the waste of potential	Anger at inequalities	Fear of being duped and bedazzled by identities in the service of others
Political commitments	Alert and reform teachers of their biases	Celebrate those thought to be unable and reorganize schooling accordingly	Confront neoliberal manipulations; demand transparency
Data gathering (beyond long-term participant observation)	Interviews; psychological inventories and Rorschach tests	Audio and video tapes; efforts to reorganize learning situations	Interviews; media pronouncements across multiple sites
Units of analysis	Individuals in culture	People in social interaction	Identities made elsewhere and mediated locally
Methods of analysis and presentation	Narrative accounts of the foibles and neuroses of people caught in the partial wisdom of a culture; told from a position of the omniscient observer	Detailed descriptions of people in social interaction making environments of and for each other; told with appeals to empathy and empiricism	Narrative accounts of the entrapment of local people in world capital and power flows; told with attention to the positioning of the storyteller
Audiences appealed to and confronted	School personnel	Established research disciplines, particularly educational psychology	Centers of power that control and finance educational rhetoric and practices
Aligned disciplines	Personality theory and psychoanalysis	Interaction analysis, ethno-methodology, socio-linguistics, kinesics	Cultural studies, critical theory
Theoretical opposites	Economic determinism; mechanical materialism	Essentialisms of all kinds, social sciences without careful attention to the complexities of behavior	Essentialisms of all kinds, developmental paradigms, and structuralism

drivers of change in themselves, but generative institutions that reflect and, in connection with other productive domains, create possibilities for social reproduction and change” (2004: 90).

A SHORT HISTORY OF CONTINUITIES

Ethnographic accounts of learning and socialization did not coalesce into a disciplinary focus until the mid-twentieth century. George Spindler (1955) convened the first conference on the topic in 1954.⁶ Over the next 15 years, a professional association (Council on Anthropology and Education) and a journal (*Anthropology and Education Quarterly*) emerged. In the late 1960s, a few publishers initiated a monograph series on anthropology and education, and various schools of thought took shape in a steady spate of essay collections. By 1975, there was enough material for three different volume-length bibliographies, and topical specialties emerged on learning processes in different cultures, educational inequality in various nations, and linguistic differences in and out of schools. By 1990, there were strong choices to develop, dispute, and resist.

Reasons for studying schools and ways of analyzing them have shifted over time. Some easy to name discontinuities are highlighted in Table 3.1. If one reads a column at a time, the preoccupations of the different generations might seem mutually distracting or even unwarranted. If one reads a row at a time, the differences soften enough to show generations that share knee-jerk assumptions about what might be wrong (the nightmare culture can be), how it should be studied (slowly and with the help of those being studied), and what might be done about it (evocation and confrontation). If we treat anthropology as an instinct to study big problems lived moment to moment by real persons, then dropping anthropology into the social and political contexts that invited ethnographies of schooling in the 1950s, 1970s, and 1990s should net us approximately what we have: first culture and personality studies, then interaction analyses, and then global cultural studies. The following descriptions offer a more continuous account than the hard-lined chart.

Culture and personality

Culture and personality studies dominated American (but not the British or French) cultural anthropology from 1928 through 1955. The theoretical verve of the tradition collapsed and quickly disappeared from mainstream anthropology but for its continued use in the anthropology of education. Psychologists often divide people into two parts: a cognitive part guiding what a person does, and an affective part guiding how the person should feel about what just got done. By this model, mainstream anthropology in the late 1950s transitioned from affect to cognition, while some anthropologists of education maintained the more emotional version of culture.

Culture and personality studies spoke to the question of how it feels to be part of a culture. Analyses focused on the emotional struggles of individual persons giving each other headaches. The 1954 conference included little on schools and little on minority children. The effort instead was to use ethnographic data from other cultures to

comment on the arbitrary nuttiness of American schooling. For this generation, the monster haunting the system was conceived analytically as inside each individual. Might knowledge of education from many societies help American school personnel reset their emotions enough to do a better job?

Questions pursued by culture and personality inquiries in the 1960s often led to monotone answers. At worst, their ethnographies described people without agency. Individuals socialized to a core personality became emotional robots. The stereotypes were particularly harsh on working-class and minority populations. At best (best and worst often appeared in the same book), their ethnographies described people in active engagement with their environments: suffering in silence the pricks and kicks of the system while responding to those about them.

In 1963, Jules Henry captured such tensions with the title, *Culture against Man*. If rephrased as *Culture against People*, we can use his analysis as an exemplary culture and personality account of schooling writ large. Henry began a long-term study of life in the United States in the 1950s after fieldwork with two Indian groups in Brazil and Argentina in the 1930s. Both the Kaingáng and the Pilagá lived close to subsistence, worked with a limited sense of property, and suffered aggression from white invaders. These conditions must have made the compulsions and sensitivities of the American middle class seem foolishly arbitrary and, to use Henry's (1973) term, a "sham." The Kaingáng were especially arresting (Henry, 1941). They suppressed open conflict in their immediate families, routinely slaughtered other families, and appeared headed to "cultural extinction." Kaingáng cruelties would have made Westerners look peaceful, but Henry arrived home in time for the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the bombing of Hiroshima. Henry knew cruelty from both ends on any scale of institutional complexity. In middle America, he found predictable cruelty in the work of advertisers, teachers, parents, and caretakers. People had little choice but to participate in aggressive competition in the simple work of reducing fractions at a chalkboard or playing a "spelling baseball" game: less bloody perhaps, but more like the Kaingáng than one would hope. Henry tied the staging of intelligence and learning in American institutions to the emotional torment of grade-school students racked by fear, acquiescence, and alienation.⁷

Henry had two complaints about American schools. First, they are a primary institution for making visible the tensions of the culture:

School metamorphoses the child, giving it the kind of Self the School can manage, and then proceeds to minister to the Self it has made (Henry, 1963: 292).

Schools are the place, and competition is the process, for "sharpening to a cutting edge the drives the culture needs" (Henry, 1963: 292) and the fears by which it operates: drives to succeed and to win, and fears of failure in the face of the success by others – make that fears of others, period. Second, schools accomplish their work by sham. If everyone is forced to pretend that reality is whatever the teacher wants, nothing can be what it seems. Schools not only make the lives of children small, they do it with fakery.

As Benedict's student, Henry learned to worry about culture as the individual writ large. He studied with psychoanalysts and recommended the inner divisions of

persons as the stuff of writ large cultural organization. Henry hoped that anthropologists using psychoanalytic theory to *interpret* data might reveal the psychic costs of a culture committed to unnecessarily competitive and falsely consequential situations like school. Psychoanalysis offered traction for Henry's outrage against the political and cultural systems that make lives more hobbled than they should be. His anguish over the repression of human potential was based on real people in real activities in real political economies organized and interpreted by cultural drives. Accounts of the inner lives of persons require constant movement across levels small and large:

When we say that "culture teaches drives and values" we do not state the case quite precisely. One should say, rather, that culture (and especially the school) provides the occasions in which drives and values are *experienced in events* that strike us with *overwhelming and constant force*. To say that culture "teaches" puts the matter too mildly. Actually culture invades and infests the mind as an obsession. (Henry, 1963: 297, original emphasis)

The most personal obsessions are organized in the *en masse*. It takes a culture writ large to organize personal problems and a school system to reproduce them. This is American culture against children and teachers.

Interaction analysis

Interaction analyses became essential to the reform of educational policy and practice for minority children starting in the 1960s. They continue to inform inquiries into talk-rich events in schools: teaching and learning, assessing and accessing, grading and degrading.

Spindler's conference followed the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by only three weeks. The proceedings closed with an afterthought discussion of race struggles in education. At a key point in *Brown v. Board*, psychological data were introduced to show how African American students in segregated schools were being deprived of cognitive-emotional growth. The good news: the Supreme Court bought the argument and drove a wedge into the heart of one kind of institutional racism. The bad news: measured personal growth was moved to the center of public policy. Because psychometric data correlate well with race and class – or better phrased, because psychometric tests are well designed to correlate with race and class – measured learning became, ironically, a new way of turning race into a social structural barrier. There is a direct line of argumentation from *Brown v. Board* and the culture of poverty to current screaming on the Achievement Gap: from Jim Crow to the Big Test, they seem well designed to reinforce inequalities. *Brown v. Board* relied on a hope that all groups would do well if schooled in equal environments, but the test scores did not deliver. After *Brown*, Oscar Lewis's (1961) accounts of a culture of poverty in Mexico were combined with impoverished test scores for low income minority children in the United States into a theory of cultural deprivation with the claim that children from impoverished environments would have impoverished minds even if placed into integrated schools.⁸ With school integration, anthropology was on notice to resist the

new shape of racism, and the moment to moment production of inequality in schools became an essential focus. Interaction analysis supplied tools for a defense of children called failures.⁹

Interaction analyses focus on persons available to each other in situations as the primal site of social life. Their achievement has been a documentation of the ingenuity of participants in any interaction. The monster that haunts the system, the monster that makes people look sharp or clumsy, eloquent or inarticulate, able or unable, can be found in situations that set people against each other; such situations, and schools are loaded with them, activate the social borders that keep people – whether by neighborhood, money, race, dialect, and so on – separate, segregated, at cross-purposes, and struck dumb even while communicating face to face. To return to Benedict’s image, American culture is situations of sorting and degradation writ large. If culture and personality analyses studied *emotional* patterns to reshape American teachers, interaction analyses focus on *demotional* patterns to show how children called stupid, slow, and disabled were often brilliant, but working under conditions designed to make them look bad.

In Benedict’s move from individuals to the larger or whole culture that arranged them, the adjectives “larger” and “whole” are misleading. Larger/smaller is a false pairing for a cultural analysis and so too its friends: macro/micro; socioeconomic/personal; and context/behavior. All situations are micro, personal, and local, and all situations are also historically constructed in the *en masse*, in the writ large. As for the idea of a whole culture, well, it is filled with holes; no culture is clearly bounded. Interaction analysts reject the large/small dichotomy and distrust the easy gender, race, class, and intelligence categories that have masked arrangements of power and wealth and distorted explanations of what constrains the lives of people on the wrong side of identifiable social borders.

This puts interaction analysts into the difficult position of building a way back to the writ large one category at a time. Without easy access to race, class, and gender categories, they have to discover in people’s responses to each other exactly if, when, and how they make race, class, or gender consequential. Their logic is demanding. They are interested in culture and social structure writ large, refuse to talk about it with received categories, insist on limiting inquiry to the visible/hearable behavior of people in interaction, and hope that a pattern will emerge. A three-step finding has consistently emerged. Step one shows that the behavior of participants in social interaction is always more complex and intelligent than any terms applied to the people – terms for race, gender, class, aptitude, learning capacity – might allow; step two shows that part of what people must deal with in their interaction with others is the arbitrary, but systematic, threat of terms that would simplify and degrade them; and step three points to the people who create, maintain, and enforce the categories and situations that keep everyone ever ready to defend and/or destroy everyone else.

Take the case of Learning Disability (LD) labels as treated in interaction analyses. Step one shows the child more able than the term implies; step two shows that kids labeled LD spend much of their class time arranging not getting caught not knowing something that could get them called LD; and step three points to the people who create, maintain, and enforce LD categories and situations that keep everyone ready

to defend and/or destroy everyone else with LD labels (McDermott and Raley, 2009; Mehan, 1993). If LD is mostly about staging, how does it come to have such a central place in educational financing and policy?

We can turn to the work of Hugh Mehan for a guide to how analytic things can come up in ways that are surprising and compelling. Influenced by ethnomethodology and conversation analysis, Mehan started to look at videotapes in the early 1970s. He examined various educational settings, here in approximate order over 40 years: one-on-one tests; turn-taking in grade-school lessons; school hearings for special education; tutoring sessions for high school students facing college hurdles; and university interest groups trying to organize community education ventures.

The settings are identical in two ways. Each is an organized moment in a system for sorting and arranging learners into an established hierarchy, and each requires input, attention, specific goals, and predetermined outcomes for both immediate participants and the millions of others involved in organizing and policing the situation: teachers, test-makers, parents, admissions officers, employment managers, and so on. The settings are also systematically different: each one engages an increasingly obvious chunk of social structure for analysis. Observing one non-interactive adult giving an oral exam to one student trying not to get caught not knowing an answer allows the illusion that there are only two people in the room: one insisting and one responding, both in an effort to make raw inherent intelligence visible. To that illusion, Mehan (1973) showed that child and adult were helping each other get through a difficult situation in which they were plagued by arbitrary, inappropriate questions made up by people far away for purposes of securing and legitimizing a bell-curved social structure with smart successful and dumb failing children. His achievement was to find intelligence where others found failure and to press the question of why a society would invest so heavily on failing its children.

At the other end of his continuum of settings, a school system, a city government, and a university were players in interaction; salary lines, public policy rhetoric, and academic biographies were constantly at work. Mehan's accomplishment (2008) is twofold. First, he describes the problems of a school system as co-constructed by people working with the constraints and possibilities available in their circumstances. Second, in an advance over most ethnography, he does more than just watching people responding to each other. Because he had been trying to make institutional change, the responses he studies were often directed to – and against – his efforts to help. For the interaction analyst, the writ large becomes visible in the work that people do in *staging* problems for each other. For Mehan, the writ large becomes visible particularly in the ways those in power respond to his attempts at *restaging* the problems. The same language of interaction analysis he used to describe turn-taking in elementary classrooms, he uses in his later work to describe the resistance of those with power to advances by those without power. In social interaction, people reconstruct the pricks and kicks of the system while responding – ingeniously and regressively – with the materials at hand to the conditions that brought them together. The writ large is visible in the activities of people having to make lives with each other under conditions neither of their own choosing, nor of their eventual interpretation.

Global cultural studies

For the current generation, postmodern, postcolonial, and poststructuralist studies have focused more on state, corporate, and media market forces that, in a fit of global norming, are coursing through classrooms and schools around the world (for position papers, see Hall, 1999; Levinson, 1999). When a child goes off to school in the morning, the world is thick with constraints and thin with possibilities. For Henry, the world gnaws away from inside the child in school, and for Mehan, the world awaits the child in most every interaction after the school door. The next generation has added the rest of the world as a new consideration. All three efforts point to hidden forces in the child's engagement with school, but they find their theory and data in quite different quarters.

If the transition from culture and personality to interaction analysis through the 1960s is made intelligible by the tasks brought to anthropology by *Brown v. Board*, an equivalent shift in purpose came about in the 1980s with the rise of Reaganomics and the rhetoric of neoliberalism. In the 1960s and 1970s, ethnographers believed they could aid reform by showing how the promises of equal playing fields were a cover for the upper half of society to reproduce its good fortunes. By 1990, it became increasingly unnecessary to expose false promises; what had been a discovery – an object of unveiling – had become national policy: *the newly avowed and daily propounded role of schools is to recreate elites*. It has become increasingly unnecessary to expose the secret role of schools; given current arrangements, the better question is whether schools can recover any democratic function. This is one context for focusing new ethnographies of schooling on managerial intrigue inside an international capitalism that requires everyone to choose to be better than everyone else.¹⁰

Students of global cultural studies describe how the whole world, not just people – neither the incidentals of their personalities, nor the minutiae of their social interaction – is organized in ways consequential to all children going to school at the turn of the millennium. The writ large has exploded its borders and shows up in divisions that inhabit the tiniest people in the tiniest places: children and their schools everywhere. The monster that now haunts the system is as ubiquitous as global capital flows, financial crises, cellular violence, and religious fanaticism (Appadurai, 2005; Comaroff and Comaroff, 2009; Harvey, 2010). This is a difficult world for democracy and education, and the promise that status-driven, measured, and accountable education can make it all better seems shockingly false. The colonialism and modernization that earlier stalked traditional people and allowed Westerners to worry only about themselves is gone, and children everywhere meet up with new and invidious problems when they go to school. The troubles of living in global cultures could show up in Henry's personality tests or Mehan's videotapes, if one knew how to look, but other sites – from policy fights between parents and state officials to national media interpretations of international performance outcomes – can be more immediately revealing.

Amy Stambach (2000, 2003, 2004) has provided examples of the complexity of schooling in contemporary Tanzania.¹¹ If we ask how many students and teachers are in local schools, a rough answer is easy. If we ask how many people are involved in the schools, the number skyrockets, and their geographic range opens to places like Texas

and Washington. Follow the capital – and the rhetoric of neoliberalism – and suddenly Tanzania might well be, as all other places might well be, the center of the earth. No place is separate from the allures and alarms of capital flow, educational choice, and even religious conviction as they have been honed elsewhere and made available for local consumption, manipulation, and representation. Children wake up in an African village and in no time visitors appear from all corners of the earth ready to buy, sell, teach, learn, measure, report, convert, diagnose, and explain.

Stambach does not need to project from people's personalities or social interaction to make visible their writ large concerns. Their worries live in a distributed network reaching around the world. Educational choices about the language and style of instruction or the role of parents and other local authorities are worked out in conversations originally developed elsewhere among Christian missionaries, educational psychologists, and neoliberal economists. These are all adjusted to the local circumstances, as Stambach (2003) emphasizes, but the press of the wider world is clearly operating on what happens in the schools and how the children will be asked to develop.

Stambach's achievement is to track how educational categories (like parental choice) take on specific institutional forms that can get reorganized when dropped into specific local settings and incorporated into local histories, narratives, and registers of value and meaning. The good news of her multi-sited inquiries is that the local can be quite forceful in reshaping what comes from elsewhere: "similar forms appear; but similar forms do not mean cultural uniformity" (Stambach, 2003: 157). It takes good ethnography to show how institutional forms in different settings are rearranged by local conditions:

The uneven reinscription of local beliefs and practices is key to understanding why cultural forms appear to be isomorphic ... Uneven access to and control of resources leads to some beliefs gaining stronger footing in the category termed "universal." (Stambach, 2003:157)

The bad news is that there is little choice about what has to be adjusted to and, in some long run, swallowed as reality. We can always count on "uneven access to and control of resources" to lead the way, and no doubt followed by Western assumptions about a universal, rational, well-schooled, maximizing actor. The children of Tanzania, say some of their parents, and in this way they can echo the demands of their government and international funding agencies, need to speak English. The market insists on it and so too the sciences that celebrate the rationalities of the market and the managerial world. And who is to teach English but Christian missionaries. And they do it with high engagement, yes, and with song. The traditional Tanzanian school – part of an earlier colonialism – is a dreary affair of rote learning and teacher lectures, and the new missionaries, pedagogically anyway, know better. They teach to the bodies of world savvy citizens ready to make choices about what they want, how they want to get it, and even the religious entities they want to overlook it all.

These are exciting new considerations, and they will yield new views of American education as well. The work should enhance what Henry and Mehan set out to accomplish. "The School metamorphoses the child," Henry told us, "giving it the kind of Self the School can manage" (1963: 297). This is true wherever teaching and

learning officially happen: in every social interaction, said Mehan, where ability and disability are staged, recorded, and interpreted, and across a wider economy of cultural and religious formations, says Stambach, reaching to the far ends of the world and back.

CONCLUSION

In the journey from inside the person, to persons in interaction, to global political economies that set the table for persons and their interactions, there are significant differences in theory, method, and purpose for working on an ethnography of schooling. The basic instinct of the academic marketplace is to break with the past, on the strong chance that new theories will force progress, but recovered continuities offer a strong history with which to move forward. The ethnography of schooling has been a consistent alternative to mainstream educational research. Whereas most psychologists, social scientists, and policy experts have worked from inside the system, ethnographers have often offered a disruption of normal assumptions.¹² This was almost as true in 1955 as it is today. It is a worthwhile history.

We have stressed that all three generations have searched for ways to conceive and confront the institutionalized arrangements that have turned schools against children and teachers. Behind this general similarity, there are specifics: an outrage about what gets done in the name of schooling; a skepticism about the received categories that make it easy to mis-measure kinds of children and kinds of learning; a distrust of national efforts at change and reform; and an attention to real people in action as the site for the drama of schooling to reveal its connections to ongoing inequalities and injustices. The specifics apply whether researchers have focused on individual personalities, social interaction, or global oppression. They identify a continuity of instincts that have informed significant progress across the ethnography of schooling from 1955 to 2010.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Kathy Hall, Bud Mehan, Mica Pollock, and Amy Stambach for additions and correctives to this paper.

NOTES

- 1 Karl Marx: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please in circumstances they choose by themselves, rather they make it in present circumstances, given and inherited" (Marx 2002: 19).
- 2 In the 1930s, British social anthropology – by Bronislaw Malinowski, Raymond Firth, E.E. Evans-Pritchard, and especially Meyer Fortes (1938) – described the acquisition of kinds of people by social structure, not as an anthropology of education, but as part of what all ethnographers should study.

- 3 The good sense of this three-part history hides great complexity. A focus on traditions edgy enough to get named ignores some great studies. The dates are also approximate.
- 4 Consider Hori (1994) on learning in a Zen temple, Basso (1995) on Apache knowledge of landscapes, Gundaker (1998) on the systematics of African American dressed yards, Maira and Soep (2005) on expressive youth cultures, Ito (2009) on “mobilizing fun” in “edutainment,” or the growing literature on apprenticeships (e.g., Singleton 1998).
- 5 McQuillan’s study (1998) is best because the school is part of a national reform movement; Packer’s (2002) becomes riveting when a local auto factory closed and the children’s parents become unemployed; Pollock’s (2005) delivers best after a court order requires a reform of race ascription in achievement; Seyer-Ochi’s (2006) is enhanced by a mapping of neighborhood contours. Studies capturing the side industries of schooling are crucial: Koyama (2010) on big-test tutoring or Lin (2007) on race mediation groups.
- 6 The *American Journal of Sociology* housed a disjointed symposium in 1943. The Spindler volume, in contrast, was half papers and half discussion. This allowed the authors to talk themselves into an anthropology in the service of American schools.
- 7 The portraits also show his attentive observation of human interaction at the pen-and-pencil note-taking level of analysis.
- 8 A cultural deprivation theory of school failure is usually associated with the psychologist, Martin Deutsch, whose first major research report was published by the Society of Applied Anthropology (Deutsch, 1960). Although Deutsch’s work now reads as blatantly racist, by the standards of 1960, by turning home environments – and not racial background – into his main variable, he offered some relief from racist interpretations of woeful African American test scores even after the promise of integration. The Achievement Gap is the latest version of this effort to blame the victims of social inequalities.
- 9 The transition from mourning failing children as victims of cultural neuroses to celebrating them for their ingenious resistance to the contradictory demands of their culture and social structure was not easy. Henry was unable to make the move in his disappointing essays on disorganized and culturally deprived minority children.
- 10 With Reaganomics, income distribution was skewed to an ever-smaller handful that controlled a greater amount of the wealth produced by the wider population. The wealthy have had little problem getting wealthier; they need instead to worry only that their children might suffer a regression to the mean. By 2007, a mere 0.01% of the American population controlled 12% of the country’s wealth compared with the bottom 80% – skewed to the wall – who control only about 2% (Saez, 2009).
- 11 The details of Stambach’s example fit our comparative scheme, but there are many excellent cases (e.g., Doerr, 2009; Lukose, 2008). A more complete story would include linguistic analyses that have overlapped with both interaction and global studies of schooling (see Wortham and Rymes, 2002; Rampton, 2007).
- 12 Exceptions in both directions are important, but this would be another chapter.

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CHAPTER 4

Education, Cultural Production, and Figuring Out What to Do Next

*Hervé Varenne, with
Jill Koyama*

Language does not unite people. On the contrary it is the arbitrariness of language that makes them try to communicate by forcing them to translate – but also puts them in a community of intelligence.

(Rancière, 1999 [1991]: 58)

It is our fate, as human beings living ordinary lives with friends and foes, relatives and co-workers, that what we know about each other at the beginning of the day is not quite helpful in figuring out what to do with them – *next*. Our consociates, “the special jury that examines and confirms the course of one’s being and becoming” (Plath, 1980: 8), are always likely to surprise us.

Consider Vignette 1, where the representative from a large company was told by an assistant-principal to commit what would amount to fraud in order to resolve a scheduling problem. What is one going to do when one is told: “You can bill for two hours” (for one hour of work)? At *this* moment, sorting out personal or institutional plausible causes for such a suggestion might be interesting but altogether fruitless. At *this* moment, the issue for the participants concerns the production of futures (one in which one commits a fraud, or one in which one withdraws, among many other possibilities). The issue, for anthropologists, is to follow the participants in their efforts to produce a future with what is given to them.

Vignette 1

One time in 2007, an assistant-principal was talking with the representative of a large tutoring company about the organization of the tutoring sessions then required of schools officially identified as “failing” under the original NCLB legislation. The representative was complaining that the suggested schedule would only accommodate one hour sessions when the company was contractually obliged to provide two hour sessions. To this complaint the assistant-principal answered: “Well, we don’t have any more rooms and so that has to happen. Don’t worry ... we’ll work it out. *You can bill for two hours.*” (Koyama, 2010: ch. 5, emphasis added)

Anthropology is said to have started with Franz Boas’ rejection of the evolutionary determinism that comforted the political powers of the time as they rationalized colonial policies, and that also led to an induced blindness for the vast range of human possibilities. He demonstrated that one could not predict how the people he met in the west coast of North America organized the details of their everyday lives, or what would be their major concerns. Even if the people appeared to live as we imagine the first human beings did, tens of thousand years ago, Kwakiutl, Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, etc., were also unique and particular. Each people had found one way to live in their ecology with their technology, while their immediate neighbors, with very similar ecologies and technologies, had found other ways. Boas’ students generalized the argument and also emphasized, particularly in the work of Ruth Benedict (1934), what sort of practical problems each particular way of organizing life, what she called a pattern of culture, produced for the people who had to live by it. The first anthropologists of education, particularly Jules Henry (1963), were driven by the same sense that “culture” always made particular problems for particular people. My own work has built on this sense of the fatefulness of culture. From my earliest work on lives in the American Midwest (Varenne, 1977), to my work (with Ray McDermott, 1998) on culture “*as*” disability, to my current work on education as a general principle, I have continued to investigate the consequences of what I now call the “culturation” of human experience.

All people, I argue, have to figure out, day in and day out, the exact conditions they and their consociates face together. They have to figure out what to do with what they find and, almost always, how to convince consociates that *this* rather than *that* course of action might be more satisfactory for any number of goals. In this process of discovery, explanation, and reconstitution, they are likely to find even more matters that they were not aware they needed to investigate. Most significantly, the search that leads to a *next* act also produces new conditions. These, like the original ones, will be unique, grounded in a particular time and space, and altogether factual in their consequences. In other words, as people, together, act *next*, and thereby “culture” (transform, reconstitute, *bricole*) the *previous*, they produce a temporary state for their consociates, “a” culture. In much of my earlier writing, most recently with Ray McDermott (McDermott and Varenne, 2006; Varenne and McDermott, 1998), I have been concerned with “culture” in this sense we inherit from Boasian anthropology and Saussurian linguistics. For example, when McDermott and I write about “the American School,” we write about a historically constituted

state, the “house we inhabit” – one of our favorite metaphors. I am now turning to the activities that produce such states (Varenne, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2010), whether they last a few minutes or centuries, whether they involve a few people or hundreds of millions. And so I play with “culture” as both noun and verb, as historical product and ongoing productive activity.

I place “figuring out” (as well as interpreting, explaining, convincing, etc.) at the core of this activity. It is an activity I deem “educational” in a pragmatic tradition more than compatible with cultural anthropology in most of its versions – as long as the phrase “culture is learned” (in the past of individuals) is rewritten as “culture is *learning* (and *teaching*)” in the fully progressive sense of an ongoing collective process activated, throughout life, when faced with renewed uncertainty. This activity does produce a specific *here* and *now*. Like the walls Robert Frost wrote about, and which may or may not make good neighbors, what is produced by human construction is fully factual in its consequences. But a wall does not determine what can be done with it. Hunters may tear them down, hikers may ignore them. Cultural facts constrain, but do not determine. As people approach the architectural, institutional, political walls that frame their lives, the question becomes what to do with them.

This, for example, attempting to schedule multiple activities in the same room, is the problem that *now* requires figuring out a plausible *next*. *This* that someone else has made catches us in its tangled web of connections, potentialities, threats of consequences, etc. Above all, and against the most common interpretations of Geertz’s famous phrase (1973: 5), *this* “web of significance” is not one “we” spin. The webs that make the most difference are spun by people “we” do not know, in other times, spaces, cohorts. We, our consociates and I, are caught at a specific historical moment, or “culture,” with specific conditions and consequences we cannot escape. But *this* culture is not “ours” even as we work with it, day in and day out. *This* culture is our problem, necessarily triggering what Rancière called, in a particularly felicitous phrase, “a community of intelligence” (1999 [1991]: 58).

In this chapter, I sketch how to explore the key terms “education,” “culture,” and “figuring it out.” I start with a brief summary of the theoretical grounds of an argument I developed at greater length elsewhere (2008 [2007]). I then summarize a few exemplary ethnographies and move to develop further what I mean when I write about education as a fundamental aspect of cultural production in general. I conclude with suggestions about a new way of writing about the production of America, and the specific forms of ignorance with which people in the United States must struggle.

FIGURING OUT HOW TO STUDY “FIGURING OUT”

Half a century of research and theoretical developments has demonstrated the analytic power of starting with the postulate that human sociability is founded on ever renewed ignorance, active searching, and determined persuasion. An extensive body of research has demonstrated that performing even the simplest tasks requires ongoing work done in concert with others also involved in figuring out what to do *next*, *here*, and *now*. Who is to speak first in a telephone conversation (Schegloff, 1968)? Who is to read next in a classroom reading lesson (McDermott and Aron, 1978;

McDermott and Tylbor, 1983)? More complex tasks, involving many more people, are even more likely to present new puzzles as what had been settled as “known” is revealed to require new learning. Several such moments have been well documented in recent ethnography: Given a science laboratory, what sort of experiments should be performed next (Latour and Woolgar, 1979)? Given a prenatal counseling center, what sort of advice should be given following an amniocentesis test (Rapp, 1999)? Given the collapse of an industry, what are workers to do (Ferguson, 1999)?

These are instances of a general question about the construction of a future given some present conditions. This question concerned the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1973 [1969]) and the linguist Émile Benveniste (1971 [1966], 1974) when they wrote about the speaking out of experience (what they called “enunciation”). It concerned Lévi-Strauss when he wrote about *bricolage* and myth-making (1966 [1962]; 1969 [1964]). Congruent arguments have been made by de Certeau (1984 [1980]) and Boon (1999) as they emphasize people’s ongoing production of what Boon, building on Thoreau, qualified as “extra-vagant” alternatives to what some observers might have expected (on the basis of prior knowledge), or to what some efficiency experts might have proposed (given hypotheses about functionality). Roman Jakobson (1960, 1985 [1956]), when writing about metalinguistics, also contributed to the overall framework by exploring the means and conditions of cultural production. All worked at the intersection between conditions, uncertainty, and imagination. They challenged the common assumption that social order requires earlier socialization or enculturation. Rancière (1999 [1991]) has pushed this furthest philosophically by making ongoing, uncontrollable education the motor of human life, with socialization an altogether unpleasant side-effect.

The work mentioned above is often heavily theoretical. It also provides the foundation for much recent ethnography, as well as for a re-reading of earlier ethnographies. It should lead to a recasting of our own practice as anthropologists of education. I have argued elsewhere (Varenne, 2008) that, in the ongoing practice of the field, we over-emphasize the travails of American schooling. More limiting is our emphasis on “what has [not] been learned,” unconsciously or automatically. We inherit this emphasis from many sources: the American tradition in cultural anthropology (“culture is that which is learned”); the French and/or Marxist critical traditions (“the problem is what the powerful make us *méconnaître* [‘mis-know’]”); and all research looking for the reasons “why” some people do not learn. We need to escape *méconnaissance* and recapture what was most powerful in early anthropology. Then, those who built the field demonstrated that human beings, everywhere, are involved in finding ways, actually many different ways, to survive in all sorts of ecological niches, including all the niches produced by other human beings earlier in the history of humanity. We now need to expand this demonstration by showing that ecological transformation, material production, biological reproduction, etc., are not matters that happen mysteriously in some subterranean terrain. They happen in ongoing deliberations during which people bring out the locally and temporarily salient aspects of their conditions as they discuss what they seek to transform, thereby producing new conditions, a new culture, for their consociates.

Vignette 2 can serve as an illustration of the complex historical sequences that collective deliberations require. Once upon a time, central administrators placed a

school on a list of “Schools in Need of Improvement” (“SINIs”), that is of failing schools. This school’s principal convinced administrators that this was an error. But the school was still on the list and had to report that it had done what SINIs must do. This was the condition (culture in its multiple arbitrariness) that the principal and the teachers now faced as they deliberated what to do *next*. The vignette is taken from the meeting when the teachers, in turn, produced for their students conditions that made all of them “failures for the current purpose.” And so they all “passed” (in the ethnomethodological sense), successfully, as failures. They had figured out some of the paradoxical complexities in the administration of school failure; they had convinced each other that, at *this* moment and for *this* purpose, they would do *this* rather than *that*; and then they moved out to face renewed uncertainties when they faced students and parents. Or, as I would now put it, they kept educating themselves about their world, including what they could change and what they could not.

Vignette 2

Teacher 1: We are a successful SINI that is failing?

Teacher 2: Or are we a failing SINI because we are succeeding, excelling? [laughing throughout room]

Teacher 1: Face it. We’re succeeding and the DOE thinks we’re failures.

Principal: Actually, they [the DOE] know we met our AYP last year and this year.

Teacher 3: So, why are we SINI again?...

Principal: I’m frustrated too! We are a remarkable success here. All of you know that. I certainly know that. They [the DOE] say we need improvement because we failed to meet the ELA AYP, but we didn’t ... I don’t want us to get hung up on labels. We know that we met the AYP and still we need to direct some energy into all the things that get thrown at us for being a SINI. We know how to do this, even if we don’t want to, right?

Nonetheless, for the next half hour, the teachers worked to make sense of the SINI designation. They planned what to do next as if their successful students were actually failing. They decided to have students do more concentrated vocabulary and arithmetic in small groups, to tutor individuals for a larger part of each day, and to make weekly benchmarks for their classes to meet (Koyama, 2010: Chapter 8).

EXEMPLARY ETHNOGRAPHIES

Quite a few anthropologists have been tracing such educative activity all around the world. Three recent ethnographies can serve to illustrate the range of what can be done.

Grey Gundaker (1998, 2008 [2007]), for example, makes us pay attention to the activity of some West Africans when they arrived in the United States. They soon figured out that those who had enslaved them paid a lot of attention to particular forms of engravings through which they appeared to exercise their power. They found out that they were forbidden to learn how to read – and yet quite a few taught themselves to do so in the face of the determined opposition of their masters. Gundaker shows

how complex the situation could be: even slave-owners figured out that having literate slaves could be helpful. Slaves, and also sometimes enlightened owners, had to answer many questions on an ongoing basis: how is reading to be taught?; who can/may/must read when?; what can be done to mitigate potentially disastrous consequences when illegitimate reading is discovered? Gundaker's is classic ethnography at its best. Like Boas or Malinowski, she brings out what some people are not generally known as having done, and thereby expands our understanding of our humanity.

In a similar vein, Fida Adely (2008 [2007]) tells us about high school girls in Jordan. They were facing varieties of Islamic practices that might or might not be permissible, might or might not be escaped. Some of the girls insisted that they should veil and that all forms of music were forbidden. Some of the same girls were recruited to sing, unveiled, in front of men, by the administration of their school. Neither girls nor administrators controlled the conditions that made it necessary for them to deliberate about Islam. Instead, they demonstrated that they could use sophisticated meta-linguistic devices to discuss the ways in which Islam impacted them.

Michelle Verma's work (2008, 2010) with Indo-Caribbeans in Queens, New York, makes a similar point. As two-time migrants, first from India, and then from British Guyana, the Hindus among them had to figure out, again, how to conduct their Hinduism, practically and on an ongoing basis. They found themselves settling in neighborhoods, predominantly Irish or Italian until then, that had been laid out by American urban designers, but not for Hindus. The migrants may have learned their Hinduism earlier in their lives, but this knowledge was not enough. New questions had to be answered in short order: where are our temples to be located?; what are the issues about locating a temple *here*?; can we conduct the same kinds of rituals we could conduct *then*, in Guyana, *now* that we are in the United States?; where are we going to find our priests?; how do we figure out whether someone who claims to be a priest is indeed a priest?

It would not be too difficult to recast many classical ethnographies as records of educational efforts. As an example, I take a classic pair by Evans-Pritchard (1940, 1951). The books are usually presented, like much anthropology of the time, as pictures of the "way the Nuer are," useful for those who might wish to control the Nuer, or devise policies better attuned to their "local knowledge." However, taken together, Evans-Pritchard's accounts can also be read as documenting how the Nuer puzzled over each other and their physical environment and how, eventually, they built something that produced new issues to resolve for themselves and their descendants. Reading Evans-Pritchard as someone solely concerned with social structure is to miss that he, like most anthropologists, found out about the Nuer by witnessing and recording the struggles of the people he talked to and their uncertainties about what to do next. Evans-Pritchard does write at times, like most of us, in a declarative way that appears to reify the Nuer. But as soon as he gives a more fine-grained sense of his experiences, we get to feel the deliberate work of the Nuer with their neighbors, and each other. He cites the poignant lament of a father:

You think how when they were little you carried them in your arms and played with them and fed them with tidbits, and now they have gone to live with a man who did not bring them up, because it was with his cattle that their mother was married. (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 149)

As Tolstoy said, all unhappy families are unhappy in their own way. This lament gives a sense of what can lead to unhappiness in Nuer land (complex rules about marriage, cattle, and reproductive rights). And it reminds anthropologists of what has always been good ethnographic practice: First, direct your ethnographic gaze on the issues of everyday life in their full emotional valence; then, follow unflinchingly the leads one discovers towards the historical conditions that people cannot escape, even as they seek to transform them; and, finally, write about all this without shortchanging either the factuality of conditions, or the efforts of the people to figure them out.

Vignette 3

“Lots of parents here work two or three jobs. Both parents, usually. So, having their kids in a safe educational environment allowed them more flexible and longer work schedules. By putting their kids in SES, they were able to pick them up at 5:30 instead of 3:30 and that’s got to be a big difference in work hours. Most of our parents are Mexican immigrants who want their children to succeed. So, you know they do what they think will help their kids. Like work more hours to provide for them and put them in tutoring ... Parents aren’t going to stop this just because the school got off some list it was never on. Hey, if I had to work, I too would put Alyssa in SES [‘Supplementary Educational Services’ consisting of free afterschool tutoring].” (Koyama, 2010: ch. 8)

Vignette 3 concludes this section with a glimpse of the work some new immigrants must perform as they figure out what New York City and its schools are like. They are men and women who came from Mexico, had children, and discovered one of the many paradoxical properties of the culture that had now caught them: having children attend a “failing school” can be useful. And so they fought the teachers’ attempt to reclassify their school as a success.

ON THE PRODUCTION OF CULTURE

My claim is a broad one and does not solely concern the anthropology “of education” as a peripheral subfield, or as another attempt to “apply” anthropology “to the problems of our days.” Rather, I claim that education must be placed at the core of anthropology as the flip side of the concept of culture. Levinson (1999) has made a similar argument, which I expand. As anthropologists, we have claimed with very good reasons that “culture” (the historical specificity of human conditions) is, or should be, an inescapable concern of *all* behavioral sciences (including sociobiology) because there are so many ways of being human. We must now demonstrate that “education” should be a similarly inescapable concern, and for reasons that are a direct correlate of those that make culture inescapable. The activities that produce variability, as well as the activities that seek to control it and thus reveal the problematic character of this production, must be our concern and must not be reduced to automatic processes of human evolution. When Marx (1970 [1845]) wrote that “men” “distinguish themselves from animals” [that is, I would say, “distinguish themselves from their sociobiological endowments”] “as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence,” then he implied a theory of education.

To say this, I am well aware, will be controversial. I call for the challenging of many grand theories of the twentieth century when they discussed what might be the motors of the human production of humanity. Rather than hypothesizing past causes, I start with the moments when, in the life of some collectivity, something is noticed and some in this collectivity produce something that had never been quite done before – and which will constitute new problems for future others. Prototypical might be that moment Jean-Jacques Rousseau once imagined when one man told another one “this is my land” and the other man agreed to act as if this statement made sense. This may never have happened in this way, but human history is made of such moments when speech (and all other symbolic media) does “act” and imposes its consequences – including the need to educate oneself into one’s new conditions.

These are the moments that concern me. The human production of human conditions (in the past) cannot but induce new forms of specific ignorance (about the present) that lead to renewed production (for the future). Whatever one’s understanding of “history,” the local production of new means of material production cannot be taken as automatic or mechanical. For example, as Anthony Wallace documented powerfully in a wonderful historical ethnography (1978), it was an ongoing challenge to constitute oneself as a capitalist in the early 1800s (particular time) in Rockdale (particular place) with particular others (engineers in England, new immigrants, craftsmen, etc.). Everyone found out that something always happened that made them ignorant – and this included not only the workers or local craftsmen, but also the local engineers, factory owners, their banks, etc. As one owner put it, “Not only was the machinery badly made, it was also ‘badly planned.’ But he and his mechanics worked with it and he added newer and better machines as well” (Wallace, 1978: 187).

More recently, Bourdieu and Rancière have urged us to pay attention to the induced ignorance that is the necessary correlate of human cultural evolution. But they move in very different directions. Bourdieu and Passeron put the practical issue quite well: ignorance is produced by the past development of “arbitrary forms by arbitrary powers” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977 [1970]: 5). They develop this to claim that “every [institutionalized education system] must produce and reproduce, by the means proper to the institution, the institutional conditions for misrecognition of the symbolic violence which it exerts” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977 [1970]: 61). Whether this “must” be the case is the core issue I raise. It is just as likely that “arbitrary forms” imposed by “arbitrary powers” trigger the constitution of “communities of intelligence” (Rancière, 1999 [1991]: 58), that are, of course, also “polities (communities) of practice.” Before Rancière, Merleau-Ponty had also faced the phenomenological implications of the fact that all human expression must proceed through arbitrary codes. Merleau-Ponty argued this meant that all expressive acts must be an ongoing struggle. “Meaning,” he wrote in a striking phrase, is “between what has been said and what has never been said” (1973 [1969]: 38). Thus, he prefigured the intellectual resistance against the common sense that enculturation into a particular arbitrary makes it *impossible* to say what has not been said before, or do what institutions, even when overwhelmingly powerful, say cannot be done. Without denying the difficulty of producing that which has not been produced before, it is evident that what has never been quite said or done in *this* particular way, does get said and done in just *this* way.

I build on Rancière and Merleau-Ponty and focus on education as the ensemble of the concrete, local activities that people conduct in real time when they are in “communities of intelligence” as a polity figuring out their exact present conditions, and what to do next. I cannot expand here on the properties of these activities as they are being revealed by current research. I know we will need to pay close attention to what ethnomethodologists and conversational analysts have written about sequentiality, accountability, indexicality, and also, as Garfinkel has recently brought out, about the ongoing instructions people give each other to keep everybody on track. We will need to pay attention to the operation of networks and machines, in the way Latour has urged us to do. We will need to pay attention to matters of metalinguistics and metapragmatics, as well as of poetry, play, and extra-vagance.

This leaves one major problem. The temporal sequence I modeled as “then-now-next” is not bound to any particular length or to any maximum number of people involved – though the minimum is probably three, as Arensberg argues (1982). The theoretical point has generally been illustrated, from Pearce, through G.H. Mead, to Garfinkel, through cases involving small numbers of people, in face to face interaction, and for short periods of time (often a matter of minutes). Thus, Garfinkel tells us that driving down a freeway requires the ongoing work of a particular cohort instructing each other. It is what he calls a “tutorial problem” (2002: 92, 162–165). Many researchers in schooling and family life have demonstrated repeatedly the reflexive and indexical properties of sequences such as reading lessons or familial events. The important thing was to show that, in all cases, it is *these* drivers, children, spouses, from which one is getting instructions about what to do *next* to accomplish *this* task. It is *these* people who then have to be instructed about what one is attempting to accomplish.

Bourdieu repeatedly criticized this theoretical tradition for its purported inability to deal with processes (1998 [1994]) that proceed on a larger stage and over longer periods of time. It is more accurate to argue that the full demonstration remains to be done. Highway driving, reading lessons, putting children to bed also index the work of engineers, state regulators, lawmakers. Their work produces culture by deeply inscribing instructions about what to do or not do to accomplish a task that no one ever had to accomplish *heretofore*. This work always brings together larger cohorts than the immediately visible people. These large cohorts include people far removed from the immediately interacting cohort, their relationships are often mediated by inhuman actors (roads, buildings, machines), and they most often deal with each other asynchronously over long periods of time. Bruno Latour is now famous for having developed the argument (2005). Daniel Miller and his students (1998; Horst and Miller, 2006) have been moving in the same direction.

ON THE PRODUCTION OF AMERICA

Putting together older work with emerging work provides every indication that the postulate that should now guide our work is one where we privilege the tracing of linkages, consequences, and ongoing activity over the summarizing of personal properties.

In conclusion, I sketch where this postulate might lead when working among people caught in the American polity.

With Ray McDermott, I have struggled against the lazy assumption that America must be the product of “Americans.” I have attempted repeatedly to state more carefully how a historical pattern (“America”) is experienced and possibly reconstituted in the everyday lives of the people of the United States (Varenne, 1986). In my work with McDermott, we have kept searching for the mechanisms linking a child saying “I could read page 4” (when all know she cannot) to the School America has built. How can a statement like “all men are created equal” lead to a teacher asking “who can read page 4?” and then to the production of official records stating “this child cannot read page 4,” “this teacher does not know how to teach,” “this school is failing”? This is surely not because most (many? some?) have been enculturated to believe mindlessly that identifying children, teachers, or schools as failures is a good thing. *Some* people do make very good arguments that such identifications are a good thing. *These* people have convinced the powers that be to act on these arguments so that, now perhaps more than ever, all their consociates (“Americans”) must deal with these identifications. Thus, at every level, from the most local of classroom reading groups, to the most general of political settings, where Congress legislates schooling (not to mention anthropologists of education), it makes sense for people to act as if these identifications were real. For them, at this moment, these identifications *are* real.

Again, it is essential to notice that, now (in 2010) like at every other time, whether in a New York classroom or in Washington, people do not agree about what to do next, even though they find themselves having to *do* some thing – perhaps even against their best judgment. In the process, the powerful do not simply set a generalized context. Rather, they produce a set of specific instructions about who should do what next and thereby set in motion the constitution of new networks of stakeholders who must then instruct each other about what each must do next – including perhaps how to make it look as if one has done what one has been instructed to do, even if one has not done it.

Vignette 4

One Hundred Seventh Congress of the United States of America
AT THE FIRST SESSION

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Wednesday, the third day of January, two thousand and one

An Act

To close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

This title may be cited as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Vignette 4 appears as a starting point. The vignette is a quote from the first few lines of a US Federal Government website for what is also known as “Public Law 107–110.” Starting in 2001, this (speech) Act has produced much. It has made practical differences in the lives of millions of administrators, teachers, students, their families, as well as large and small corporations, not to mention all the scholars who have been at work measuring, investigating, and criticizing this Act.

Where do we, as ethnographers of America, go next, given such an Act that is also “data” in our anthropological world? We should not go, I argue, where we may be most tempted to go, and that is on to a search for the motivations, beliefs, or values of the people who en-Acted PL 107–110 (aka “NCLB”). It is tempting to follow critics who see this Act as the product of the (mostly) white (mostly) males who made it happen. These may be symbolized by President Bush and Senator Kennedy who, according to any “great men” theory of history, are responsible for making the Act happen. As social scientists we might push further and search for the men (and some women) for whom Bush and Kennedy are just the most notable stand in. We could point out that many of these people did not know much about what they were doing (they were just plain stupid), or that they were misguided (they were too well schooled in academic policy research), or that they were mostly concerned with expanding their personal power (they were just plain evil). As cultural anthropologists, we could take this further and note how the Act was wrapped in redundant calls to American pieties, from the sanctity of childhood to the metaphor of life as a race. All this may be “the reason why” the Act was not only popular (it passed with 87 votes in the Senate), but altogether common sense, a matter of “America” as the culture into which “Americans” seem so thoroughly socialized that they cannot see how it hurts them. Such an analysis (or similar ones) could then claim to have “explained” the Act in terms of its antecedents.

Excavating the personal or institutional antecedents of an act can be interesting, but will not tell anyone much about what the act is doing, in the here and now. This is why I argue for an alternative well illustrated by Koyama (2010) as she elaborates on Latour. In her work, she follows the linkages that make NCLB a particular type of constraint on the various stakeholders which it constitutes. In the process, she demonstrates that NCLB makes different kinds of problems, and thus requires different, though specifiable, educational deliberations, depending on the exact cohort that must act in its terms. The four vignettes included in this chapter illustrate what is being brought out, and indicate where our next ethnographies should focus.

In this perspective, we make sense of the meaning of an Act (what difference it makes) by sorting out the other acts that it indexes, to which it responds, and which it anticipates. The Act then appears as a moment in the ongoing conversation people mostly located in the northern half of the Americas have been having for two and a half centuries about democracy, merit, schools, testing, and the unintended consequences of earlier acts. This is now a worldwide conversation – though certain voices are louder than others. These are conversations that have led to all sorts of Acts continually reforming earlier Acts, in the United States of course, but also all over the world. Conversations in Washington echo other conversations, and will be echoed in many other chambers where different aspects of the Act will become salient, includ-

ing, of course, many that were not intended. Work in comparative schooling under colonization and later is fascinating in this regard. Anthropologists, like Koyama, may be best at tracing the more local of the conversations. But they should not fail to point out the broader linkages, or yield the field to quantitative research when the question is a general one. Rather, they must demonstrate the power of other kinds of generalizations as they trace the networks or webs of significance.

To me, NCLB is just one statement in a cacophony of other statements now leading to conversations about the *next* Act. In fact, by 2010, NCLB is starting to fade into history, in one of its forms at least. While much is still in the air, the Obama administration now refers to the act under a different name going back to 1965 (the “Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act”), thereby indexing Lyndon Johnson rather than George Bush. What exactly might change when PL 107–110 comes up for re-authorization is an open question.

That the *next* will always be an open question requiring further work is the core of my argument. McDermott and I have quipped that “culture is less about the past than the future” (2006), and my call now is an extension of our work to recast the anthropological task away from (causal) explanation or any pretense of prediction. Instead, we must recapture what has always been the strength of the discipline, and that is the demonstration that human beings *can* do what some other human beings, particularly when they have political authority over other human beings, will not see them doing. The task is a dual one. On the one hand, it should produce well-specified accounts of constraints for a particular set of consociates, at a particular time in their history together. On the other hand, it should reveal the work these consociates do with each other, in the present, to make it a better day in the future.

Everyone produces culture out of their ignorance and with the stuff they find around them. To the extent that the anthropology of education is also one of the places where anthropology does directly enter the public sphere, then we must take care that our contributions are grounded in our own insights and not in the most hackneyed of policy debates. However hegemonic these discourses can be, particularly for university-based scholars, they can be resisted, and another *next* can be produced, if we can figure out where we are and where we could go.

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CHAPTER 5

Recovering History in the Anthropology of Education

Elsie Rockwell

Early in November 2009, while I was pondering this chapter, news arrived that two great anthropologists – Claude Lévi-Strauss and Dell Hymes – had passed away. I had not initially thought of their work as particularly significant for historical anthropology, yet further reflection turned this contribution into an excellent opportunity to render tribute to them. Their loss rang a deep chord in me, as I recalled moments on the path I had followed toward integrating my early training in history with my later dedication to the anthropology of education. By drawing on them in this introduction, I hope to provide a historical grounding for my own argument, situated as it is in the latter half of the twentieth century and in the fruitful Latin American periphery of the field.

An early encounter with the work of Lévi-Strauss had provided many of us with a shield in the face of the pervading Eurocentric perspective that confused history with the presumption of a progressive evolution of mankind culminating in “Western” culture. As François Hartog summarizes Lévi-Strauss’s argument in *Race et Histoire* (1952):

in order to do justice to the diversity of cultures, one must begin by recognizing that all societies are within history, but also, that time is not the same for all ... The forms of civilization that we are made to imagine as “scaled in time” should rather be seen as “staged in space.” (2005: 183, author’s translation)

Lévi-Strauss interpreted the rich diversity of human symbolic expression as multiple transformations of basic cultural structures, but he was careful not to turn these into

evidence of a chronological development implying a unilinear evolutionary process (Lévi-Strauss, 1975). Yet the struggle to free our thinking from the evolutionist scheme continues to this day. As the Comaroffs (1992: 4) – who cite Lévi-Strauss – argue: “[Evolutionism] remains in our bones, so to speak, with profound implications for our notions of history and our theories of meaning.” The task of recovering a historical dimension in anthropological studies, without resorting to an evolutionary scheme, is an ongoing challenge, recognized by Lévi-Strauss, as by others, many decades ago.

Dell Hymes, one of the founders of the anthropology of education, approached historicity from the opposite pole, using a proximal, rather than a distal perspective. I first heard of his research as I worked in close contact with linguists in the field of bilingual education in Mexico in the 1970s. Trained in linguistics and having served in several departments of anthropology, Hymes became Dean of Graduate Studies in Education at the University of Pennsylvania in 1975; he regarded the study of education not as an “application” of anthropology, but rather as an opportunity to achieve deep insights into language and society. This purpose was well captured in his introduction to one of the first books I read and taught, *Functions of Language in the Classroom* (1972). Despite its relevance, this book and those that followed in its wake sparked a false polemic between “microethnography,” linked to sociolinguistics, and “real” anthropological studies of schooling. I think we can now disregard this opposition, recalling that many scholars working in anthropology and education acquired important insights through the situated study of discourse, just as scholars of discourse have contributed significantly to a broad anthropological perspective (e.g., Erickson, 2005; Varenne and McDermott, 1998). Hymes himself not only urged attention to the development of specific speech genres in schools, as in other settings, but also called for an educational ethnology, a disciplined, comparative search for answers to such questions as, “What kinds of schools are there?” (Hymes, 1980). His general awareness of the historicity of cultural phenomena, and his avoidance of easy dichotomies and typologies, is quite clear, for example, in the following paragraph, where *education* could easily replace *linguistics*:

So far as the history of linguistics reveals, then, any synchronic state of affairs is likely to be characterized by a relation between a central movement and a range of traditions. The interrelation may be complexly dialectic. (Hymes and Fought, 1981: 229)

In what follows, I propose that the task of recovering history in the anthropology of education is not simply that of adding a historical chapter on to a traditional ethnography. Rather, it is an attempt to comprehend precisely the “complex dialectic” between central educational movements, such as hegemonic forms of schooling, and the diverse educational and cultural traditions that cross through and confront them on multiple space/time scales. The notion of “reproduction,” summed up in Bourdieu and Passeron’s (1977) epitaph of pelicans begetting pelicans, hardly captures the multifaceted experiences of schooling emerging in specific places and periods. And the model “grammar of schooling” imposed upon elementary schools during the nineteenth century in the United States (Tyack and Cuban, 1997) fails to account for the discontinuous coming together of assorted multiage and multilingual kindred

groups with the lone teacher – a pattern that still prevails in half the schools of the world. Clearly, we need concepts that might articulate a more subtle, dynamic account of the history of education embedded in broader social and cultural processes, such as prefigured by historians of education (e.g., Julia, 1995).

Given the increasing awareness of this contemporary horizon, a new perspective seems to be emerging for the study of schooling and other educational processes. Before tracing some currents that may serve this task, I will review the contributions of the “historical turn” in anthropological sciences generally. I will flesh out these ideas through examples from my own work done in Mexico and then discuss implications of this historical perspective for the anthropology of education.

THE HISTORICAL TURN IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Much anthropological research has been deeply transformed during the past decades through a turn towards the historical dimension. In the 1980s, several anthropologists made significant contributions. Eric Wolf’s (1982) seminal work situated the “people without history” – traditional subjects of anthropological research – well within the profound global transformations resulting from European expansion, and challenged the concept of culture that originated in that same history. In another direction, Marshall Sahlins (1985) explored how diverse cultural structures reinterpret events on the periphery of the world system, and developed the idea he summed up as: “Different cultures, different historicities” (1985: x). More recently, several published collections, produced through dialogue among the authors, have called for attention to the temporal dimension in anthropology (Hastrup, 1992; McDonald, 1996; Ohnuki-Tierney, 1990). A formal recognition of the importance of this theme came in 1999 with the 98th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Chicago, “Time at the Millennium.” At that meeting, numerous challenges to the evolutionary model and productive alternative schemes for researching historical time were proposed.

Together with the rethinking of time, the refutation of an essentialist, static concept of culture has contributed to the historical turn. It has been expressed by many, but a particularly pertinent statement is William Roseberry’s critical review (1989: 30–54) of Clifford Geertz’s concept of culture, in which he stresses the divergence between “inscribed” culture and differentially experienced meanings, noting that “the disjunctions may be the focal point for the production of new and alternative meanings ... or of struggles over the meaning of particular elements within tradition” (1989: 47). Also relevant is Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney’s article (2004), which questions the concept of “hybrid cultures” as distinct from “pure cultures” by arguing that all culture is “hybrid by its very nature.” Other scholars (see Halstead, Hirsch, and Okely, 2008; Kalb and Tak, 2005) offer deeper critiques of the traditional culture concept, and locate changing cultural materials and meanings *within* the overarching dimensions of praxis, power, process, experience, and struggle that explain their emergence and continuity. A number of empirical studies have articulated this historicized sense of culture; one that powerfully drives home the point is Gerald Sider’s (2003 [1993]) study of the complex transformations and differentiations that have

marked the history of Lumbee and Tuscarora peoples during the past four centuries, as well as their contested versions of that history, situated in ongoing legal battles with US government agencies.

A fundamental change of perspective was produced at the same time, as various organizations and scholars from the regions of the world that had been colonized by European empires – South and Southeast Asia, Near East, Africa, and Latin America – explicitly reclaimed not only their own histories, but also their own versions of historical time and transformation. Talal Asad (1973) gave us one of the first thorough analyses of the role of anthropology in the Western colonial enterprise. A pivotal moment was the emergence of post-colonial studies, ignited largely by the Subaltern Studies group from India working in the tradition of Gramsci's theory of praxis (Chakrabarty, 2002). In Latin America, other sources influenced a turn toward historical research among anthropologists, particularly dependency theory and historical materialism, influenced by the early publication of Gramsci's complete *Notebooks* in Spanish (1975–1978).

In Mexico, anthropology and history have long shared a common institutional framework, which made greater conceptual proximity possible. Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, in his classic work, *México profundo* (1987), argued that Mesoamerican civilization, far from having been destroyed and supplanted by the Spanish colonization, still provides the basic cultural matrix for the majority Mexican population, even while acknowledging its continual transformations and appropriation of other cultural materials. Simultaneously, Marxist anthropologists dismissed the categories of culture and ethnicity altogether, and framed studies in terms of class relations, modes of production, and peasant studies, stressing historical discontinuities within social formations. This academic context supported the strong criticism of the Harvard Chiapas Project (Vogt, 1978), noted for its atemporal and romantic view of the Mayan peoples of Chiapas. Anthropologists working through documentary evidence were subsequently able to reconstruct the histories that had led to the contemporary configurations of the Tzotzil communities in the Highlands, and thus refute the idea that they represented untainted vestiges of pre-Hispanic Mayan culture (e.g., García de León, 1985; Rus and Wasserstrom, 1980).

Though many scholars have contributed to the integration of anthropology and history, I find most relevant those who go beyond the incorporation of a temporal dimension to share deeper theoretical and epistemological reflections on the implications of the historical turn. I have chosen to examine more closely the contributions of three – Trouillot, the Comaroffs, and Fabian – who share a background of research with sub-Saharan African peoples, including those forcefully taken to America.

In *Silencing the Past*, Haitian anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot examines the relation of historical chronicles, archives, and texts to the dynamics of power, and exposes three historical moments to show how certain events or persons of the past have been silenced. He explains: “The very mechanisms that make any historical recording possible also ensure that historical facts are not created equal” (1995: 49). This leads to the “silencing” of the past: “By silence, I mean an active and transitive process: one ‘silences’ a fact or an individual as a silencer silences a gun” (Trouillot, 1995: 48). The historical record written and preserved by those in power selects, distorts, and consecrates particular events (e.g., the “Fall of the

Alamo”, the “Discovery of America”), and at the same time hides significant historical evidence. Following the ambiguities between “history as what happened” and “history as the account of what happened,” Trouillot suggests new interpretations of received secondary sources. This is most striking in his analysis of Sans Souci, an African-born former slave and military rebel of the Haitian struggle for Independence (1802–1804), who never capitulated to the French army or recognized its local accomplices – both intent on re-establishing slavery after independence. Sans Souci was murdered by Christophe, the future King Henry I of Haiti, and his story was subsequently silenced by contemporary observers and later historians.

Reflecting on work done with the Tshidi in her native South Africa, Jean Comaroff (1985: 13–15) notes that a “wealth of historical material ... particularly that of the mundane practice of ordinary people” is “essential to the understanding of the continuities and discontinuities of the modern Tshidi world.” She nevertheless admits: “Such data are notoriously difficult to rescue from oblivion, even in literate or semi-literate societies.” This leads her to seek out a large variety of sources, including personal documents, letters, and photographs, and, significantly, earlier ethnographies and ethnohistorical documents held by the Tshidi people themselves. She warns (as many have) of “the dangers in constructing the past through the grid of the present, or of reintroducing to a would-be processual account a present/past dichotomy ...” (1985: 13–14). In another book on the problems facing a “genuinely historicized anthropology,” Jean and her husband, John Comaroff (1992: 6), note the difficulty of “making our own existence strange”; they stress the need not only to understand the temporal dimensions of our own and other societies, but also, to “acknowledge the effects of history upon our discourses” (1992: 12). Although their work, like that of many anthropologists attempting to recover a historical dimension, clearly benefited from close readings of social historians (such as Davis, 1975; Ginzburg, 1980; Thompson, 1963), they distinguish historical anthropology by grounding it in the study of significant practices embedded in relations of power, through the process of estrangement:

The purpose of estrangement ... is to remind ourselves that the West and the rest, long locked in historical embrace, cannot but be interrogated together. [Our challenge] is to explain the great conjunctures, the processes and practices through which have been fashioned the significant social phenomena of our times, both global and local. (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992: 45)

Belgian anthropologist Johannes Fabian, with a lifetime of work in central Africa, has also challenged the evolutionary paradigm through which, he claims succinctly, “dispersal in space reflects directly ... sequence in time” (1983: 12–13). Considering that societies traditionally studied by anthropologists were denied the status of contemporaries, Fabian proposed the radical concept of coevalness: “What else is coevalness but recognizing that all human societies and all major aspects of human society are ‘of the same age’ ...” (Fabian, 1983: 159). In a later article on ethnology and history (Fabian, 2001: 70–86), he defends the need to identify “terrains of contestation and tasks shared by the three players,” the Western academic disciplines of history and anthropology, and a third one, “popular historiology,” which for Fabian encompasses

contemporary non-academic practices of representing the past in the present through diverse media. In his work on popular arts and theater, this perspective forced him “to take cultural memory seriously,” rather than subsuming it under “objective” theories of culture and identity. His own research represents a sustained effort “to meet the Other on the same ground, in the same Time” (Fabian 1983: 165).

As those of us involved in academic disciplines take seriously the dialogue with others in relation to tensions and transformations of educational processes, we must deeply question our notions of what constitutes historical fact, time, and change. Again, rather than seeing their accounts of past and present practices and meaning as discourses belonging to a different “culture,” the position summarized above asks us to accept them as challenges to our academic versions of historical progression. This leads to an issue that is beyond the scope of this chapter, though quite pertinent: the historically situated nature of anthropology and education as a field and its present positioning in relation to contested policies and politics.

ON THE TRACKS OF A HISTORY IN THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

These advances in historical anthropology are just beginning to emerge in ethnographic studies of educational processes. Nevertheless, our field has important precedents that may well serve the task. This cursory review of primarily American anthropological research will necessarily leave out many references. In the limited search I did for this chapter, I did uncover relevant work for a growing historical awareness. Indeed, classical studies of education – broadly conceived – by anthropologists had produced the sort of estrangement needed to re-examine the overly schooled experience in the United States. Margaret Mead (1928) and Jules Henry (1963), among others, offered profound insights into the ways the dominant social and economic order of the mid-twentieth century had infiltrated the everyday experience of millions of children.

Yet ten years after the founding of the Council of Anthropology and Education of the American Anthropological Association, Walter Precourt noted that:

Ethnographic studies on education tend to be synchronic in orientation ... Ethnographers must not, however, lose sight of the fact that the unfolding of educationally relevant behavior is embedded in a broader historical complex of cultural patterns and processes. (1982: 440)

In the classic collections edited by Louise and George Spindler, Precourt’s chapter on Appalachian schooling stands alone as an ethnohistorical study of school/community relationships. In the Spindlers’ 1955 overview (republished in 2000) of the field, history is conspicuously missing from their proposed interdisciplinary study of education. While the Spindlers described the cultural context of American and German schooling, and discussed the changes in schooling over time observed during their multiple field experiences in Germany, they tended to remain in the ethnographic present and to contrast “traditional” and “emerging” values along scales of modernization that have been deeply questioned by recent anthropological theory.

Nevertheless, their emphasis on a comparative study of schooling was an early move toward a more historicized view of educational processes. Many scholars who published in the *Case Studies in Education and Culture* (Spindler and Spindler, 1983) followed this lead, minimally, through the inclusion of a historical contextualization of their sites (whether using actual or fictional names), or, more significantly, by weaving local and global history into the ethnographic narrative. These precedents have led to systematic comparative studies (Anderson-Levitt, 2003) and reviews that highlight, for example, “the historical dialectic between colonial powers and indigenous populations” (Philips, 1992), and thus contribute to the educational ethnology envisioned by Hymes.

John Ogbu (1978) is noted for his attention to the effects of the collective history of particular voluntary or involuntary minorities upon their experience of schooling. Studies of immigrant groups by scholars both from the United States and other countries have followed his lead, enabling ever finer distinctions to be found between those who succeed and those who fail in school (Gibson, 1997). An early call to further consider specific historical situations in the analysis of racial and ethnic relations to schooling was made by Douglas Foley (1991). Nevertheless, only recently have some studies incorporated new theoretical insights to study the dynamic relationship between different generations of immigrant families and the experience of translocation (e.g., Hall, 2002; Villenas and Deyhle, 1999; Wortham, Murillo, and Hamann, 2001).

Essential tools for approaching the “complex dialectic” mentioned by Hymes are to be found in anthropological studies on education from the perspective of critical social theories, with the convergence of traditional Marxist theory, the Frankfurt school, and recent formulations of critical class, gender, ethnicity, and race theories. This trend, marked initially by the embrace of Paul Willis’s *Learning to Labor* (1977), has undoubtedly supported the work of many scholars within the past two decades in the United States, and in the rest of the world (Brayboy, 2005; Foley, 1990; Fordham, 1996; Levinson, 2001; Nesper, 1997; Ortner, 2003, and many others; see reviews by Collins, 2009; Levinson and Holland, 1996, and Foley, Chapter 6, below). A historical anthropology of education is unthinkable without taking into account these contributions. They have strongly influenced a more cautious and nuanced use of dominant categories of thought and expression related to fundamental educational processes, not only at the “macro” scale involving power and class relations, but also in approaching such “micro” processes as talking, teaching, and even learning (Lave and McDermott, 2002). This range is further evidence of the need to abandon the macro–micro dichotomy and work toward an understanding of the rich interplay of multiple time/space scales (Nesper, 2004). For example, ethnographic studies of material cultures of schools and of policies in practice are well positioned to uncover long-term effects of successive waves of technical innovation and pedagogical reform upon the everyday experience of schooling.

Along these lines, it is important to acknowledge Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), indebted to the Soviet scholars Lev Vygotsky, Aleksei Leontiev, and Mikhael Bakhtin, and its influence on the anthropology of education. Many articles linked to the keywords “history” and “historical” in the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* are in this vein, including Dorothy Holland and Michael Cole’s important

piece on cultural schema (1995) in the special issue on Vygotsky (Emihovich and Lima, 1995). Dorothy Holland and Jean Lave (2001) explored “history in person” to provide a solid bridge between this tradition and anthropological research by developing a Bakhtinian frame to analyze improvised and creative identities in situations of social struggle. Taking a different approach, Kris Gutiérrez, Patricia Baquedano-López, and Carlos Tejeda (1999) used CHAT to understand processes of hybridization in multicultural educational settings. Other studies in this line contest the assumption of seamless hybrid cultures and point rather to strong processes of differentiation between dominant and subaltern or dissenting practices and conceptions of learning (Paradise and de Haan, 2009; Rival, 1996).

Finally, a search for related AEQ articles also brings up studies based on oral history or life histories, a distinct field that anchors ethnography in co-constructed memories of past experience. Seen as sources to enrich or counter documentary and ethnographic versions, personal accounts can be of enormous value to historical anthropology. Biographical narratives of teachers and students, for example, give temporal depth to descriptions, educational processes, and signal crucial moments in unfolding social and cultural contexts. In-depth interviews related to past experiences can further the spirit of openness to be confronted by local versions of history, as urged by the anthropologists reviewed above.

Scholars working toward a historical anthropology of education in other countries (beyond the scope of this chapter) are indebted to many of the same references, but also draw on their own academic and intellectual traditions favoring historical perspectives on culture and schooling. A positive sign of movement toward a more international research community has been the growing interest of Anglo-American mainstream journals and editors in publishing and reviewing work in other academic traditions (Anderson-Levitt, 2011). Readers of studies done in other academic traditions must keep in mind that social categories designating diverse groups and cultural histories differ greatly from region to region; for instance, “popular culture” and “popular education” mean something completely different in the United States and Latin America, reflecting different historical configurations of the underlying notions of “the People,” as well as the influence of scholars from different fields.

As important as these undercurrents in anthropological research on education have been, they do not yet fully reflect the historical turn of more recent anthropological research. However, some studies have picked up the discussion being conducted in other fields. Indeed, a new generation of scholars with interest in observing what happens in schools and classrooms approach their sites with a deeper knowledge of context and history than was true some decades ago. Recent seminars and panels on education have opened communication with historical anthropology; for example, the Spencer Foundation-funded seminar, “Reconsidering the Interrelationship of Anthropology and Education,” organized by Amy Stambach, Kathleen Hall, and Bradley Levinson, dedicated the 2001 meeting to historical anthropology. In 2002, at another Spencer-funded event, “What in the World Happens in Classrooms?,” historians Ian Grosvenor and Kate Rousmaniere presented their understanding of what past classrooms looked, felt, and even

smelled like, by drawing on a range of new, albeit scarce, sources, such as letters, directories, and photographs. At this meeting it became evident that some of us doing classroom ethnography were still largely obsessed with the discursive interaction between/among teachers and students, and often took for granted the material culture, graphic representations, and sensory and emotional milieu of schools. Indeed, anthropologists have rarely documented the transforming power that changing learning environments have had on the experience of schooling of successive generations, in specific times and places (Candela, Rockwell, and Coll 2004; see also Beni, Chapter 16, below).

DELVING INTO THE PAST TO UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT

My search for historical depth in the ethnographic study of schooling and literacy (Rockwell, 1999, 2009) in the Malintzi volcano region of Tlaxcala, central Mexico, has taken me through several stages of the sort of estrangement mentioned above. After a prolonged period of ethnographic research in and around the elementary schools of the region during the 1980s, I steeped myself in the strange documentary record of the state archives. Though I had always assumed that contemporary life in schools showed traces of previous political confrontations over education, it was not easy to reconstruct these effects through fieldwork alone. The pedagogical sources in the local archives (e.g., books used in teacher training, inspector reports, articles for teachers) allowed me to re-examine the classes I observed in the 1980s, and thereby to discover a multilayered practice that echoed the discourse of the successive educators and reform movements that had left their imprint upon local ways of teaching over the course of the twentieth century (Rockwell, 2007b).

During my fieldwork, teachers and administrators were still rendering nostalgic homage to the rural schools founded in post-revolutionary Mexico (1920–1940), when the federal Secretariat of Public Education had launched an ambitious program to provide a more relevant education to the *campesinos*, people of the countryside who had mostly participated in the armed movement and were the object of post-revolutionary discourse. An official history extolling this period had been transmitted to all who worked in the educational institutions of the country. However, delving into the historical records actually produced in my field site during the post-revolutionary period, and reading them in the light of present ethnographic knowledge, revealed another facet of the national project, the centralized strategies of state formation. I found deep contradictions between the public discourse of “schooling for the community” of the 1920s and 1930s, and the way the new federal authorities moved in to appropriate, and at times literally fence in, spaces of schooling which had a long pre-revolutionary tradition rooted in the indigenous towns themselves. This longer history, particularly the local labor and resources that had gone into building the schools, had been silenced by the ubiquitous version of a benevolent state providing presumably free schooling for the first time to the rural communities. However, it was the experience in the field that enabled me to find the “clues,” in the tradition of Carlo Ginzburg (2002), to some of these historical processes. For instance, I began to find

in the archives accounts of conflicts over the control of school keys (Rockwell, 1996), a detail that could easily be overlooked by historians unfamiliar with the everyday dynamics of school life. By systematically collating evidence indexing the “materialities of schooling” (Grosvenor and Lawn, 2005), such as inventories, photos, and maps, I gained perspective on the dimensions of the federal incursion into the indigenous towns, as well as on the State’s growing control over much of their everyday life through the agency of the teachers and inspectors (Rockwell, 2005, 2007a). A few documents also signaled forms of resistance displayed by villagers at that time, some of which were replayed toward the end of the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, the archives were relatively silent on transformations of the lived experience of schooling. There was a lack of evidence of what occurred within the classrooms, particularly in relation to children who at the time spoke only the indigenous language, Nahuatl. Strangely, an institution devoted to the spread of literacy leaves very little written record of its own more intimate practices (Grosvenor, Lawn, and Rousmaniere, 1999). Photographs were taken primarily of ceremonial moments rather than of actual classrooms. This made me turn toward oral history, seeking insights in the memories of elders who had been through elementary schools as monolingual Nahua children in the 1930s and 1940s. These conversations began to challenge my own versions of the history of schooling in the region. The accounts revealed both the enduring tensions of attending school at the time and surprising appropriations of post-revolutionary ideals that had made it down to the classroom. Listening to these life histories also opened a world of long-term appropriation of literacy in this region that has had little to do with formal schooling, and much to do with learning through participation as citizens in community assemblies and committees (Rockwell, 2008). In the case of some elder men who had held office in the local governing structure, I found an active interest in researching the history of the towns. Their accounts revealed concern, debate, local preservation, and interpretation of evidence of the region’s past, and opened new paths for my own archival research on the post-revolutionary period. The encounter with this local historiology of the past, to use Fabian’s term, has deeply altered my understanding of the continuities and discontinuities in present-day cultures of schooling and literacy in these indigenous towns. I am currently searching for an honest way of including these narratives and fully acknowledging their effect on the historical anthropological assumptions I had elaborated during the decades prior to this field experience.

PERSPECTIVES

In summary, I find that the field of anthropology and education has rich currents, springing from various theoretical sources, which have prepared the way toward further integration of a historical dimension. By delving into archival records and artifacts from the past, educational ethnographies can gain temporal depth, adding a multilayered perspective on contemporary research. Unfortunately, certain constraints have led in the opposite direction, including restricted funding and lack of training for documentary research. The move toward recovering historical depth comes at a particularly difficult moment, as scholars everywhere are struggling to preserve and

make available the documentary and photographic record of past and distant educational practices with little public support. Our primary field notes could be invaluable to future historians puzzling over some of the pendular shifts in present-day schooling, or attempting to make sense of the quantitative figures that are used to account for large-scale differences in achievement and quality of schooling. Yet ethnographic records have a short life unless they become part of the published record, perhaps with the exception of the battle won by folklorists to preserve oral history recordings as archival materials.

True, the privacy of field notes responds to the legitimate ethical motive of protecting the identities of those who admit us into their worlds. This concern justifies the rule of anonymity, but also often leads to the omission of geographical and temporal information necessary for a historical contextualization of the field experience underlying an ethnographic text. Such omissions may lead to a “silencing” that eventually plays into the hegemonic version of educational realities, by constructing the sort of abstract generalizations that ethnography has always eschewed. The tendency of educational institutions to silence subaltern or dissident voices has been signaled as a systematic way of buttressing white privilege and masking diversity and resistance as deficiency. Conversely, adding a temporal and situated dimension to ethnographic research on long-held grievances and injustices can surely serve current struggles and challenges. Those of us with the privilege of publication must strive to validate the collection of *testimonios* in publicly accessible form and to register as much as possible of the undocumented everyday practices, occurrences, and movements that we witness, as well as to understand them in the light of the unfolding history of our times.

A graver obstacle to consider is that Western educational thought still has deep roots in an evolutionary scheme of time, often found under the guise of “modernization.” This view surfaces, for instance, in the underlying assumptions of child development and cognitive or behavioral learning theory, in the spread of schooling as a “civilizing” mission through colonial administrations and development agencies, in the growing business of national and international evaluation, and even in our own conceptual lenses for analyzing the schooling of societies. Shallow uses of the culture concept, which often imply a ranking of different competencies, abound in educational discourse and are used to explain away the effects of unequal power relations on achievement, as Mica Pollock has argued (2008). Through a more historicized conception of culture, educators might gain insight into the effects of past actions on the contemporary social practices and processes occurring in and around schooling.

By accepting the challenges posed by historical anthropology, scholars and educators might rethink the temporal dimensions and categories of both conservative and transformative processes in education. The call to historicize our own discourses, as well as the plea to meet our collaborators “on the same ground, in the same Time,” poses general dilemmas for anthropologists attempting to understand the cultures of learning and teaching. Thus, historical anthropology is not simply a matter of academic preference, but rather a decisive step toward creating better educational policies and practices, through long-term, close relations with people involved in educational processes. Ultimately, a historical anthropology of education is an honest way to fully acknowledge and support the human capacity to transform the world, even within the increasingly powerful structures dominating our times.

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CHAPTER 6

The Rise of Class Culture Theory in Educational Anthropology

Douglas Foley

Others have told the story of educational anthropology's search for a culture concept that addresses power relations, social inequality, and exploitation (Levinson and Holland, 1996). What follows is my version of how American educational anthropologists are fusing cultural and class theory into a new interpretive paradigm. The story begins, however, with sociologists, who produced most of the early critical studies of class and schooling (Hollingshead, 1949; Lynd and Lynd, 1937; Vidich and Bensman, 1958). They generally deployed a Weberian theory of social class and emphasized the superior resources and dominance of middle-class adults in civic affairs and their youth in the schools. During the post-1960s era, educational sociologists continued elaborating upon these early studies. The exhaustive Coleman report (1966) and Jencks' restudy (1972) demonstrated that a middle-class family background was the best predictor of academic achievement. A host of other studies documented the differential community tax bases and facilities expenditures that favored middle-class suburbs over tax-starved urban schools (Sexton, 1961). Others emphasized institutional practices that reproduced class inequality in schools, such as elite school board composition (Johns and Kimborough, 1968), business models of education (Callahan, 1962), academic tracking (Oakes, 2005), and class-biased curriculum and pedagogical practices (Anyon, 1981).

In addition, many ex-teachers like Jonathan Kozol, Gerry Rosenfeld, George Denison, and Peter McClaren wrote passionate autobiographical accounts of shameful, neglected urban schools for the poor. I think of the aforementioned academic studies and autobiographies as a "stealth" form of class analysis. They do not cite Marxian

preoccupations with class conflict and who controls the means of production and the state, but they do highlight the following “structural” economic and political practices: the superior resources and political networks of the privileged classes; elite control of educational decision-making; and institutional practices that favor the well-to-do and punish the poor. All of these factors tend to reproduce rather than reduce class inequality.

In the post-1960s era, two types of more openly Marxist educational critiques also became fashionable for a short time. The first was by Marxist economists like Bowles and Gintis (1976). They offered a sweeping critique of capitalist schooling that complemented the aforementioned “stealth” class critiques. The limits of these early Marxist critiques are well known. They were plagued with rather mechanical, structural Marxist views of school socialization, which exaggerated the capacity of public schools to produce obedient workers and citizens. They rarely chronicled how teachers and students resisted such socialization. Worse still, they tended to overemphasize the primacy of economic factors over race, gender, and sexual identity practices.

The other Marxist critique of education that emerged in the 1970s was by Brazilian activist Paulo Freire (1970). He represents a much more politically activist brand of Marxism. He sought to organize and educate the rural peasantry in his country to resist an oppressive ruling elite. For Freire, making the peasantry “literate” was much more than being able to read and write. A citizenry that possessed “critical literacy” had the ability to “read the word and the world,” thus understanding their own history and why they were poor and oppressed. Freire’s critical pedagogy offered a way for educators to raise political consciousness through democratic dialogues in “cultural circles.” Like American progressive educators John Dewey and George Counts (1969 [1922]), Freire advocates using education to transform society. Two of America’s most outspoken Marxist educators, Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren, along with an important cadre of other outstanding critical educators such as Carlos Alberto Torres (Torres and Noguera, 2008) and Antonia Darder (2002), have produced an astonishing number of books that have advanced political activism through Freire’s pedagogy. Together, they have helped to popularize his critical pedagogy as a way for educators to resist capitalist ideology and empower the disenfranchised. In short, class analysis of schooling was alive and well in the 1960s and 1970s in the sociology of education, and Freire’s pedagogy became popular in the 1980s. None of the aforementioned class analysis of schooling tackled, however, the thorny theoretical problem of how to combine cultural and class theory.

During the 1960s and 1970s, few educational anthropologists were contributing to either stealth or Marxist class critiques of capitalist schools. Most were busy attacking “cultural and linguistic deficit” views of ethnic minority communities, child rearing practices, and students (Foley, 1997). Anthropological studies of the linguistic and cultural mismatch between home and school were quite influential, and a few sociolinguists, like Shirley Brice Heath (1983), did important studies of how race and class factors produced linguistic inequality (Collins, 2009; Erickson, 2004). Jules Henry (1963) was the only anthropologist of that era who produced a sweeping critique of American culture and school socialization. His *Culture Against Man* zeroed in on what he called the “pecuniary logic” of advertising and sales that dominated everyday life in

America. He showed how this logic filtered down into the schools and encouraged extreme forms of individualism and competition. Henry conceptualized American capitalist culture and its schools as a ruthlessly competitive, consumer-oriented culture that, from cradle to grave, robbed people of their humanity.

Henry did not cite Weberian or Marxist class theorists, but I felt his study had strong affinities with the neo-Marxist German Frankfurt school of critical theory. Various Frankfurt theorists, especially Herbert Marcuse, argued that modern capitalism's media-driven "culture industry" was commercializing the arts and everyday consumption practices. I read both of the aforementioned critiques of capitalist culture as re-statements of Marx's alienation thesis. The exceptionality of Henry's work led me to conclude that the field of anthropology of education was saddled with a psychological, functionalist concept of culture that limited the questions one could ask. Most educational anthropologists of his era studied "culture" as the transmission of discrete cultural values and practices from one generation to another (Spindler, 2000; Wax, Diamond, and Gearing, 1971). This notion of culture tends to privilege the continuity of socialization and harmony rather than discontinuity and conflict. In short, educational anthropologists of the 1960s and 1970s era were still not infusing cultural theory with class concepts of alienation, power, exploitation, and inequality.

Developments in American anthropology would change that in short order. Sherry Ortner's (1984) highly perceptive article chronicles these currents of change and highlights the rise of a more dynamic "practice" and "performance" oriented concept of culture, which begins addressing the problem of fusing cultural and class theory. A seminal text that promoted a more politicized concept of culture was George Marcus and Michael Fischer's (1986) *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*. They entreated anthropology to do more socially, politically relevant, value-laden "cultural critiques" of modern capitalist cultural institutions. These authors provided a few suggestions on how to synthesize class and cultural theory, but the real breakthrough came with the arrival of the "New European Sociology of Education" in the early 1980s.

ENTER THE "NEW EUROPEAN SOCIOLOGY": BOURDIEU AND GRAMSCI

These two authors eventually become the foundation of what American educational anthropologists think of as the "cultural production," "cultural Marxist," or class culture perspective (Foley, 2010; Levinson and Holland, 1996). I tend to use these terms interchangeably, but the terms have different but complementary connotations. The term "cultural Marxist" is a broad cover term that suggests a new hybrid type of class theory. The term "cultural production" emphasizes actor agency and suggests a dynamic view of culture as process, performance, and practice. The term "class culture" highlights the importance of class theory for cultural analysis. Of all class culture theorists, Pierre Bourdieu has most influenced how American anthropologists do cultural analysis. Most readers will be familiar with his work, but considerable confusion remains about what kind of class theorist he is. Bourdieu is often mis-labeled a "neo-Marxist," but I think of him as a "neo-Weberian." He seems Marxist because he entreats mainstream sociological stratification theorists to adopt Marxian political preoccupations with inequality, capital, ideology, and exploitation. His emphasis on

“practice theory” (Bourdieu, 1977) shifts inquiry towards how individual actors interact and intentionally challenge and/or acquiesce to normative sociocultural systems. Somewhat like cultural Marxists, he emphasizes agency and change, but as we shall see, his notion of agency through status competition games is quite different from the agency of collective class struggles. Moreover, he has little interest in Marxian preoccupations with bourgeois–proletarian class struggle over who controls the state and the means of production. Methodologically, Bourdieu argued that both Marxist and mainstream sociologists were misguided in their attempts to model social science on the physical sciences. He preferred the less “positivistic” Weberian concept of interpretation, which is founded on continuous critical self-reflection (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

In his grand opus, *Distinctions* (1984), Bourdieu outlines a sweeping model of how capitalist societies are stratified through two great and unequal “taste cultures.” The “habitus” (learned dispositions) of these two status lifestyle groups – the superior, more civilized bourgeois and the inferior, less refined working class – differ markedly in aesthetic and expressive cultural preferences for art, literature, music, language, and manners. Status (social class) identities are learned initially in the home and developed further through cultural institutions ranging from fashion, museums, and the mass media to the public schools. In effect, Bourdieu fuses the Weberian idea of social classes as status/identity groups to what anthropologists might call the “high” and “folk” concepts of culture. In anthropological terms, social classes have distinct, learned expressive cultural practices that mark each group’s status and cultural identity.

Individuals from these broad cultural identity groups compete to maintain or enhance their position in the society’s status hierarchy. Life in the status hierarchy boils down to a complex interactional game, which people conduct in various social “fields” or institutional settings. To play this game well an individual needs superior communication and networking skills, not an organized revolutionary movement, political party, or interest group lobby. People socialized into the allegedly superior habitus of the “bourgeois” taste culture are at a distinct advantage. Bourdieu argues that bourgeois taste culture practices are a form of “linguistic,” “cultural,” and “social” (networks, contacts) capital. Members of the bourgeois taste culture know how to use their inherited or acquired taste culture capital of manners, language, dress, and preferences in dance, music, literature, and sports to get ahead in life. Individuals who possess cultural capital often convert their cultural capital into economic capital. One of the key social fields of status competition is over school credentials (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). The parents of middle-class youth work hard to get their kids into the gifted programs and honors classes. These programs help their youth accumulate the school credentials (high test scores and good grades) that serve as a form of cultural and linguistic capital needed to gain admission to and succeed in the best universities. Graduating from a “good university” certifies that these students are ready for post-graduate training and access into high status professions that pay well.

Despite the fact that Bourdieu created an innovative, neo-Weberian stratification theory, feminist and critical race theorists are quick to point out his blind spots, which the second type of “new European sociology of education” addressed more adequately. Scholars at the Birmingham Center for Critical Cultural Studies (BCCS) like Stuart Hall (Morley and Chen, 1996), as well as “post-Marxist” scholars like Ernesto Laclau

and Chantal Mouffe (1985), shifted class analysis toward “identity politics.” They advocated focusing on how cultural groups struggled against hegemonic discourses that stigmatized them as inferior “cultural others” (Foley and Moss, 2003). These “post” or “cultural” Marxists were much more attentive to patriarchy, race, and queer theory than traditional Marxists and neo-Weberians like Bourdieu. The BCCS perspective is generally founded on Marxian historical materialism, not Weberian stratification theory. BCCS scholars valorized E.P. Thompson’s (1963) classic study of the English working-class movement and the seminal work of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1971). Gramsci was deeply involved in the Italian labor movement of the 1920s, and thus was labeled a “syndicalist Marxist.” He spent years organizing and educating the working class to defeat the rise of Italian fascism. Like the Frankfurt neo-Marxist scholars, Gramsci was faced with explaining why the Italian working class embraced nationalism and fascism rather than communism. Unlike the Frankfurt School, Gramsci did not abandon the concept of class struggle for control of the state and economy. He retained Marx’s conception of social classes as historical blocs with conflicting interests and different access to political power. He emphasized the Italian elites’ use of cultural institutions like the media, church, family, and public schools to produce ideological “hegemony” and consent to the state capitalism of fascism.

Gramsci also realized that Italian communism needed to build what he called a “counterhegemonic” revolutionary working-class culture. After building a united, self-confident working class, they would wage a cultural struggle against the ideological apparatus of the elite historical bloc. Like Paulo Freire, Gramsci spent a great deal of time in consciousness-raising activities with workers. His efforts included building working-class solidarity and community through the popular arts, sports, and critical journalism. His emphasis on working-class culture and cultural struggle opened up Marx’s narrower idea of an economic class struggle. As noted earlier, Stuart Hall (Morely and Chen, 1996) and Laclau and Mouffe (1985) popularized Gramsci’s version of class theory as a way of incorporating the cultural identity struggles of various oppressed groups. This new hybrid class culture theory is not reductionist, thus does not privilege class as more fundamental than race and gender factors. How class, race, and gender practices articulate in particular historical situations is always an open question to be studied empirically. It is this openness to inquiry into all forms of oppression and struggle that has attracted scholars of color and feminists to the Gramscian version of class culture theory (Brayboy and Bartlett 2005; Villenas 2010).

The BCCS revival of Gramsci filtered into progressive American educational circles during the early 1980s through Paul Willis (1981) and Michael Apple (Weis, McCarthy, and Dimitriadis, 2006). Neither of these scholars engaged in direct political activism to raise working-class consciousness, but their scholarship pointed others toward a new class cultural critique of schooling. Willis helped to popularize the view that the working class, contrary to much mainstream thinking, had a distinct, resilient, functioning culture. Apple produced a much more comprehensive Gramscian critique of class and the American public school system. He zeroed in on the elites’ ideological control of school curricula (1979), the deskilling of professional teachers (1986), the market driven politics of textbook selection (1991), and ultimately, the rise of the Christian right as a historical bloc (2006). His greatest contribution has been a

sustained critique of the post-1960s American conservative historical bloc and their neoliberal educational reform schemes, which include private charter schools, vouchers, and an “audit culture” of accountability. He shows how Christian conservatives have tried to infuse the public school curriculum with creation theory, anti-abortion sex education, and arguments for the superiority of Western culture.

Two recent anthologies by educational sociologists on class and schooling contend that a revival of class analysis of schooling is needed (van Galen and Noblit, 2007; Weis, 2008). These new anthologies note that contemporary educational sociologists now strive to do “intersectional” class analysis, which includes race and gender. A number of contemporary educational scholars have followed Apple’s lead. Linda McNeil (2000) indicted the Texas business classes’ accountability schemes, and Lois Weis (1990, 2008) explored the impact of globalization on the working class and its gender relations. Others have critiqued urban school reform (Anyon, 1997; Lipman, 2004; Oakes, 2005) and the corporatization of higher education (Shumar, 1997; Shumar and Canaan, 2008). A new group of activist educational anthropologists inspired by Freire are engaging directly in school reforms (AEQ, 2008b; Cammarota, 2008; Duncan-Andrade and Morrell, 2008). What the new sociological anthologies do not chronicle is the role of anthropologists in producing a more “intersectional” class theory based on Bourdieu and Gramsci.

RECENT ADVANCES IN THE STUDY OF CLASS CULTURES AND US SCHOOLING

Since I came out of the post-1960s era determined to infuse cultural theory with class theory, I developed my own version of the class culture/cultural production perspective. The new edition of *Learning Capitalist Culture* (LCC) (Foley, 2010) chronicles in detail how I fit into the development of class culture theory. It suffices to say here that I appropriated Gramsci’s notion of cultural identity struggles and Bourdieu’s notion of status competitions into Marx’s theory of political economy, class struggle, and alienation. What makes my perspective different from other class culture studies of schooling is: (1) its extended, historical study of political economy, class formation, and ethnic politics (Foley *et al.*, 1988); and (2) its use of contemporary communication theory to expand upon Marx’s alienation thesis. Empirically, LCC portrays how high school students skilled at impression management navigated dating, sports, and classroom scenes. Teachers and parents willingly collaborated with students to produce upward mobility for the minority (Anglos) and a few middle-class Mexicanos, and social inequality for the majority (working-class Mexicanos). This status competition, which the school stages and sanctions, teaches students both their station in life *and* the commodity logic of capitalist culture.

In recent years several exceptional new studies of class culture and schooling have appeared. Peter Demerath (2009) and Ellen Brantlinger (2003) take earlier critiques of “talent farms” (Cicourel and Kitsuse, 1963) and of status identity competitions (Foley 2010; Henry, 1963) to new levels. They chronicle the lengths to which middle-class families and youth go to produce a school culture that sponsors their success. They show us how the privileged classes appropriate and use public schooling, and

how teachers and administrators collude to preserve their class, race, and gender privileges. Equally important, they provide a deeper portrait of the values, “psychological capital,” and strategic moves it takes to be a winner, as well as the enormous psychological cost of such extreme competitive individualism. Two sociological studies are also excellent applications of Bourdieu’s class culture perspective. Annette Lareau’s sustained research on families and parenting (2000, 2003) adds to these portraits of how the middle class maintains its class privilege. Middle-class parents have a value orientation that she calls “concerted cultivation,” which pushes their children to acquire the cultural and linguistic capital necessary to excel in the middle-class inflected culture of schools. Julie Beattie’s (2003) feminist, post-structuralist discursive analysis of race, gender, and class articulations demonstrates how the school privileges a middle-class white “preppie” aesthetic style over the dress and make-up style of working-class Mexicana and white girls. She shows how preppie girls perform “good girl” and “good student” images, which enhances their upward mobility. Conversely, working-class girls who use allegedly “vulgar, tasteless” dress and make up are less likely to receive school sponsorship. These fine microethnographic studies underscore the cultural/linguistic match/mismatch between the white middle-class culture of the public schools and their culturally diverse student bodies. They show the various ways that school boards, administrators, and teachers continue to collude, wittingly or unwittingly, with the white middle class to preserve their privileged status.

The other side of the cultural production of privilege coin is what Bourdieu calls “symbolic violence,” and what Foucault calls “surveillance” of the students not fitting the imaginary ideal of the high achieving “mainstream” student. Varenne and McDermott’s (1998) seminal study demonstrates how schools construct the failure of culturally and linguistically different students, who are stigmatized as “cultural others.” Their study uses the type of intensive interactional analysis that Bourdieu advocated but rarely did. As we noted elsewhere (Foley, Levinson, and Hurtig, 2001), the “new American anthropology of education” of the late twentieth century includes many scholars of color and feminists who are studying race, class, and gender articulations. This infusion of new talent and standpoints was initially dedicated to replacing deficit thinking with more positive perspectives on stigmatized cultural others. In recent years, the interpretive focus has shifted to specific “microtechnologies” of institutional control and/or agency such as: disciplinary policies (Ferguson, 2001; Lomawaima, 1994; Schnyder, 2009); tracking/detracking (Mehan, 1996; Oakes, 2005); pseudo-scientific labeling practices (Mehan, Hertweck, and Meihls, 1986); the dominance of color blind/mute whiteness discourse (AEQ, 2008a; Lee, 2006; Moss, 2003; Pollock, 2004); agency through double consciousness (Fordham, 1996); street culture (Akorn, 2003, 2008); popular culture (Lamont-Hill, 2009; Nesper, 1997); ethnic movements (Foley 2010; McCarty, 2002); networking (Valenzuela, 1999); identity production (Pascoe, 2008; Urrieta, 2009); and class/race/gender articulations (Anderson, 2009; Beattie, 2003; López, 2003). Not all of these authors would label themselves class culture theorists, but their work bears the influence of the post-1970s debates among feminist, critical race, and class theorists. Twenty-first century educational anthropologists attend to race, class, and gender articulations more than earlier educational anthropologists did. These developments are particularly true among the current US educational anthropologists who study non-US societies and schools.

ANTHROPOLOGISTS TAKE CLASS CULTURE THEORY ABROAD

In the early 1970s, I wrote an extensive review of how anthropologists were studying non-US schools (Foley, 1976a). I argued that too many educational anthropologists of that era were under the spell of “modernization” theory, which idealized the American public school system. Most of the early studies of village schools were preoccupied with documenting whether the Western/American model of mass education was a democratizing force that transmitted “modern” value orientations and created hard working, loyal “national citizens.” In contrast, I portrayed the American colonial experiment with mass education in the Philippines as failed “modernization,” riddled with political corruption and social inequalities (Foley, 1976b, 1977). What excites me about the new anthropological studies of non-US schooling is how much more they focus on colonial, class, race, and gender inequalities (AEQ, 2008c). The cultural reproduction–production paradigm has definitely replaced the old cultural transmission–modernization paradigm. These new studies are more broadly conceived than many studies of inequity in the US public schools. Consequently, they theorize how the state uses schools to create a national identity and cultural citizens from very diverse populations (see Beni, Chapter 16, and Levinson, Chapter 17). More importantly, a new generation of Latin American, Asian, and African educational anthropologists are producing their own post-colonial, non-Western critiques of mass education in newly industrializing countries (AEQ, 2009; see also, e.g., Anderson-Levitt (Chapter 1), Miñana and Arango (Chapter 22), and Stambach and Ngwane (Chapter 18)).

Some educational anthropologists still deploy the modernization concept but in less normative ways. For example, Amy Stambach’s (2000) analysis of schooling and gender in Tanzania portrays the modernization process as a series of cultural continuities–discontinuities between local culture and the schools. Like a good cultural production theorist, she also highlights shifting gender roles, social mobility patterns, and the colonial legacy of Christian education. Cati Coe (2005) focuses on the Ghanaian government’s explicit attempts to institute multicultural education. She contrasts the invented versions of national culture with the local, daily practices of culture in textbooks and classroom lessons. This novel way of portraying “modernization” policies highlights the contradictions between state and church policy and local cultural practices. Both of these studies provide complex portraits of modernization and nation-building and schooling without advocating idealized models of Western education.

Other recent studies deploy a cultural production perspective even more explicitly than do Stambach and Coe. For example, Aurolyn Luykx (1999) provides us with an in-depth portrait of how the Bolivian state, via its teacher training colleges, tries to inculcate indigenous Aymaran students into a hegemonic notion of a national Bolivian identity. She chronicles the ensuing cultural identity struggle that erupts between an assimilationist faculty and Aymaran students with strong racial and gender sensibilities. Her detailed microethnography of one normal school is situated in a historical account of social movements and the Bolivian state. Thus, we are presented with a “bottom up” view of the national identity struggle occurring in a racialized, patriarchal Bolivian social formation. Bradley Levinson’s (2001) meticulous account of student subcultures in one Mexican “secundaria” (junior high school) is also set in a

historical account of national policy to use the public schools for promoting the egalitarian ideals of the Mexican revolution. Building upon Mexican scholars' notions of state formation, Levinson contends that the local youth groups he studied did indeed appropriate the "official" state ideology that "we are all equal," and thus downplayed their racial, class, and gender differences. His study, which shows youths' strategic but contradictory response to school and national ideologies, calls into question the generalizability of US and European studies of antischool youth cultures to the Latin American context. Deborah Reed-Danahay's (1996) ethnography of a rural French school also challenges the universality of American and British studies of youth that emphasize oppositional, antischool cultures and forms of open, aggressive student "resistance." She highlights more passive forms of student and community resistance to the heavy hand of the centralized, French national school system.

Two new studies of changing socialist educational systems in China (Fong, 2004) and Cuba (Blum, 2010) are also thought-provoking portraits of national government policies to socialize youth into a globalizing world economy. Vanessa Fong provides a detailed cultural analysis of how the forced one-child policy and "quality" campaigns have created a new generation of "singleton" youth who are individualistic and materialistic, thus in conflict with traditional Chinese family ideology and practice. Denise Blum portrays how the Cuban government attempts to create a "new socialist man" through organized collective experiences in the "pioneer place" and "schools of the countryside." Yet the government's efforts to create a hegemonic socialist ideology clash with the re-emergence of markets and tourism. This clash produces youth with a complex, mixed political consciousness; they are loyal to the revolution but also budding entrepreneurs. Both studies provide a fascinating look at how these socialist states are trying to cope with reentry into the world capitalist system. Another study that looks at the politicization of state schooling is Lesley Bartlett's (2009) study of Brazilian education. She provides a revealing portrait of how Brazilian teachers and students actually take up and use Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy in youth and adult literacy programs.

A strong critical cultural studies framing of the state-local school relationship is quite apparent in Katherine Hall's (2002) study of South Asian immigrant youth in Britain. Her multi-sited discourse analysis pays attention to a hegemonic nationalism that racializes Britishness as white, and the popular culture practices of immigrant youth who are adapting to such a nationalist context as well as capitalist commodity culture. She provides a touching portrait of Sikh youth navigating and negotiating family ethnic traditionalism and the lure of British youth culture. Hall also pays some attention to gender issues, but one sees this thematic more comprehensively in Janise Hurtig's (2008) portrait of "negligent patriarchy" in a provincial Venezuelan secondary school. Hurtig situates her study in the region's changing political economy – an oil boom and the rise of commercial agriculture. These economic developments bring some prosperity and many visions of upward social mobility. Paradoxically, young women coming of age in this era have rising expectations at precisely the moment of diminishing male allegiance to the patriarchal role of family provider. Some of the young women become socially mobile through schooling credentials, but other promising students forsake their studies and resign themselves to finding a "good" male provider. Ritty Lukose's (2009) study of Indian college students is another sharply drawn portrait of the educational struggles of young women. She chronicles how these youth navigate through the pressures of

state-sponsored nationalism, family, and peer culture, and provides a complex portrait of these youth “becoming” upwardly mobile, modern “citizen consumers.” She highlights significant differences in the way male and female students experience the globalizing effects of being consumer citizens. Male privilege is alive and well and expressed through political activism, life style, dating, and marriage practices. Conversely, young Kerala women find interesting ways of creating a space for themselves to be “modern” middle-class women in dress, comportment, and romantic attachments, but they still honor “traditional” gendered cultural expectations.

Finally, studies by Gregory Starrett (1998), Sam Kaplan (2006), and Veronique Beni (2008) also explore the state–school relationship through the discourse approach that emerged from the “post-Marxist” critical cultural studies paradigm. There are significant differences in their approaches, but they generally analyze how religious discourses converge and compete with modern secularizing discourses of modernity and development in Egypt, Turkey, and India. These studies focus on the wider cultural politics of creating a national political identity through a secular mass education system. The ethnographers spend time in local schools to illustrate how a nationalist hegemony is constructed, but none do a traditional ethnography of schools that focuses intensely on the agency of local actors. Consequently, they provide a less detailed portrait of the worldviews and interactions between teachers and students than the previously mentioned studies. For example, Beni’s novel use of the concept of “sensorium” and embodied “structures of feeling” provides a compelling portrait of state ideologies that socialize through school texts, music, dance, folk stories and rituals, but much less on how Hindu and Muslim actors react to the discursive regime of Hindu ideology. Nevertheless, these studies expand earlier notions of school ethnography in interesting ways. They are complex portraits of the competing macro religious and secular discourses that shape modern schooling.

A CONCLUDING NOTE

I would like to conclude by characterizing the new class culture studies of schooling as more nuanced, less essentializing, less deterministic portraits of actors and schooling institutions. This new generation of anthropological studies of schooling has two main foci: (1) institutional microtechnologies of control and ideological socialization; and (2) group and individual identity struggles against such institutional control and socialization. These foci provide educational researchers, policymakers, and activists with more complex portraits of how schools willfully and inadvertently reproduce class, race, and gender inequalities *and* of how groups and individuals consciously and strategically produce autonomy from institutional constraints. This new generation of educational anthropologists is tackling the ageless structure–agency debate, and is dedicated to representing the negotiated, historical character of social change and social order. As a “tribal elder” nearing retirement, I am delighted to report that educational anthropologists are fulfilling the original promise of the “new European sociology of education.” I would urge other anthropologists, educational researchers, and educational sociologists, to catch up with this felicitous turn of events.

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CHAPTER 7

“If There’s Going to Be an Anthropology of Education ...”

Harry F. Wolcott

As anthropologists of education based in the United States, we have done a good job of tracking variations in educational processes observed around the world and examining efforts to improve schools in the United States and elsewhere. Whether or not the change efforts themselves have always been a success, efforts to describe them have been highly informative.

Here I want to turn attention back on ourselves to ask: how have we changed?; have our objectives for that work been changing as well?; is an “anthropological perspective” still evident in our work? First, I review the uneasy relationship between anthropology (which earlier had tended to overlook education) and education (which tended to dismiss anthropological research). Second, I want to explore what it means to “think” like an anthropologist of education. Third, I examine the change we have been experiencing as some individuals working in anthropology and education have shifted from efforts at conducting “objective” field research to efforts focused explicitly on achieving *social justice*. That seems to me a large and problematic leap. Perhaps because I have been at this for a number of years, I would like to remind younger colleagues of where we have been and where they now seem headed. As is befitting an elder of the tribe, my comments will dote more on the past and serve, I hope, as a cautionary reminder to today’s younger generation of how things seem to have been.

I first encountered anthropology when I entered Stanford University as a doctoral student in education with a fresh new master’s degree from San Francisco State College and four years of teaching in the intermediate grades. The year was 1959, and

that happened to be a great time to enter Stanford. Doctoral students were being encouraged to include courses outside the School of Education, even to consider a Ph.D. minor.

I spent my first year wondering what field I might add to complement my studies. The field that intrigued me was anthropology. I knew that I did not want to pursue psychology, and educational sociology as I had experienced it did not seem to lead anywhere. A young anthropologist by the name of George Spindler had joined the faculty in 1950 and had been recounting what anthropologists do and how educational researchers might be able to employ similar procedures. Several of his earliest students had produced anthropologically oriented studies of local schools and school people (notably Clarence Fishburn, 1955; Russell Sharpe, 1956; and Murray Shipnuck, 1954). The only drawback was that Spindler was away from the campus that year, so I could not initiate studies with him.

Once he was back on campus I knew I was on the right track. Spindler actually proved to be far more interdisciplinarily oriented than I realized (or needed at the time); his Ph.D. was in cultural anthropology but it also included work in psychology and sociology. I was not deeply enough into anthropology to detect subtleties among the various disciplines, and Spindler's own interests fit nicely in the then current pre-occupation with culture and personality.

What Spindler had us read at the time (if I remember correctly) included, among others, selections such as Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934); Meyer Fortes' *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* (1938); Herskovits' *Man and His Works* (1949); something of Margaret Mead, such as *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928) or *Growing Up in New Guinea* (1930); and recent accounts such as *Children of the Kibbutz* written by Mel Spiro (1958) or Ted Brameld's *The Remaking of a Culture* (1959).

Spindler was aware of a need for new material in anthropology to augment its shelf of classics. Our readings included selections from the then new series edited by my mentor himself (together with his wife, anthropologist Louise Spindler), *Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology*. At the time the series had only five titles: Homer Barnett's *Being a Palauan*; John Beattie's *Bunyoro: An African Kingdom*; C.W.M. Hart and Arnold Pilling's *Tiwi of North Australia*; Adamson Hoebel's *The Cheyennes*; and Oscar Lewis's *Tepoztlán: Village in Mexico*. We had lots to read, but we had to mine it pretty deeply to make it relevant to educational processes.

The authors in the series were anthropologists writing about their own fieldwork, and if we intended to become anthropologists who did fieldwork, they were the models for us to emulate. What they seemed to have in common included the following:

- they studied societies different from their own;
- they conducted fieldwork for a long period of time, frequently returning to pursue further work or a restudy;
- they were able to converse with the local people in the native language;
- their studies were conducted with publication in mind;
- their responsibility, as they saw it, was to observe and record, not to change or attempt to improve conditions as observed;
- their work was comparative, with a conscious effort to identify dominant themes in the "culture" of their people: their ways of thinking and living;

- they studied specific groups and were reluctant to generalize beyond what they observed first-hand;
- it was not customary to pass judgment on the ways of life of the people they were studying or to offer recommendations for change or improvement.

There was no *particular* preoccupation with method and few books devoted specifically to that topic at the time. (One exception was the longstanding publication of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, *Notes and Queries*, at that time in its 1951 edition. It suggested innumerable topics for a fieldworker to consider, but not what one did with the topics or how they might best be investigated.)

There were also a few papers circulating on *aspects* of fieldwork, but as best I recall the earliest authored book devoted exclusively to the topic was Rosalie Wax’s personal account, *Doing Fieldwork*, which did not make an appearance until 1971. There was legendary advice about fieldwork (e.g., Kroeber’s “Take a big skillet”), and some shorter pieces in books dedicated primarily to findings from the studies themselves. We were especially attentive to Malinowski’s words on this topic in the chapter from his classic *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, “The Subject, Method and Scope of this Inquiry” (Malinowski, 1922: 2–25).

The consequence of this “training” was that although we approached the field with a strong sense of *can do*, we had little idea of what we *had* to do other than bring back something in the form of a fleshed out account of some culturally different people modeled upon what already existed in the literature.

To illustrate, I draw on my experience and that of my cohort at Stanford. At the time I was studying, four of us were ready to see what insight we could gain through cross-cultural fieldwork. We did not constitute a cohesive team or have a common mission; we were simply willing to commit to a year of fieldwork and to begin dissertation research at about the same time, the early 1960s. What we shared in common was that we were students of George Spindler.

The group consisted of A. Richard King, John Singleton, Richard Warren, and myself. We were students in education, but under the guidelines of the time, all except Singleton (who already had cross-cultural teaching experience) made a formal commitment to anthropology as our Ph.D. minor. We wrote Ph.D. exams in both departments.

Each of us returned from a year of teaching and living in a community to write up our experiences “abroad” – abroad at least in the sense of being outside the continental United States. Our anthropologically informed but education-focused dissertation studies were both challenge and incentive for the Spindlers to launch a new series parallel to their earlier *Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology*. They titled the new series *Case Studies in Education and Culture*. Collectively, the series gave “anthropology and education” some focused accounts to supplement the wide-ranging collection of books most often cited at the time. Along with John Gay and Michael Cole’s *New Mathematics and an Old Culture* (1967), each of the four of us contributed a rewritten dissertation to launch the new series.

And here began an unforeseen predicament. Since our Ph.D.s were in the field of education, we discovered that we were not accepted as full-fledged anthropologists by the American Anthropological Association, and were not eligible to become Fellows

of that organization (a dictum that was eventually relaxed). We represented the beginning of a new breed: hyphenated anthropologists. We were exactly what we claimed to be: students of both anthropology and education, but we had a particular focus on one aspect of cultural process – how the young are raised.

Each of us had successfully completed fieldwork. We were different from doctoral students trained in psychologically oriented educational research. But we were not trained along traditional lines of anthropology's customary four-field approach.

Spindler had been "talking up" the potential of this new area of academic interest for several years, although he stated flatly in his opening remarks at a 1954 Conference on Education and Anthropology:

Though no "educational anthropology" exists at the present, and this conference is not aimed at its creation, the purpose of this overview paper (*and of the conference, as well*) is to survey the articulation of these two fields. (Spindler 1955: 2, emphasis added)

From such humble beginnings the anthropology of education in the United States was launched, and Spindler was the first to publish several edited books addressed specifically to the topic. His earliest was a summary of the proceedings from that 1954 conference and was titled simply *Education and Anthropology*. It presented the views of anthropologists and like-minded educators expressed during that historic meeting. In the years that followed, Spindler edited, in order, *Education and Culture* (1963); *Education and Cultural Process* (1974); *Doing the Ethnography of Schooling* (1982); and *Interpretive Ethnography of Education* (1987b). Each of these books was well received and underwent multiple editions.

Spindler occupied one of only two joint university level positions in anthropology and education that existed in the 1950s, the other a comparable appointment held by anthropologist Solon T. Kimball at Teachers College, Columbia University. Kimball's students were also doing significant studies, but while Spindler encouraged students to find cross-cultural settings, Kimball's students tended to conduct their studies in institutional settings – including schools, of course – closer to home. Like Spindler, Kimball also edited a series in anthropology and education dealing with the anthropological study of schools (best known among those was Cazden, John, and Hymes' *Functions of Language in the Classroom* (1972)).

Without intending to, Kimball's and Spindler's students introduced further problems for anthropologists. Who was and who was not to be considered a "legitimate" anthropologist? Was it *formal training* or *fieldwork experience* that best distinguished them? And, did the school, or schools collectively, constitute a legitimate domain of anthropological inquiry? We begin to see the consequences of a dilemma in the making: some of the studies produced by their students had a distinctly anthropological twist, but some did not. So, what did a scholar have to do to be recognized as an anthropologist?

There were additional tensions about "method." For anthropologists, the way one went about research had always been taken for granted: you simply did whatever you had to do to get people to talk and to allow you to observe – maybe even join – their daily routines; for the educator, research meant knowing and applying a rather narrow set of univariate measurement techniques directed primarily toward assessing increments in learning achieved in the classroom.

Thus, the new breed of educational anthropologists approached their inquiries with conflicting orientations. In anthropology, there was rather casual attention to method; in education, method has always meant “everything.” That problem is still with us—depending on how ready and willing one is to accept “participant observation” as a method. While other doctoral students proudly paraded their quantitatively oriented dissertation proposals, my proposal was dismissed as “going off for a year to live with the Indians.” And that is exactly what I did (Wolcott, 1967).

At Columbia, Kimball kept his “anthropology and education” students on a more “applied” track by having them read a study that heralded a newly developing field called Applied Anthropology: the Bank Street Wiring Study described in *Management and the Worker* (Roethlisburger and Dickson, 1939). At the same time, he offered a way to understand a fieldwork approach for working in contemporary settings by having them read William F. Whyte’s *Street Corner Society* (Whyte, 1955).

Kimball also encouraged students to conceptualize their studies following Arnold van Gennep’s *Rites of Passage*. The book had originally appeared in French in 1908 and was translated into English in 1960 under Kimball’s auspices. Kimball’s enthusiasm for the work included van Gennep’s sequence of initiation rites – identified as rites of separation, transition, and incorporation (see van Gennep, 1960: ch. 6) – as a framework for examining aspects of the educational process (for an example, see an early article by his student Jacquetta Burnett (now Hill), 1969) .

Kimball wrote enthusiastically about the potential of van Gennep’s ideas for future students of “anthropology and education” in his Foreword to the new translation:

His study of initiation ceremonies holds important implications for learning theory that have yet to be explored. His analysis of rites of incorporation is valid for understanding the problems associated with the “alienated” and the “unclaimed” of modern societies. (Kimball, *Introduction*, in van Gennep, 1960: x)

In those days, Kimball and Spindler had the whole United States to themselves and there was ample room to accommodate a number of interested anthropologists (and a few sociologists, such as Bud Khleif and Murray Wax). The list of recognized anthropologists seemed to expand and contract like the tides, as a few academics – such as Paul Bohannan, Yehudi Cohen, Lambros Comitas, Fred Gearing, Jules Henry, Dell Hymes, Dorothy Lee, and, of course, Margaret Mead – dipped cautiously into the unfamiliar waters where anthropologists studied education and educators.

Kimball and Spindler were not close but never seemed to get in each other’s way. Spindler believed in the necessity of cross-cultural experience in the making of an anthropologist. Kimball’s students were oriented toward current problems and the issues addressed by applied anthropologists looking at institutions within their own society. Kimball insisted that anthropology should be of practical use and urged others to “get above the dead-level of ethnographic description” (quoted in Eddy, 1983: 143). With their different approaches they were never in competition.

It was Sol Kimball who informed me about the university position that I accepted after I completed my degree in 1964. The position that I took was originally intended

for an anthropologist, but the anthropology department at the University of Oregon could not imagine an appointment that entailed full-time research in educational settings. The call had to go instead for an educational anthropologist whose appointment to research and teaching would be in the School of Education.

At Oregon, I was anxious to try my hand at teaching in this emerging field and was encouraged to do so. Over time my “teaching load” included a two-term sequence in “anthropology and education,” which was co-taught with anthropologist Malcolm “Mac” McFee. “Co-taught” meant that we could cross-list the course and let students earn credit in either department. The beauty of this arrangement was that McFee and I had both been Spindler’s students at Stanford, although Mac was strictly studying to become an anthropologist, while my studies were in anthropology and education.

Each of Spindler’s new books, as they were published, offered a basic outline for organizing an introduction to the rapidly accumulating material in anthropology and education. Mac and I led an exciting seminar, encouraging the anthropology students to examine core concepts, including culture, culture change, evolution, race, and relativism, and encouraging education students to weigh the potential of following an anthropological approach. In the first course, we conducted a broad survey of cultural anthropology and the available literature in “anthropology and education”; for the second, we held a seminar on some announced-in-advance topic, such as: (1) the education of anthropologists; (2) the Culture and Personality era; (3) how anthropologists view American society; or (4) a then current hot topic, anthropology in the public school curriculum, such as the MACOS project (Man, A Course of Study; see Schensul, Chapter 8, below). That project was then in its early days, and we held high hopes for this superb anthropologically oriented unit developed for the fifth or sixth grade social studies curriculum (see Wolcott, 2007).

Because ours was an advanced graduate course, we also made time for students to discuss their dissertation proposals. Oblivious to the fact that for many of the education students, this was the *only* course they would ever have with an anthropological focus, Mac was forever proclaiming, “*If there is going to be an anthropology of education, there should be something anthropological about it!*”

Although Mac passed away several years ago, his words continue to haunt me. Mac was quite right, of course, but no one had ever stated it quite so bluntly. And where did he get the idea? My guess is that it was from Spindler himself, who had often expressed concern that the anthropology of education should not become like its predecessor, the sociology of education, a field he viewed as having gone off on its own, completely cut off from its discipline of origin. Spindler envisioned an “anthropology and education” that would maintain an active dialogue between the two fields.

Mac’s words became my shibboleth. They contain a straightforward and rather obvious logic, but I still repeat them (sometimes aloud) whenever we convene to discuss the “anthropology of education.” And sometimes I get to wondering if what we are up to these days still meets the criterion that anyone should be able to detect an anthropological dimension in our efforts. I have taken this opportunity to examine how we ensure that anthropology is still evident in our work.

LEARNING TO THINK LIKE AN ANTHROPOLOGIST OF EDUCATION

New scholars of educational anthropology in the United States often enter the sub-field with some prior coursework in anthropology (courses in cultural anthropology or linguistics are typically more helpful than courses in archaeology or biological anthropology) and at least a couple of years of adult experience in the field of education. I assure you that if you anticipate working with educators, they will be more forthcoming if they recognize you as one of their own – that you speak their language and have served “in the trenches” where they serve, and understand the problems they face.

But you must also realize that from an anthropological perspective the study of education is far broader than the study of schools. We use the word “enculturation” to emphasize that our interest is in “education writ large” and extends far beyond what one is taught in school. Having that world view is critical – understanding the kind of perspective that an anthropologist customarily takes when studying anything, and believing firmly that *to learn about something, you must see for yourself how it is accomplished*.

Far more importantly, you should have an idea of what “taking an anthropological perspective” is or implies. This is not to suggest that there is a single perspective, but that you understand in general how anthropologists look at things – your view should be *holistic*, broad enough to include the total picture. There is, of course, no *particular* way that anthropologists see things (it’s hard enough to find two of them who agree about anything), but in general you recognize predominant themes that occur in virtually all anthropological studies, certain assumptions that are customarily made.

Explicitly (or at least implicitly) these assumptions always involve the concept of *culture*: that humans organize themselves into social groups, that these groups develop particular ways of doing things, that these ways must be transmitted to the uninitiated, and that the processes through which this “enculturation” takes place can be discerned through careful observation.

The process is carried out primarily through daily routines and is done largely out of consciousness, which is why we insist that culture is “mostly caught, not taught” (Wolcott, 1982: 91). What the ethnographic observer does is compare what is seen in a new setting with what he or she knows from personal experience.

When you realized long ago that your own education encompassed vastly more than what you learned in school, you had the foundation for a comparative basis – your own experience versus the experience of everybody else. The chances are that the formal part of your education was in schools rather like those of any group that interests you, even in the remotest parts of the world. To conduct school research you only need to visit other classrooms to accomplish a relatively easy assignment: to see how those classrooms and other places of formal instruction are similar to and different from your own and to try to understand how cultural assumptions or practices within the group foster or impede the learning process.

But that is only a small portion of the field of anthropology and education, which is the anthropology of *schools and schooling*. We have been making substantial headway there (see, e.g., Cazden, John, and Hymes, 1972; Emihovich, 1989; Spindler, 1982).

But there is a far more compelling element in our mission: discerning the totality of everything that constitutes another's out-of-school learning (sometimes referred to as non-formal or informal education, or experiential learning). It is at this point that you contrast your perception *as an anthropologist* with that of the educator. For you, the educational process always includes far more than schooling. Like Spindler, you may come to view schools as one kind of intentional intervention in the learning process (Spindler, 1987a: 3).

This assumes, of course, that you take "cultural acquisition" as the central focus of our concern. For a student of Spindler like myself, there has never been any question that cultural transmission, broadened now to include cultural acquisition as well, is and rightly deserves to be, the focal point of our studies. That is what connects the two fields, education covering the content of what is learned, anthropology looking comparatively at settings and processes through which the lessons are conveyed (for an excellent example, read about "learning in [un]likely places" developed in Singleton, 1998). If you are willing to take this broad view, then everything we do can be subsumed, directly or indirectly, under the broad category of cultural acquisition.

As one of my colleagues noted in reference to many educational researchers' intensely quantitative orientation, today's measurement-oriented researchers can "shoot ants with cannons" through the power of carefully followed procedures and statistical approaches. Anthropologists of education, on the other hand, concern themselves more with how the "ants" survive and organize themselves. We must be present to observe firsthand what is going on, whether focusing on a community or a single individual. Since educators already have an idea of what they are expected to do, quite likely they are already doing it. That may mean that the anthropologist must also take a step back to try to understand local "teacher culture" as a possible source of problems, before making recommendations about how things might be changed.

But, is there is any problem at all? If a problem exists, from whose point of view is it problematic? Those questions ought to be ones the anthropologist explores first, while sizing up the whole setting, thus reinforcing the claim that anthropology is "holistic" in its view, trying to take in entire settings or contexts.

As suggested by recent changes in the field, and in the mission statement of the Council on Anthropology of Education, accepting "social justice" as a universal problem seems to assume that something is wrong, without first trying to identify what that something is. Of course, granted that the incredible goal that educators set for themselves – to teach people what they believe those people need to know – appears beyond question, it seems presumptuous to go looking for problems without first determining whose problems they are.

The ethnographic approach requires a proper appraisal, or sometimes a reappraisal, to discover whether there is a problem, rather than having a mindset declaring that a problem already exists. What is needed is an open anthropological question such as "What is going on here?" The anthropologist needs a question that makes sense in the broadest total setting, unlike the question that an educator might ask, such as "Why aren't these students willing to learn what they must learn?"

The anthropologist always wants to "go find out." If there is a place where this ordinarily happens that can accommodate a participant observer – a classroom,

perhaps, but maybe a kitchen or a foundry instead—that is where the anthropologist wants to be. The unfortunate phrase “participant observation” hides more than it reveals because so many activities can be carried out under its name. But it is a core activity for the anthropologist, and even those who seem to eschew it in favor of flashier and more “scientific” techniques are unwilling to forego it completely. Hear anthropologist H. Russell Bernard, who writes widely on ethnographic research but describes himself as an “unrepentant positivist,” on the subject:

On the extreme low end, it is possible to do useful participant observation in just a few days. (Bernard, 2006: 349)

By the “extreme low end” I think Bernard refers to anyone skeptical of participant observation or reluctant to devote precious time to it, and yet unable to imagine how conducting a study in anthropological fashion would not require some time spent on site.

The first thing to do is to establish one’s starting point for any effort to carry out anthropological research. The second thing is to discern what an ethnographic approach, with its on-site focus, can add to what is already known about the issue and to begin inquiry into those matters. These are the qualities that anthropologically oriented individuals bring to their studies. That includes concepts and terms employed in anthropology, especially the idea of “culture.” Most often it includes ethnographic research. The well-oriented anthropologist of education needs to demonstrate how an anthropological orientation offers a perspective for examining what is being taught and what is being learned and how such understanding contributes to the total “education” of members of the group(s) being studied.

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF “CULTURE” IN OUR STUDIES

When we employ the anthropological concept of culture, we need to keep in mind the words of anthropologist Richard Fox, who notes that we study “the everyday life of persons, not the cultural life of a people” (1991: 12). Fox does not dismiss the concept of culture; he simply reminds us of how we go about studying it.

An anthropological inclination requires some concept of “culture.” Like many of my generation (see Kelso, 2008, especially the Introduction and Chapters 1, 18, and 19), I maintain faith in and allegiance to the idea of culture. I cannot imagine an anthropological discipline without it. A great deal of ink has been spilled in attempting to define culture to the satisfaction of everyone concerned. Years ago two distinguished anthropologists sang its praises as “one of the key notions of contemporary American thought” (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952: 3).

But notice that they referred to culture as a “notion,” not as a theory. I have never regarded it as a theory; it has always seemed to me a *concept*, although a powerful one. And it is important not to confuse *culture* with *society*. Society refers to the people who comprise a group; culture is what those people believe and do. You can measure or count the number of individuals in a society; you can only *attribute* what you think they are up to. As anthropologist Ward Goodenough explains:

In anthropological practice the culture of any society is made of the concepts, beliefs, and principles of action and organization that an ethnographer has found could be attributed successfully to the members of that society in the context of dealing with them. (Goodenough, 1971: 5)

You can readily see why any term that refers boldly to the *totality* of “concepts, beliefs, and principles of action and organization ... attributed to the members of a society” might get bandied about. My caution is to be frugal with the concept, neither to enshrine it nor to treat it so casually that it assumes no importance. As Goodenough observes, in its anthropological sense, culture refers to something *attributed* to members of a society by an ethnographer (which, in this case, is you) in the context of dealing with them. That is what cultural anthropology is all about: concepts, beliefs, and principles of action and organization. I firmly believe that culture should be apparent in anything that calls itself the anthropology of education.

The definition does not ask whether you judge the quality of education as good or bad; it requires only that as a fellow human you describe what you observe as carefully as you can. You may take your interpretation anywhere you like, but first and foremost, provide your careful descriptive account (that “dead level of ethnographic description” that concerned Kimball).

You are not admonished to employ the term “culture” itself. In my experience, I have found it best not to let students get into the habit of scattering that term like birdseed throughout their writing, but to use it precisely, showing exactly what they intend in each instance where it is used. It is important to keep in mind that *no one ever observes culture directly*, so we proceed cautiously whenever we implicate culture’s influence or power over us. Always remember that *society* refers to people, *culture* to what those people appear to be doing, or say they expect of their fellows. In this anthropological use of the term, there is little point in making reference to something as vague as “American culture,” and even “teacher culture” is an abstraction.

MAKING ANTHROPOLOGY USEFUL AND RELEVANT: HOW FAR SHOULD ONE GO?

In the years that I have been in academia, some anthropologists, and some educational anthropologists, have endeavored to make their work more immediately relevant to society’s pressing problems. There is no reason that they should not continue along that same path, recognizing only that their advocacy is a professional *choice*, not a professional responsibility (see Fluehr-Lobban, 2003: 240). There is room for those who seek social justice; many long to see that their work is of service to humanity. This is an anthropology more like what Kimball envisioned for his students, and less like how Spindler conceived of it. Kimball’s background in applied work prior to his appointment marks still another tension that pervades anthropology and education: exactly how utilitarian should our efforts be? Yet even Kimball took a dim view of anyone attempting educational reform under the guise of educational research. Spindler sent the four of us (and many who followed) to do relatively “pure” ethnography. That pretty well set the course for our professional careers. Kimball encouraged students to identify and address the problems they encountered; Spindler took a view that sought first to know as much

as possible about the context. I cannot help but think that anyone interested in anthropology and education should feel free to work on behalf of either approach. Individuals with this applied orientation provide a prototype for the anthropologist anxious to help others or to improve conditions in society. They are less concerned with anthropology as a discipline, more concerned about their effectiveness in being of help.

Like their ivory tower counterparts, applied anthropologists can be found anywhere. What sets these applied or “practicing” anthropologists apart are their direct and immediate efforts to make their work *as anthropologists* applicable to everyday problems and needs. These scholars are not as concerned about whether their efforts are anthropological, or whether they are contributing to the discipline, as whether or not they can muster the available anthropological resources that *might be of help* in resolving human problems. They are often involved with multidisciplinary efforts. Their involvement does, however, tend to make others aware of the value of having observers “on the ground,” both to garner information and to check the effectiveness of intended solutions or reform.

I certainly do not mean to disparage individual efforts to work interdisciplinarily. But keep in mind that *disciplines themselves cannot be interdisciplinary*, so the responsibility for interdisciplinary work rests on the shoulders of those who claim multiple allegiances. If you are among them, I counsel you to follow the cautions that I have urged here – give anthropology credit for whatever is its due, and let your audiences know how other fields have also influenced your thinking.

In applied work, the problem gets top billing, not the discipline(s) to be employed as major resource(s). A pragmatic approach to finding a resolution is what the anthropologist brings to the setting, looking for what needs to be done or to be known in order for that something to happen. The topics of interest to applied anthropologists are as far-ranging as one can imagine: they draw on human problems associated with climate change, recovery efforts following a disaster or relocation, globalization, health disparities, national elections, conflicts, war and the effects of peace, managing scarce resources, etc.; the list goes on and on (see Johnson, 2008). Human rights fit in there, as does social justice.

Nevertheless, I repeat, if there is going to be an anthropology of education there ought to be something anthropological about it. When we declare our association with a particular discipline, we assume an obligation to demonstrate it. When no evidence of an anthropological orientation exists, we should forgo the claim that our efforts display the distinguishing characteristics of the discipline. Some researchers ignore disciplinary boundaries altogether and rightfully boast of being multi- or interdisciplinary in their approach, without having to acknowledge allegiance, indebtedness, or fidelity to any one discipline. I applaud such efforts as long as they acknowledge the source(s) of their inspiration and endeavor.

WORKING ONE’S WAY INTO ANTHROPOLOGY

Frankly, a lot of anthropology is irrelevant to me. I have no interest in old bones and potsherds, only a layman’s interest in our physical heritage, and I never delved deeply enough into linguistics. For me, cultural anthropology is where it’s at. I have never

worried about being accepted as a fully trained professional anthropologist. What I have carefully attended to is the integrity of my ethnographic research. I reasoned that if I performed that well, I would eventually prove myself and thus gain acceptance via my fieldwork approach.

I have urged the same with my students – suggesting that they be patient about being accepted as anthropologists, but insisting that their ethnographic studies be done with care, reflecting their special training as the qualitative researchers in education that they are. I have, so to speak, crept under the tent to find my way into anthropology. That has taken many years and several studies, but the journey has opened my eyes, has taken me around the world, and has greatly enriched my life.

That may be the best alternative for those who come through the ranks as educators – to hone our skills as competent ethnographers but, as I have often advised others, modestly to insist only that we *borrow* fieldwork techniques from anthropology and sociology (Wolcott, 2008: 44 and *passim*). You will find ethnographic advice and encouragement freely given and – allowing for the fads and fashions that accompany educational research – your colleagues in education a receptive audience. In time you may find that some anthropologists have also become colleagues, and they yours. When that happens, you have arrived.

STRENGTHENING TIES TO ANTHROPOLOGY

There are, of course, other small ways through which we can demonstrate the utility of our endeavor beyond the broadness of our perspective and the breadth of our methods. I assume that you read widely in anthropological journals to keep your knowledge of ethnographic practice current, in order to appreciate its fads and fashions, which somehow – even in anthropology – do change, if ever so slightly.

I feel that we should follow the standard anthropological reference style of the American Anthropological Association (see AA style on the web at aaanet.org/publications/styleguide.pdf) whenever we have a choice. Show that you are conversant with the style and applaud its utility in the competition that has grown around citation forms acceptable in scholarly publication. Attending national meetings shows another level of support, and when doing so I recommend that you seek out sessions on topics unfamiliar to you – your search for inspiration and new insights from how others are conducting research should be never ending.

Above all, never lose sight of the opportunity that anthropology gives us to talk and write about “the everyday life of persons” among our fellow humans as unique and complex individuals. That seems to me to be a genuine opportunity these days – to keep a human face on so-called human research.

Only when there is evidence of deep injustice, do I personally feel we should work on behalf of change. Uncovering what meaning their patterns of behavior have for those who live them remains our primary objective. We look at cultural variation because it offers a way for us to understand the behaviors that set peoples apart as they confront the universal problems that humans everywhere face.

Conversely, I’m not sure we can ever resolve all the tensions I have mentioned, such as the method problem. Anthropologists tend to be rather pragmatic in their approach to research and educators seem wedded to rigid statistical approaches requiring huge

numbers of anonymous subjects for their studies. The status problem of who is or is not a “real” anthropologist will never be fully reconciled to everyone’s satisfaction. I only caution that in this interdisciplinary endeavor our best effort will be to make our contribution, whether in basic descriptive efforts or in applied work, damn solid, indicative of the finest scholarship of which we are capable.

We have been at this now for more than half a century, and we have learned to live with some issues still unresolved. In spite of this, there is little doubt about our extensive participation and progress in establishing a rock solid endeavor joining the two fields. Just let the anthropology show through.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author acknowledges the assistance of long-time friend and colleague, Jacquetta Hill (formerly Burnett), who was studying with Kimball when Wolcott was studying with Spindler. He also acknowledges the assistance of editors Bradley Levinson and Mica Pollock, and Richard Warren, who offered comments on earlier drafts of the manuscript. He is also indebted to Levinson’s graduate student, Ellen Prusinski, for meticulous editorial suggestions.

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CHAPTER 8

Building an Applied Educational Anthropology beyond the Academy

Jean J. Schensul

INTRODUCTION: IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLIED EDUCATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Educational anthropology often is viewed as an applied field, since most educational anthropologists who write and advocate for the development and evolution of educational anthropology as an intellectual subdiscipline are based in professional schools or academic departments of education. These schools have, as one primary concern, the preparation of educators for basic and intervention research, administration, pedagogy, and practice – and educational anthropologists, along with other social scientists, contribute to these goals. Many faculty may be involved in applying research to the direct solution of educational problems, in addition to conducting basic research and training students. At the same time, there are educational anthropologists with advanced degrees whose base is outside the formal academy. They work in other locations and programs with educational missions, such as large public education programs and museums, art galleries, and innovative and specialized schools. They form and sustain independent organizations that create curriculum resources, work with parents, and advocate for various types of educational change; they also create and conduct education-based interventions in schooling, health, and community development, and conceptualize, direct, and evaluate large-scale systemic change efforts. We define the work of all of these anthropologists as applied educational anthropology because they utilize anthropological theories, methods, and principles in the solution of education problems

in social and political context. All of this “applied” work is underrepresented, and at times marginalized, in the general anthropology and education literature.

My goal in this chapter is to highlight some important trends in applied educational anthropology, and to provide examples of work that integrates theory and methods, research, intervention, and advocacy to support transformational changes in social norms and values, individual behaviors, and educational systems. To construct this chapter, I searched for and located published literature on each of these areas of practice. Much of it is found in the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, *Practicing Anthropology*, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, and *Education and Urban Society*, but some of it is found in book chapters, “gray literature” (archived reports, project descriptions, and secondary data), non-peer reviewed journals, or on the Internet; and some approaches are hidden or implicit in published articles. Some of the anthropologists whose work is described are engaged university-based scholars; others work in research settings that are independent of, and often different from, university culture and practice. Finally, the examples I have chosen have as their theoretical underpinnings many of the same theories that guide other research and writing in the field.

Applied educational anthropology focuses on a wide variety of educational problems, which may include:

- learning about and helping to shape adolescent identity formation in diverse multilingual–multiethnic environments, exploring the sociocultural gaps and discrepancies between teachers and students and their families;
- understanding and building community and culturally responsive educational institutions that address the root causes of educational inequities and their manifestation in teacher–student performance and achievement disparities;
- changing public understanding of anthropology and anthropological principles that value diversity and cultural and educational equity;
- collaborating to address the educational, cultural, and pedagogical rights of educationally and otherwise disenfranchised and disempowered peoples, and indigenous peoples who wish to create their own educational institutions;
- addressing discriminatory higher education practices;
- creating models of learning and curriculum development that are culturally specific, interactive, and based on multiple learning modalities.

These challenges can be met in a variety of ways. Those I describe in this chapter fall into the following domains: (1) large-scale multimedia public education programs; (2) delivering education through museums, galleries, and libraries; (3) educating educators in communities (with implications for university systems change); (4) intervention research for systemic change and indigenous movements; and (5) participatory action research which changes identities by engaging individuals and groups in social movement and other social change activities.

Large-scale education programs designed to educate “the public,” and public education programs conducted through exhibits and activities associated with museums, galleries, and libraries, typically are not thought of as falling within the domain of educational anthropology. Nevertheless, I introduce them here because they are based

on anthropological principles and values, provide opportunities for engaging the public in interactive educational experiences, and highlight our field's commitment to racial/ethnic and other forms of equity. Other areas of work are pedagogical, reflecting new ways of educating educators, redesigning school systems, teaching anthropology to others as a form of activism, and "hybrid research" – a form of action research in which ongoing ethnography is integrated with active involvement in instruction and advocacy.

ARGUMENTS ON BEHALF OF AN APPLIED EDUCATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGY: A HISTORY

Many of the founders of our discipline – for example, Margaret Mead, Fred Gearing, Courtney Cazden – were applied social scientists, concerned with public dialogue, curriculum development, teacher research, and indigenous educational rights. In the 1960s and 1970s, when grand efforts to open educational systems to the needs of a diverse group of formerly marginalized racial/ethnic groups were undertaken, several graduate schools of education, most notably Columbia's Teachers College under the leadership of Charles Harrington (an instrumental strategist in the Council on Anthropology and Education), built applied educational anthropology programs around civil rights and linguistic diversity education. Collaborations between social scientists, educators, and community activists resulted in a variety of instructional innovations that were evaluated using mixed methods approaches. During that period, the concept of planned intervention (policies, curricula, new instructional pedagogy) was widely accepted. Dawson, an educational anthropologist writing in 1977 in a special issue of the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* on methodology, argued that interventions were complex, and created a series of models demonstrating why more complex understanding of "the intervention process" and its components could lead to better outcome results and interpretation. He concluded that interventions had both educational and political value (Dawson, 1977: 18). This early article helped to promote the expansion of "process evaluation" in understanding the implementation of interventions and their differential effect on classrooms and even on individual students. The role of educational anthropologists in evaluation of these interventions expanded in the mid- to late 1970s, and became part of the research repertoire of the subdiscipline by the mid-1980s. In the mid-1980s, the CAE, followed by the American Anthropological Association, sponsored among the first premeeting training institutes on evaluation, facilitated by myself and Marion Dobbert-Lundy. Since that time, educational anthropologists including Drs. Dobbert-Lundy (Dobbert-Lundy, 1984), Kathryn Borman (Professor and Director, Alliance for Applied Research in Education and Anthropology, University of South Florida; Borman, 2005), and Jolley Bruce Chrisman (founder of Research for Action; Chrisman, 1993; Chrisman, 2009) have made very significant advances in the rigorous application of qualitative and quantitative methods to important educational changes from their respective university or independent consultation bases.

Several articles written by North American scholar activists over the past 25 years have addressed directly the question of applied educational anthropology, framing the

field at different points in time as intervention science, activist research, engaged scholarship, and reflective observation and analysis of instructional practices. An overview article by Elizabeth Eddy in another special issue of AEQ on applied educational anthropology summarizes the early history of educational anthropology and situates it squarely in the domain of application, although she does not describe in detail any application theories or methodology (Eddy, 1985: 79). Some answers to this question are provided by articles in that same issue describing the implementation of specific projects in Hawaii (the formation of a school and educational research center based on Hawaiian culture, traditions, and socialization practices; Jordan, 1985), California (the development of a Punjabi cultural center; Gibson, 1985), and Hartford, CT (research-based adult education pedagogy to change the treatment of Puerto Rican patients in an urban hospital; Schensul, Borrero, and Garcia, 1985). Other educational anthropologists central to our field call for improved understanding of the process by which anthropologists create and implement educational pedagogy and curricula (Jacob, 1995), and for more politically engaged, activist educational research and advocacy (Cazden, 1983; Emihovich, 2005; Schensul, 1985). In an introduction to an AEQ special issue on indigenous movements in education, Ismael and Cazden discuss the important transition from non-indigenously guided to indigenously-driven linguistic, educational, and cultural programs in various parts of the world, and highlight some of the interesting contradictions and challenges in the potentially uneasy alliance between these two groups (Ismail and Cazden, 2005). Exemplars follow in that same issue.

After a number of years of soul searching and reformulation of identity, the CAE reformulated its mission – characterized by Anderson-Levitt as inclusive, allowing for scholarly work, the application of theory to various forms of intervention, and advocacy on behalf of policy change and the welfare of specific populations (Anderson-Levitt, 2007). These and other articles open the door to broader discussion of methodologies of scholar/activism, action research, curriculum experimentation, popular education, hybrid research, and other such applied educational activities. Collectively, they should encourage the development of a tradition of applied scholarship framed in theory, and detailed in the methodology of practice – a tradition still in the early stages of development.

THEORETICAL PARADIGMS UNDERLYING PRACTICE

Most educational anthropologists, even those such as Gonzalez and Tanaka, who appropriately interrogate the use of the concept of culture as a static, stereotyping notion, would support a deepened centrality of culture in their work and their arguments (Gonzalez, 1999; Tanaka, 2009). Concepts of culture, enculturation, or socialization remain central to educational anthropology, while at the same time incorporating the diversity of expressions and processes that characterize socialization and educational practices in families, schools, and communities. Culture now is reframed as notions about how cultural beliefs and practices are co-constructed, negotiated, and reconstructed in asymmetrical relationships and systems, and as individuals and groups shape and are shaped by their contexts, situations, and interactions. This constructivist

view of culture has significant implications for any applied researchers concerned about curriculum development and instructional processes in ethnically or otherwise diverse populations (Brodkey, 1987; Greenman and Dieckmann, 2004).

Nancy Greenman provides a useful review of theories guiding a critical applied anthropology of education (Greenman, 2005). Theories of situated learning and critical racial/ethnic pedagogical theory, social and cultural capital, eco-critical theory, and theories of marginalization, power, and gender help to place cultural differences in the context of structural factors, which result in inequities in the distribution of resources that affect learning and the quality of education. These same factors influence the ways in which educational anthropologists position themselves, and reflect on their positionality in relation to the communities, schools, and students with whom they conduct their research and engage in application and activism. Now I turn to ways in which these broadly defined theoretical principles or paradigms take shape in specific approaches to application.

MULTIMEDIA AND PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

As mentioned earlier, in this chapter I have chosen to highlight two examples of large-scale public education programs that illustrate what anthropologists, working with others, can do to inform the public about anthropology or about concepts central to our field, and what challenges may arise when we do so. The first, *Man: a Course of Study* (MACOS), an interdisciplinary effort involving psychologists, anthropologists, and educators, involved a nationally funded and supported effort to teach anthropology to elementary and middle school students. Its goal was to promote a deeper understanding of evolutionary processes, and to show that what humans have in common is their diversity of practices that solve similar human problems of survival, socialization, development, and death. The second, the RACE Project, guided by educational anthropologist Yolanda Moses and biological anthropologist Alan Goodman, involves the development of a widely supported public education effort to introduce the historical, political, social, and biological myths, misrepresentations, and meanings associated with the concept of race. Each of these projects represented a collaborative interdisciplinary and intersectoral effort, involved large numbers of anthropologists, and addressed important core principles and values deeply embedded in the science of anthropology. Each created a variety of learning materials, has been widely evaluated, and has provoked considerable national dialogue and, at times, controversy.

Man: a course of study

Developed and implemented in the early 1970s, MACOS was a comprehensive attempt to generate a fifth grade social studies course to introduce students to anthropological perspectives and to address the critical questions, “What is human about human beings, how did they get that way, and how can they be made more so?” Underscoring the effort was the “hypothesis that an understanding of human nature could contribute to a better world” and that “intelligent understanding of

(human) behavior could improve our chances for survival”(Dow, 1975). Led by Jerome Bruner, a well-known Harvard cultural psychologist, with the involvement of a Harvard physical anthropologist, Irvin DeVore, and Asen Balikci (University of Montreal), it included a nine-book teacher’s guide with lesson plans, a teacher training program, and accompanying instructional materials, including films, booklets, records, maps, games, and other materials. The curriculum was developed under the aegis of the Educational Development Center, Newton, Massachusetts, and supported with substantial funding from the National Science Foundation.

The principles guiding the curriculum were widely accepted by social scientists, although not necessarily by educators or others with different perspectives on human evolution and culture. For example, the curriculum was rooted in cultural relativism, or the notion that all cultures were fundamentally equal – “the idea that men everywhere are humans, however advanced or ‘primitive,’ their civilization” (Bruner, 1965: 18). It supported the theory of evolution and of human evolution based on then current paleontological findings. Its pedagogical approach was based on a commitment to the social construction of learning and the importance of designing interactive learning materials that catered to different ways of teaching and learning. Through experiential exercises, the curriculum required students to compare and contrast their own experiences by replicating communications, tool-making and use, and modes of social interaction shared by young people of other non-Western cultures (Canadian Eskimo and Danai people of New Guinea) through enactment (Bruner, 1966). Finally, the pedagogical approach was based on the idea of introspection, contrast, and comparison by beginning with the unfamiliar, the different, the “other,” and learning through comparison the similarities between others and ourselves (Bruner, 1966; Dow, 1975).

Referred to as a “pioneering” fifth grade social studies course to introduce children to fundamental anthropological concepts, the curriculum was implemented and evaluated in a number of schools across the country, mostly positively (Cole and Lacefield, 1980). By the mid-1970s, it had attracted the attention of a variety of conservative organizations in California, Texas, and Arizona, including the National Justice Foundation, the Citizen’s Committee of California, the Network of Patriotic Letter Writers, the Committee to Restore the Constitution, and Citizens for Quality Textbooks in Vermont (Woolfson, 1974). Issues raised by anti-MACOS critics included accusations of “atheism, socialism and one-worldism” (Woolfson, 1974: 28). Complaints were lodged against teaching children about Eskimos who “practice cannibalism ... murder grandparents, swap wives, marry animals and commit violent acts on men and animals alike” (Corliss, 1973).

Concerns about content mingled with states’ fears that the federal government would enforce a single social studies curriculum on local districts (Weber, 1975). The public expressed anger at the NSF for providing large amounts of federal funding under its science curriculum development program for a controversial curriculum that supported evolution, and the notion of human physical and cultural equality (Welch, 1979). Woolfson ends his description of the Vermont controversy with the comment that “the controversy of Macos is not really a controversy about the teaching of an obscure primitive Eskimo tribe, but really is a controversy about fundamentally

different ideologies – original sin versus cultural traditions, Christ versus Satan or self-improvement versus destruction, absolute truths or preparation for a changing world, banking information or asking questions, creating a learning environment or telling students what to do” (Woolfson, 1974: 30).

Between 1956 and 1975, the US Congress appropriated more than US\$130,000,000 for science course content improvement projects. By 1975, Congress had denied the National Science Foundation’s request for US\$9.2 million for science program implementation “as an outcome of the Man – a Course of Study controversy,” and for that year funding levels dropped below those of 1959 (Welch, 1979).

This story is fascinating in its portrayal of a radical experiment in educational curriculum development that emerged in the enabling environment of the post-Sputnik era. It was developed by an interdisciplinary group of experts, widely tested, clearly acceptable to many teachers and districts across the country, and illustrated the potential of educational anthropology for pedagogical innovation and norms change starting with fifth graders. At the same time, the failure of the development team to recognize the controversial nature of the curriculum’s view of humanity and to promote it effectively with the public in an already-changing and increasingly conservative political environment, ultimately resulted in its unfortunate demise.

The anthropology of race project

A more current example of a large-scale effort to change the public’s view of the nature of humanness is the project entitled, “RACE: are we so different?” The RACE project is a multifaceted, interdisciplinary, collaborative public education effort utilizing an interactive installation approach that includes multimedia presentations, graphic displays, historic photographs, and objects effectively coordinated to communicate to the public the most current science-based ideas about race (McCurdy, 2007; Moses, 2007; Overbey and Moses, 2006). With funding from the Ford Foundation, and co-sponsorship from the Minnesota Science Museum, the so-called RACE project was spearheaded by the nationally recognized educational anthropologist Yolanda Moses. The project had support from an advisory board of well-known anthropologists with experience working on the question of human diversity from many different perspectives, and staff of the American Anthropological Association guided by Peggy Overbey. The goals of the project were to examine human diversity, to de-legitimize the notion that racial identity is inherited, to promote improved understanding of the history of racial designations and racialization, and to promote the understanding that the disparities that flow from inherited notions of race are socially constructed and must be socially deconstructed (Overbey, 2007).

Despite the advances of the 50 years since the main period of the civil rights movement, race remains a volatile subject in the United States. The members of the advisory committee must have given many hours of thought to ways the topic could be communicated to the public, and to the venues that might be most sympathetic to its messages. The first locations for distribution were large cities and venues which were likely to gain a sympathetic audience. The promotion of the RACE Project was combined with local activities with sympathetic partners. For example, the project

was shown at the Pequot Indian Museum in eastern Connecticut, a location which attracts large audiences from the northeast and New York, especially on weekends. Among the activities associated with it, was a mural on structural factors contributing to racism constructed by youth in a program concerned with examining the root causes of disparities among youth in unequal educational systems, sponsored by the Institute for Community Research (ICR) under the guidance of educational anthropologist Marlene Berg. ICR students conducted their own research on causes of and experiences with racism, and portrayed their results in a portable wall mural, interspersed with excerpts from the film they produced on structural dimensions of racial discrimination. The film itself was offered at scheduled events at the museum, followed by youth-led workshops on racism and structural inequities for a diverse public. Similar activities took place at other exhibition sites in conjunction with local partners.

There are many similarities between the Race project and MACOS. Like MACOS, the project was interdisciplinary. The many components of the exhibit involved representatives of disciplines and subdisciplines as diverse as paleontology, archeology, ethnohistory, physiology, genetics, sociology, anthropology, communications, and museum science and representation. Collaboration across these diverse fields was a significant challenge, as over twenty different institutions as well as multiple disciplines were involved in various aspects of the project, from development to installation and dissemination (Overbey and Moses, 2006). The project includes a variety of different instructional materials and modes of conveying information and is appropriate for people of all ages, including middle school students. Currently there are plans underway to develop a smaller, less expensive traveling exhibit, and exhibition sites have been identified for full-scale installation for the next several years (<http://www.understandingrace.org/home.html>).

There are, however, many dissimilarities between the two projects. First, the Race project was directed to both students and the public at large. Thus, it was conceptualized as a far larger and more complex project, with components suitable for people of all ages and political inclinations. Many discussions were held with the public about race, diversity, and human difference. In contrast to MACOS, the pulse of the public was assessed prior to developing the content through dialogues and focus groups. Thus many of the potentially controversial dimensions of the curriculum and installation content could be considered in advance.

Second, the project consists of a complex exhibit which is readily portable, can be shown in many public exhibit halls or venues, and can be linked with local activities that address issues of race, disparities, and identities on many different levels. It offers many opportunities for local dialogue and for local partnerships that can serve to facilitate conversations and thereby defuse potential attacks. Further, the instructional guides and lesson plans included with the exhibit are integrated into science, biology, social studies, and social science standards, with lesson plans that show teachers how to teach the materials and infuse them into existing curricula. The infusion approach is voluntary, and does not require substituting an existing curriculum for a new one. The exhibit was presented in relatively sympathetic urban venues. It was intended to educate the “public at large” rather than “susceptible” fifth graders in the public schools, where culture wars are fought

first and most fiercely. It was financed and promoted by a consortium of private funders and private organizations rather than by a government institution. And finally, the current American public is more accustomed to open discussions of race and racism.

The widespread acceptance and integration of the exhibit, and its acknowledgment by the public, students, youth, and politicians, suggests that multimedia educational efforts based on anthropological insights into issues central to contemporary societies should continue to be an important component of educational anthropology's research and application agenda.

DELIVERING EDUCATION THROUGH MUSEUMS, FILM FESTIVALS, LIBRARIES, AND GALLERIES

Anthropologists have played significant roles in a variety of public education programs in settings that include private and public museums, libraries, and exhibit spaces of all sizes. They may be involved in activities ranging from conceptualization to curatorship and evaluation of programs, exhibits, installations, and festivals. Working in these environments requires a deep understanding of communication and pedagogical theories, cultural complexities and representational politics, and a high degree of reflexivity. Critical and interpretivist perspectives are useful in these settings, since all public exhibitions and programs involve collaborating with others to make decisions about framework (theory), audience, content, message (methods), and assessment (evaluation).

Museums and community galleries

Like public school curricula and large-scale educational expositions, museums and community art galleries wish to educate the public. Their exhibits may be informational, interactive, and multidimensional/multimedia. The public science museums, smaller independent museums such as Museo del Barrio in New York, and community art galleries are all alternative educational environments which see their exhibits, performances, films, installations, and other activities as promoting the public's understanding and experience with specific racial/ethnic and cultural groups and contemporary social and historical issues. Programs may extend or exhibit cultural themes and sharpen or expand skills that local ethnic communities utilize to preserve their own community and cultural heritage, and they often involve anthropologists in their conceptualization and development.

Some of the larger institutions that can obtain funding from many different donor sources, such as the natural history and science museums of St. Paul, Chicago, and New York, make creative (and expensive) decisions as to how to promote and extend understandings of cultural diversity. The Minnesota Science Museum has a full-scale anthropology department, collections and archives, field schools and exhibit space, and a program of public anthropology. Likewise, the Chicago Field Museum has a staff of seven full time anthropologists and curatorial staff, an anthropology archive with collections from seven areas of the world, and a research program that links collections to ongoing field projects. One tenet of the anthropology department at the

museum is collaborative research, which is facilitated by dialogues across cultural boundaries (Wali, 2006; Wali *et al.*, 2001). A recent exhibit called “Common Concerns, Different Responses” made creative use of a collection of materials by setting them in cultural context, to highlight diversity of materials and the meanings and uses associated with them. Coordinated by anthropologist Alaka Wali, it featured shoes from around the world. To situate this collection, she themed it as “community,” “home,” and “image” (http://www.fieldmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibit_sites/living_together/default.htm). Wali and colleagues developed the exhibit by showing how different types of shoes represented ethnic and class groupings and lifestyles across many different countries. In this way they were able to add cultural and historical depth to what might have been simply a collection of items, and to convey subtle points about cultural variation, and social and economic inequities.

There are over a hundred museums in the United States, linked to smaller and larger universities, that highlight ethnographic/anthropological and cultural exhibits, but they often lack connections to local communities. As university campuses strive for better relationships with local communities under the rubric of engaged scholarship, these museums and performance spaces should be able to learn from private and public independent museums to connect to communities and their cultural experiences, and to thereby transform their exhibits and performance and film spaces into sites of community engagement. Educational anthropologists can play a central role in these efforts.

Film festivals

Anthropology often segregates the subdisciplines of visual and educational anthropology. However, documentary films, especially those involving anthropologists and local or indigenous collaborators, are important educational tools. Globalization has facilitated connections among peoples and groups around the world, especially through visual networking sites such as YouTube, and has produced an international market for well conceptualized and constructed audiovisual products that make local cultures and practices immediate and understandable. Now there are literally thousands of films created by anthropologists, many of which are highlighted at professional meetings such as the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association and critiqued in anthropological journals. These films are shown in increasing numbers of ethnographic film festivals and other public events that highlight ethnographic documentaries, often accompanied by public discussions, debates, and other local programs that facilitate dialogue and the co-construction of cultural opinions.

The New York Museum of Natural History established the Margaret Mead Ethnographic Film and Video Festival, a juried program that highlights documentaries illustrating human diversity. According to web site promotional materials, “the festival screens documentaries that increase our understanding of the complexity and diversity of the peoples and cultures that populate our planet.” Many other film festivals are springing up around the world with associated public programming such as workshops and conversations to facilitate exchanges among the represented cultural groups, to examine the ethics of representation, and to explore collaborative ethnographic

film making. Examples include the Royal Anthropological Institute film festival (<http://raifilmfest.org.uk/film/festival/2009/home>); the International ethnographic film festival of Quebec (<http://zeroanthropology.net/2008/01/27/international-ethnographic-film-festival-of-quebec>); and the Gottingen International Film Festival (<http://www.gieff.de>); as well as film festivals at the University of British Columbia, University of California, Irvine and many other locations. In a fascinating new development, YouTube is offering grants to young documentary film makers to improve the quality of documentaries distributed on that site. This is an example of the many potential new opportunities for ethnographic filmmakers to think about how to educate a variety of niche markets with targeted products and related curriculum materials via sites such as YouTube. Both the act of creating ethnographic film and video and the act of dissemination through engaging the public in intellectual exchanges should rightfully fall under the rubric of applied educational anthropology.

Cultural conservation

Supporting and conserving local culture is critical in order to bond and bridge communities (Schensul, 2005), foster equitable relationships between local communities and public education systems, and conserve indigenous knowledge systems (Ismail and Cazden, 2005). One of the dominant themes in educational anthropology is the transformation of mainstream or dominant educational practice through the incorporation of indigenous or local cultural practice, history, and relationships, achieved through political mobilization and advocacy, negotiation, dialogue, and legislation. Most educational anthropologists are convinced that students learn more effectively when the process and content of the curriculum is reflective of, and extends, what students experience, know, and believe, and when disjunctures between dominant state and national and community education–socialization practices and language are minimized. Supporting cultural heritage assists in achieving this goal:

UNESCO defines cultural heritage as the entire corpus of material signs either artistic or symbolic, handed on by the past to each culture and so to the whole of mankind. Cultural heritage is not only a source for business and economy, but a fundamental condition for the maintenance and development of society and its economy. The preservation and presentation of cultural heritage should therefore be a corner-stone of any cultural policy. (<http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/DesktopDefault.aspx>)

Two important sources of support and mobilization for cultural conservation in the United States are the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Park Service. They are charged with supporting the documentation and preservation of cultural heritage through art and history. Heritage art from an anthropological perspective consists of the products of history, craftsmanship, and artistic production that reflect the lives, cultures, and histories of diverse groups of people in the United States (Williamson *et al.*, 1999). In other countries, similar institutions are charged with cultural conservation. Cultural conservation is driven by a strong commitment to highlight the diverse forms of crafts, housing, and other material items (including clothing), cultural institutions, and rituals of vulnerable, immigrant, disappearing,

hidden, and disenfranchised or colonized or indigenous peoples around the world. The field, supported by folklorists as well as anthropologists, has a strong educational component, emphasizing support for cultural transmission of skills and traditions from older to younger culture bearers, documenting and archiving material, visual, musical, and performance traditions, and working with local people to represent their cultures in a complex and authentic manner.

A number of independent folk life centers have as their mission the preservation, conservation, and presentation of local cultural history, identity, and occupations through oral history, video/film, maintenance of archives, interactive exhibits and educational programs, workshops, and web sites. The Vermont Folk Life Center, now 25 years old, features voice documentation of traditional stories, story tellers and local historians. Its educational program emphasizes video, voice, recording, and production workshops that allow residents of the region to record and produce their own histories. Anthropologists have been involved in all of these activities.

The Philadelphia Folklore Project, born in 1987, has been nurtured by a group of ethnographers who believed in the importance of keeping local culture and folk art alive, and who formed an activist center with a mission dedicated to a fully inclusive and equitable way of valuing artistic expression, traditional knowledge, and folk arts, working with people to sustain meaningful cultural diversity, and to shape real alternatives for Philadelphia communities. The Connecticut Cultural Heritage Arts Program of the Institute for Community Research, started in 1990, has a similar mission: to join forces to promote the presence and visibility of the many different ethnic, national, and cultural groups in Connecticut, especially those who are invisible or not yet represented as a voice in the state (Schensul, 2005; Williamson *et al.*, 1999). These centers and programs, dedicated to ensuring cultural diversity, presence, and mutual understanding through multiple public programs, community festivals, popular education, public archives, and exhibits, utilize a common set of fine-grained ethnographic methods with close attention to the ethics of representation. They are generally invisible to the world of academic educational anthropology, but their activities fall squarely within its purview.

Perhaps some of the best examples of interactive community education and cultural preservation are carried out in small towns and in community-based cultural organizations, oftentimes by researchers crossing the boundaries that separate the fields of folk arts, folklore, community ethnography, museum studies, oral history, performance ethnography, and public social science. Anthropologist Antoinette Jackson, of the University of South Florida, and with support from the National Park Service, is conducting heritage ethnography in multiple locations in the south eastern United States (including Archery, Georgia, the home of former President Jimmy Carter), by involving local African American residents and religious institutions in discovering their cultural history and political identity (Gilbert, 2010). Her plan is to collaborate to create local small museums that can exhibit and store the results of the research in order to ensure that local as well as non-local African Americans are familiar with their cultural and historical heritage.

The Hartford public library has served as a host site for new African and Eastern European immigrants to the state, with the input of folklorist Lynne Williamson of

the Institute for Community Research. As part of its program of civic education for new arrivals, the library provided them with space to meet and exhibit their photographs, and to gain and to practice their marketable skills, including lace making, weaving, and jewelry making. These heritage artists include Bosnian needleworkers, Somalian basket-makers, an Assyrian embroiderer and lace-maker, Burmese Karen weavers, and Hmong embroiderers. Most of them have come from war-torn countries and are healing and knitting their lives together in a new location while learning about each other. Once the program was established, it shifted to ICR, a nearby welcoming community location with a gallery space and training/meeting rooms, where artists and craftspeople could do their work together and, later on, market their wares. They hold regular bazaars and marketplaces at ICR and elsewhere to sell their products to a growing clientele and earn household income based on traditional arts linked to their identity and national heritage. These activities illustrate “the power of art based in cultural heritage and familiar traditions to heal people who still experience serious mental health issues because of war related trauma” (www.incommunityresearch.org), as well as the important role of heritage arts in spanning ethnic, national, and cultural boundaries (Wali *et al.*, 2001).

Exhibits may also be designed to promote the presence of a specific population in the area, as well as featuring the history of their displacement or exile from their countries of origin. The Institute for Community Research Folk Arts Program exhibited in its gallery the weaving, wood carving, stone masonry, and Thangka painting of Tibetan traditional artists, which helped to knit together the few clusters of Tibetan families in New England and promote understanding of the Tibetan diaspora. The results were revitalization of these art forms in Connecticut and the establishment of networks that enabled families to expand a market for Tibetan goods in Connecticut (Williamson *et al.*, 1999).

Many examples of museum and gallery expositions reflect the work of applied educational anthropologists, using the tools of ethnographic and mixed methods research, reflection, visual representation, and scholarly and public programs. They address social issues in publicly engaged scholarship, and feature the art and culture of groups that are often invisible, in exile, marginalized and unrecognized by the broader American public. Applied educational anthropology should engage with these arenas of intense activity, dedication, and civic commitment, building programs of research, internships, and exchanges that enhance communities and scholarship in the field.

IMPROVING INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE THROUGH IMMERSION EXPERIENCES

Improving instructional practice is one important goal of applied educational anthropology. Most recent efforts to improve practice take on the challenges of promoting transformational change in the identity, critical consciousness, and pedagogical practices of teachers who are white and middle class, and unprepared for instruction in schools marked by cultural and class diversity. Though the improvement of teacher preparation may not bring about the transformation of discriminatory schools and entrenched didactic and exclusionary practices, there is good evidence to

suggest that intervention with pre-service teachers as well as carefully considered in-service teacher development programs can make a significant difference in teacher identities, sociopolitical awareness, and commitment to culturally and community relevant education and university institutional transformation. In particular, community immersion programs are critical in assisting pre-service and in-service teachers to understand and reflect upon the cultural histories, beliefs, values, and experiences that students bring to the classroom, as well as the struggles and challenges that they face at home and in their communities. Such understandings can help teachers to build trusting relationships with students, tailor instruction, ask better questions, introduce culturally and situationally relevant materials, bridge class differences, and engage with them in their struggles for improved educational performance and educational equity (Erickson, 1987; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2000, 2009).

Vadeboncour and colleagues developed their vision of a socially transformative program for naive white middle-class pre-service teachers assigned to urban schools at the University of Colorado, “to eradicate conditions that can lead to oppression.” The program combined an immersion experience with readings on race and ethnicity, self-reflection tools, and relational instructional pedagogy and practices (Vadeboncoeur *et al.*, 1996). Evaluation showed significant improvements in student understanding of racism and inequality, principles of participatory democracy, and a shift from individual to structural explanations for gaps in student achievement. Meanwhile, Flores showed that a comprehensive Masters Program in Teaching committed to social justice could carry over to in-service teaching even in unreceptive environments (Flores, 2007). These efforts reflect a broader literature that points to the importance of immersion training for individual and classroom transformation.

A number of educational anthropologists have found innovative ways of combining research and intervention to change the culture of in-service instruction in schools in Latino and African American communities. Often the teachers in these schools are from other class and ethnic/racial backgrounds, and know little about the communities from which their students come. Their negative stereotypes and assumptions regarding their students’ ability to learn and achieve, as well as inappropriate or culturally incongruent instructional pedagogies, may impede student learning. Mentorships, co-constructed learning experiences, and “coaching” both in and outside of the classroom have been shown to make a significant difference in teacher practice and student performance.

Moll and Diaz described an ethnographic approach to changing the culture of instruction with Mexican American children by building on local culture. As they noted, “the strategic application of cultural resources in instruction is one important way of obtaining change in academic performance and of demonstrating that there is nothing about the children’s language, culture, or intellectual capacities that should handicap their schooling” (Moll and Diaz, 1987: 300) They illustrated with two examples. The first showed that students who had good English comprehension but not performance could explain material very well in Spanish when queried. Working with the teacher, they were able to change the instructional approach to focus on overall comprehension rather than English word recognition only. In the second, to improve English writing capacity and teachers’ cultural knowledge they engaged teachers in helping Mexican American students who were not very fluent in written

English to write about themselves and their communities and then to conduct research with others. In the process, teachers and students learned together about the students' own communities. They used this experience to create after-school community based research sites where innovations integrating cultural practices into educational pedagogy and curriculum content could take place, thus introducing an innovative structural transformation that effectively linked communities to pedagogical innovations.

In a similar approach, Michèle Foster found that the African American teachers she studied were successful because they took comprehensive responsibility for students' educational achievement *and* their overall development (Foster, 1993). She then developed a project entitled Learning through Teaching in an Afterschool Pedagogical Laboratory (T-APL) to improve the instructional practice of inadequately trained teachers in underperforming urban schools by linking them with master teachers similar to those described in her earlier study. Though results showed improvements in student performance, teachers' pedagogy, and parental satisfaction, she finally concluded that the quality of the relationship between teachers and students is the key element in motivating students to overcome obstacles to learning (Foster, 2004: 406). This work complements that of Gloria Ladson-Billings, who also writes extensively about successful approaches to instruction with African American students (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2000, 2009).

SYSTEMIC CHANGE AND INDIGENOUS MOVEMENTS

Systemic educational change requires a multilevel approach; it takes place over time and usually involves significant long-term involvement (Schensul, 2009; Schensul *et al.*, 2006). There are few examples in the literature in which anthropologists have driven large-scale systemic educational change by responding to the political demands and cultural variations of local and indigenous communities. In one effort to introduce collaborative learning into a middle school social development curriculum, and help teachers to become more responsive to a diverse student population with new pedagogical needs, an interdisciplinary (anthropology/psychology) researcher/school system collaboration in the northeastern United States produced a new fifth and sixth grade curriculum based on cooperative education instructional techniques. The curriculum included many exercises in which students and teachers could co-construct knowledge together and exchange information about their lives. The collaborative project team (researchers and skilled social development staff) worked closely with district administration, and both intervention and control schools. In-service training and "coaching," in which master teachers modeled instruction, co-taught with classroom teachers, and problem solved with them on demand were important components of the program. The program was implemented in all classrooms in half of the sixth and seventh grade schools and then compared with five control schools. Like L-TAPL, there were many system-wide obstacles to successful implementation, including district resistance to communication with parents, lack of sufficient district support for social development, alternative curriculum training demands on teachers, teacher resistance to teaching the

social development curricula, and discomfort with topics related to drug use or sexuality (Nastasi *et al.*, 2004). This system-wide intervention illustrated the challenges confronting approaches to bring about change in urban school districts which face community pressures, administrative demands, discomfort with socially sensitive topics, and instructional turnover.

In educational anthropology, some of the most exciting forms of large-scale educational change are found under the rubric of indigenous knowledge and human rights. The International Labor Organization defines indigenous peoples as those descended from populations which inhabited the country or geographic region at the time of colonization or establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural, and political institutions. Alaska provides an inspiring example of a long-term approach to comprehensive systems change. Here educational anthropologists at the University of Alaska–Fairbanks have been working with Alaskan Natives for the past 30 years to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, passed in 1971 (Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005). The act provided the basis for a vastly expanded and newly organized Alaskan Native education system at multiple levels based on research on indigenous knowledge systems (Barnhardt, Kawagley, and Hill, 2000; Kawagley and Barnhardt, 1997). A primary component was the Native Teacher Education Program, designed to train university faculty, both Native and non-Native, to prepare Native teachers in their own communities, thereby allowing them to assimilate instructional concepts with local beliefs and practices (Barnhardt, 2002). To address faculty knowledge limitations, a long-term program of field instruction in which faculty and students joined Native student educators in the field was introduced in the mid-1970s and has continued to the present. A significant component of this training program is experience living and working in Native communities (Barnhardt, 1999). According to Barnhardt, over the past 25 years, more than 30 faculty have become part of community life, learning from native peoples and integrating their experiences and knowledge into their teacher training activities, and in the process they have become more open, flexible, and able to problem-solve – qualities that he considers essential for success in a field faculty role (Barnhardt, 2002). The Alaska comprehensive program of interactive cooperative learning and structural change has resulted in the co-construction of knowledge through field experience, an evolving capacity on the part of faculty to teach Native educators more effectively, changes in the structure of the university in response to Native educational needs, the incorporation of indigenous culture into public education programs, and the creation of indigenous schools and programs of education (Barnhardt, 2005; Kawagley and Barnhardt, 1999).

A number of indigenous researchers and educational anthropology allies are involved in the development of alternative approaches to teaching science, instructional programs, and the creation of alternative schools based on indigenous knowledge systems. Most of the published literature in US journals on indigenous education reflects the extensive advocacy and scholarship of Maori, Native American, Canadian, and Hawaiian researchers (Harrison, 2005; Kaomea, 2005; Manuelito, 2005; May and Aikman, 2003). As the case of the Alaskan Native Education programs illustrates, these components often evolve over time into an integrated approach to indigenous

education. Most researchers would argue that broad-based efforts at systemic change require significant community mobilization and activism on the part of indigenous communities (Miheuah and Wilson, 2004). Movements may stem from the human and cultural rights organizing activities of indigenous scholars, or from the work of local activists concerned about the preservation and integration of indigenous culture, socialization, and learning into existing educational curricula. Indigenous education may result in an increased sense of national and cultural identity, as well as the use of indigenous language and mobilization for indigenous rights and recognition, and these components may occur in different ways in different locations and at different historical timepoints. Anthropologists from many different backgrounds have formed activist and scholarly collaborations with marginalized peoples to promote local change, autonomy, and educational and cultural development. Fortunately, the number of indigenous researchers and researchers of color (primarily of the African or Latin American diasporas) has increased dramatically, resulting in new possibilities for leadership and collaboration.

APPROACHES TO YOUTH ADVOCACY: CHANGING IDENTITIES THROUGH RESEARCH AND ART FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Participatory action research (PAR) is generally defined as a form of research that involves collaboration between researchers and people affected by a problem to conduct guided inquiry, which is then applied to remedy the problem. In educational anthropology, we highlight forms of PAR that are directed toward transforming oppressive social and educational structures, and the negative identity formations and ideologies that are their result. Forms of PAR that are truly transformational must be personally, socially, and politically empowering. Thus, the pedagogical theories and practices which guide its implementation must be consistent with experiential education, the co-construction of knowledge, learner self-direction, self-reflection, and successful political mobilization for change. Critical consciousness can only be developed when participants in a PAR process come to understand the social, political, economic, and structural factors that converge to result in discriminatory practices and various forms of inequity. Thus, tools must be developed to assist both adults and youth to understand these factors and the ways they impact on their lives.

There are multiple forms of PAR, driven by action science, feminist theory, sociology, anthropology, and public health, which can be arrayed along a continuum that emphasizes education/action on one end, and reflection/action on the other. Cammarota's description of cultural organizing in a school environment (Cammarota, 2008) and Aguilera's work with a mixed group of youth (Aguilera, 2009) both utilize ethnographic and self-reflection tools to arrive at the same end – youth with inquiry skills and critical consciousness who see themselves as agents with the right and the capacity to change the world they live in. Other related efforts at positive youth development describe youth empowerment through activism (Kwon, 2008), the empowering effects of engaging youth in evaluation efforts (Saboflores, 2008), or various forms of civic activism (Checkoway, 2003 No. 2). The

approach of the Institute for Community Research combines ethnography with self reflection, individual and group identity construction, data collection with peers and powerholders, analysis, action, subsequent reflection and continued development (Berg and Schensul, 2004). Over a 20-year period, a team of anthropologists, sociologists, public health educators, poets, and film-makers, along with hundreds of high school aged urban youth, developed an approach to Youth PAR that was implemented in summer institutes and year round after-school programs, in which groups of youth were paid as youth researcher/activists. In this approach, youth first form a collective identity that bridges gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, language, and sexual preference. Next, they reach consensus on a social problem they wish to understand and change. Through learning stations, they choose among a variety of ethnographic methods, including various forms of mapping and interviewing, surveys, photography, and pilesorts to study the problem from an eco-political perspective. They then learn their methods of choice, and use them to collect and analyze data. The data are made available to the public and the press in a gallery exhibit and formal presentation. Subsequently, youth utilize the data to develop intervention approaches over the course of the school year. They have worked on many topics, including suicide, HIV, teen pregnancy, hustling, environmental issues, racism, and health inequities, disseminating their work through community education and advocacy, and thereby realizing structural changes in economic development for youth. Evaluation of this approach shows that group formation and issue-learning takes place during the research phase, but it is through engagement in political activism that youth transform their identities and begin to view themselves as scholar/activists – a viewpoint that Cammarota shares (Berg, Coman, and Schensul, 2009). This approach also has been applied extensively to work with urban adults across diverse racial/ethnic communities (Schensul, Berg, and Williamson, 2008).

Finally, an overlooked and understudied area of applied educational anthropology is the interface of art-making, education, identity development, and activism. Anthropologist cum artist Beth Krensky has written extensively about the importance of art in education, arts based service learning, and ways in which schools and arts organizations can collaborate for change (Krensky, 2001; Krensky and Steffen, 2008). *Shane, the Lone Ethnographer* is the first cartooned introductory ethnography text written by educational anthropologist and graphic artist/cartoonist Sally Campbell-Galman (Campbell-Galman, 2007). Using a graphic novel approach that appeals to young readers, it is suitable for undergraduate and high school students and the public at large. Hip Hop also has been widely used in intervention projects, but Pardue describes an effort in Brazil that highlights Hip Hop as an alternative form of education (Pardue, 2004; see also Alim, Chapter 14, below). Many educational anthropologists are artists themselves, or work closely with artists and believe strongly in supporting art as a form of education, as a means of communicating with the public, and as a vehicle for integrating curricula in public school settings. Since culture is produced, and transmitted through material items, performances, written art forms, and visual art, these art forms become a central means of introducing and integrating culture into classroom pedagogy and politics, and placing students squarely in the center of such activities.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this chapter, I have reviewed a number of approaches to applied educational anthropology that I believe are innovative and should be highlighted and expanded in the years to come. Unfortunately, given restrictions on length, I have had to exclude the work of a number of researchers, as well as entire areas of application, such as evaluation. In spite of obvious advances in the realm of application, as yet we cannot point to a written compendium of work that articulates theoretically driven approaches to curriculum innovations, to classroom or school design improvement, or to innovations and interventions in science, social, or writing programs. Further, by narrowing the field of educational anthropology to formal and informal “schooling,” we have excluded other fields of teaching/learning, such as health, that might have benefited from, as well as contributed to, a fully evolved applied anthropology. This gap is truly unfortunate because an anthropologically driven program of intervention research at the individual, classroom, system, and policy levels would surely make significant contributions to the solution of some of the more serious and entrenched educational challenges of the twenty-first century. And an evolved educational anthropology that embraced fully both formal and informal learning in fields beyond language and formal educational institutions – health, cultural conservation, popular culture, environmental change – would surely enrich the field.

I believe that if we designate these so-called marginal and marginalized areas as worthy of attention as forms of *educational* applied anthropology, carried out primarily outside the university, we can situate our field squarely in the domains of “community engagement,” scholar activism, and action research. We can then move to broaden membership in our field, develop proper theoretical, methodological, and evaluative approaches that are both publishable as applied work in our journals and make sense in the broader domain of applied anthropology, and provide a more cohesive approach with which to tackle the dominance of the mainstream educational intervention approaches with all of their negative intellectual baggage and potential for social harms.

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PART **II**

**Education via
Language: Speaking,
Writing, Playing**

CHAPTER 9

Linguistic Anthropology of Education*

*Stanton Wortham
and Angela Reyes*

INTRODUCTION

Almost all education is mediated by language use. By “education,” we mean the social processes through which ideas and practices are taught and learned in a wide range of contexts, both in and out of schools, through both “formal” and “informal” instruction. When people speak and write in educational contexts, they signal things not only about the subjects they are teaching or learning but also about their affiliations with social groups inside and outside the speech event. These affiliations not only influence how people learn educational content but can also shape individual life trajectories and larger communities. Anthropologists of education study interconnections between education and the social and cultural contexts that shape and are shaped by it. Given the importance of language to these interconnections, anthropologists of education need to understand how educational language use presupposes and transforms social relations, and how educational actions are influenced by ideologies about language and social personhood. Over the past several decades, many have productively described these processes by drawing on concepts and methods from the subfield of linguistic anthropology. We call this work “linguistic anthropology of education.”

Linguistic anthropologists provide theories and methods that have proved to be useful for exploring educational processes, and linguistic anthropological studies have

* Some portions of this chapter appeared previously in Stanton Wortham, 2008. *Linguistic Anthropology of Education*. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 37:37–51.

illuminated educational phenomena for decades (Cazden, John, and Hymes, 1972; Cook-Gumperz, 1986; Wortham and Rymes, 2003). For instance, linguistic anthropological research uncovers how complex and sustained interactions among diverse groups in educational contexts often establish characteristic, hierarchically organized identities for students (O'Connor, 2001; Rex and Green, 2008; Rymes, 2004). It also provides detailed accounts of how labels such as “educated” and “uneducated” circulate in schools and become attached to differentially valued types of people (González and Arnot-Hopffer, 2003; Zentella 1997). By studying language use and language ideologies in and around schools, linguistic anthropologists of education productively examine the creation of dominant and subordinate identities (Collins and Blot, 2003; Varenne and McDermott, 1998), the socialization of individuals (Howard, 2007; Ochs and Schieffelin, 2007), and the formation of nation-states, transnational groups, and publics that include colonizer and colonized, “native” and “immigrant” (Lempert, 2006; Lo, 2004; Rampton, 2005; Reyes, 2002, 2005).

This chapter makes two interrelated arguments about the application of linguistic anthropological theories and methods to educational phenomena. First, educational language use and linguistic anthropological concerns illuminate each other. Linguistic anthropological approaches to language use have enriched our accounts of educational processes. The reverse is also true: educational institutions make important contributions to social, cultural, and linguistic processes that are of central concern to both linguistic and cultural anthropologists (Hall, 1999; Levinson, 1999). Second, linguistic anthropological approaches are concerned with four aspects of language use in cultural context, comprising what Silverstein (1985) calls “the total linguistic fact”: form, use, ideology, and domain. As we discuss later in this chapter, successful analyses of socially and culturally situated language use must attend to all four aspects, though individual research projects often emphasize one or another. Before elaborating these arguments, we first define “linguistic anthropology” and “linguistic anthropology of education” more precisely.

LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Linguistic anthropologists study language use as social action. Despite prevalent folk ideologies that suggest otherwise, written and spoken language do more than just refer and describe. They also constitute actions that both presuppose and create social relations in cultural context. Most important social and cultural processes are mediated in significant part by language, and systematic study of language use enriches our understanding of them.

The main historical line of linguistic anthropology runs through Boas (1911), Sapir (1921), and Whorf (1956) to Hymes (1964), Silverstein (1976), and Gumperz (1982). Linguistic anthropology is also an interdisciplinary field. It is one of the four subfields of American anthropology, but it draws on socially oriented linguistics (Jakobson, 1960; Labov, 1972), qualitative sociology (Goffman, 1981), philosophy of language (Peirce, 1955), social theory (Bourdieu, 1977 [1972]), and cultural anthropology (Urban, 1996). Exemplary work focuses on the ethnography of communication (Gumperz and Hymes, 1964), interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz, 1982), semiotic mediation (Mertz and Parmentier, 1985), performance (Bauman and Briggs, 1990), metapragmatic

discourse (Silverstein and Urban, 1996), language ideology (Schieffelin, Woolard, and Kroskrity, 1998), and inter-event semiosis (Agha and Wortham, 2005). Duranti (1997), Hanks (1996), Mertz (2007), and Parmentier (1997) provide overviews of the field.

Linguistic anthropology distinguishes itself from linguistics in two ways: it focuses on language use, not language form; and it emphasizes the language user's point of view. Linguistic anthropology overlaps with sociolinguistics or "sociocultural linguistics" (Bucholtz and Hall, 2008) because both focus on the social contexts of language use, but it is distinguishable from the variationist strands of sociolinguistics, which rely less on ethnographic and semiotic perspectives. Duranti (1997) and Silverstein (1985) describe how linguistic anthropology takes advantage of linguists' discoveries about phonology and grammar, but only in order to study how language users deploy linguistic resources to accomplish social action in practice. More contemporary linguistic anthropology takes what Mertz (2007) and Rymes (2007) call a "semiotic" approach to language use, emphasizing the flexible use of language to create sometimes unexpected relations, instead of focusing on stable norms of appropriate use. Linguistic anthropologists also conduct ethnographic research, emphasizing language users' points of view and insisting that researchers must attend to how people themselves explicitly or tacitly recognize the categories that we use to describe their communicative practices (Erickson, 2004).

LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

We define linguistic anthropology of education as research on educational processes that employs a linguistic anthropological approach focused on language form, use, ideology, and domain. Much work in three related fields falls within this definition. "Language socialization" research uses linguistic anthropological theories and methods to explore socialization both in and out of school (Garrett and Baquedano-López, 2002; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986; Baquedano-López and Hernandez, Chapter 12, below). "Linguistic ethnography" (Rampton, 2007) draws on linguistic anthropology as well as applied linguistics and social theory to explore language use and language learning primarily in contemporary Europe. "Educational linguistics" uses linguistic, sociological, and anthropological approaches to study language learning and language policy (Hornberger and Hult, 2007; Spolsky and Hult, 2008). Within these three traditions, some work focuses on stable "norms of communication," not on how linguistic "forms are deployed flexibly in interaction to create new forms of culturally relevant action" (Rymes, 2007: 31). Because the former sort of work does not fully explore language use – how linguistic signs come to have meaning in context, across both interactional and historical time – we do not review it here.

Most of the illustrations in this review describe events and processes that happen in and around formal educational institutions, not through "informal" education. Of course, out-of-school processes are an important topic for both the anthropology and the linguistic anthropology of education. Important linguistic anthropological work has shown how language use contributes to learning, identity, and cultural production in out-of-school learning contexts (Reyes, 2007; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986; Varenne, 2007 and Chapter 4, above). We mention some of this research in

our review, but we focus on school contexts because these contribute so significantly to the creation and differential evaluation of important social relations.

THE TOTAL LINGUISTIC FACT

In this chapter, we describe work that has focused on the four aspects of what Silverstein (1985) calls the “total linguistic fact”: language form, use, ideology, and domain. Linguistic anthropologists use linguists’ accounts of phonological and grammatical categories, thus studying language *form*, but they are not primarily interested in how linguistic forms have meaning apart from contexts of *use*. Instead, they study how linguistic signs come to have both referential and relational meaning as they are used in social and cultural context (Duranti, 1997; Silverstein, 1976). The meaning of any linguistic sign in use cannot be determined by decontextualized rules, whether phonological, grammatical, or cultural. No matter how robust the relevant regularities, language users often deploy signs in unexpected yet meaningful ways (Goffman, 1981). Linguistic anthropologists study how language comes to have sometimes unexpected meanings in interaction. As important as local contexts are, however, the meaning of any linguistic sign cannot be understood without also attending to more widely circulating models of the social world. Linguistic anthropologists often call these models language *ideologies* – models of linguistic signs and the people who characteristically use them, which others employ to understand the social relations that are signaled through language use (Schieffelin, Woolard, and Kroskrity, 1998). These ideologies are not evenly distributed across social space, but they do have a *domain* – the set of people who recognize the indexical link between a type of sign and the relevant ideology (Agha, 2007). Linguistic anthropologists study how linguistic signs and models of language and social relations move from event to event, across time and across social space, and how such movement contributes to historical change.

This chapter explores linguistic anthropological work that has enriched our understanding of educational phenomena by focusing on language form, use, ideology, and domain. In doing so, we show how linguistic anthropological work on education illuminates processes of concern to anthropologists of education. In practice the four aspects cannot be separated – all language use involves forms, in use, as construed by ideologies, that move across domains. Any adequate analysis takes all four aspects into account, and ignoring or overemphasizing any one aspect can distort our understanding of how language comes to have meaning in practice. Productive analyses can nonetheless focus on one or two aspects without losing sight of the others.

FORM

A linguistic sign gets part of its meaning from the systematic distribution of the sign with respect to other signs. Linguists describe these distributional patterns in terms of phonological regularities and grammatical categories. Systematic attention to

linguistic form has helped linguistic anthropologists illuminate various educational phenomena.

Eckert (2000) presents both an ethnographic and a quantitative sociolinguistic study of students in one suburban high school. Her statistical analyses show how gender and socioeconomic class correlate with the use of phonological variants (e.g., the raising of the vowel /ay/ in words like “mine”). By tracing the intersection between gender- and class-based variants and students’ peer groups, she explains how systematic differences in phonology help construct the school version of a middle class–working class split – the “jock”/ “burnout” distinction – as well as gendered models of personhood that involve “sluttiness,” aggressive masculinity, and other features. Eckert also shows how individual students use these phonological regularities in practice to navigate relationships and construct identities. For example, within the category of “burnout” girls are the more extreme “burned-out burnouts,” whose hyper-use of /ay/ raising, which is the clearest variable linked to urban meaning, exceeds all jocks and burnouts and helps define the quintessential burnout style.

Mendoza-Denton (2007) describes the complex multimodal signs that Latina youth gang members use to distinguish themselves from mainstream peers. She attends to systematic variation in linguistic form (for example, raised /ɪ/ in words like “sit” is significantly more frequent among core gang members), together with other modalities like paralinguistic features, dress, tattoos, and bodily presentation, as she describes how youth position themselves both within and against the larger society. Alim (2004) describes style shifting done by black youth as they adjust phonological variants, grammatical categories, and discourse markers according to the social positions of their interlocutors. For example, he illustrates how young African Americans display an extremely broad range of copula absence use (e.g., “she late” instead of “she is late”), a core feature of African American English, depending on the interlocutor’s race, gender, and knowledge of hip hop. He explores how black youth use such forms to navigate prevalent models of race and changing socioeconomic conditions in gentrifying areas.

Eckert, Mendoza-Denton, and Alim extend Labov’s (1972) variationist sociolinguistics, embedding systematic study of phonological regularities and grammatical categories within ethnographies and exploring the creative positioning that youth accomplish through language and other sign systems. They show how secondary school youth play important roles in linguistic innovation and how language use by these youth both in and out of school plays an important role in group identification and social stratification. Systematic investigation of linguistic variation and innovation can help anthropologists study the development of youth culture and the production of racialized, gendered, and class-based identities that organize both school-based and broader social relations.

Viechnicki and Kuipers (2006) describe grammatical and discursive resources through which middle school students and their teachers objectify experience as scientific fact. The process of transforming experience into “evidence” is complex, as scientists and science students turn ordinary events into warrants for decontextualizable entities and authoritative laws. Viechnicki and Kuipers describe how science teachers and students use tense and aspect shifts, syntactic parallelism, and nominalization to

remove experiences from their immediate circumstances and recontextualize them in an epistemologically authoritative scientific framework, thereby moving from concrete experiences to universal, experience-distant formulations. Their analyses both illuminate prevalent practices in school-based science education and describe an important process through which authoritative knowledge is produced in modern societies.

USE

Phonological and grammatical regularities are crucial tools for linguistic anthropological analyses, but rules of grammatically correct (or culturally appropriate) usage do not suffice to explain how people use language to create meaningful action in practice. Analyses of language use often err by taking decontextualized grammatical, pragmatic, or cultural patterns as their key tools, thereby disregarding how linguistic signs come to have sometimes unexpected meanings in particular contexts. Silverstein (1992) provides a systematic account of how signs presuppose and create social relations in context. “Context” can be indefinitely large, and language use makes sense only as participants and analysts identify the aspects of context that are made relevant in an interaction. Participants and analysts rely on two processes that Silverstein calls “contextualization” – through which signs come to have meaning as they index relevant aspects of the context – and “entextualization” – through which segments of interaction emerge and cohere as recognizable events. Cultural knowledge is crucial to interpreting language use, but we can only interpret linguistic signs by examining how utterances get contextualized in practice.

Erickson and Shultz (1982) study the “organized improvisation” that occurs in conversations between college academic counselors and students from non-mainstream backgrounds – what they call “gatekeeping encounters.” Erickson and Shultz do not argue simply that non-mainstream students and mainstream counselors experience a “mismatch” of styles, resulting in counselors’ misjudgments about students. They show how counselors and students use various resources to create, override, resist, and defuse such mismatches. Non-mainstream students are often disadvantaged by non-standard habits of speaking and by mainstream counselors’ assumptions about what they sometimes construe as “deficits,” but such disadvantage does not happen simply through a clash of monolithic “styles.” Erickson and Shultz find that “situationally emergent identity” – when participants selectively reveal aspects of their identities to make relevant in interaction – explains more about the outcome of a “gatekeeping” encounter than demographically fixed identity. They analyze how speakers use social and cultural resources both to reproduce and to overcome disadvantage. Such work goes beyond simple reproductionist accounts and illuminates the more complex improvisations through which educational institutions both create and restrict social mobility (Erickson, 2004).

Rampton (2005) focuses on the hybrid, emergent identities created as students navigate social relations. He describes language “crossing” in urban, multi-ethnic groups of adolescents in the United Kingdom as white, South Asian, and Caribbean youth mix features of Punjabi, Caribbean Creole, and Stylized Asian English. Crossing involves sprinkling words or linguistic features from other languages into speech

that takes place in a predominant language. Rampton does not argue simply that minority languages are devalued and used to stigmatize non-mainstream youth who speak them, nor that such youth use their home languages to resist such discrimination. Both of these processes do occur, but Rampton studies how these and other social effects are achieved in practice. Crossing is a “discursive strategy” in which diverse youth contest and create relations around race, ethnicity, and youth culture. The uses of minority languages involve contestation, teasing, resistance, irony and other stances with respect to the social issues surrounding minority identities in Britain. Like Erickson and Shultz, Rampton wants to understand and mitigate the disadvantages faced by minority youth, and he describes the larger social and political forces regimenting language and identity in the United Kingdom. But he does not reduce disadvantage to predictable patterns in which signs of identity routinely trigger negative stereotypes. He shows instead how youth use language to navigate among the conflicting forms of solidarity and resistance available to them in multi-ethnic Britain.

Other work in the linguistic anthropology of education also attends closely to creativity and indeterminacy in language use (Duff, 2003; He, 2003; Kamberelis, 2001; McDermott and Varenne, 1995; Rymes, 2001; Wortham, 2006). He (2003), for instance, shows how Chinese heritage language teachers often use three-part “moralized directives” in order to control disruptive behavior, but she also illustrates how these directives reinforce cultural norms. By directly indexing a particular moral and authoritative stance, these directives also indirectly index a culturally familiar model for how Chinese teachers should behave. Rymes (2001) describes typical “dropping out” and “dropping in” autobiographical stories, through which academically marginal students construct senses of self, and reject or embrace formal education, but she also shows how these “at-risk” students reproduce, contest, ridicule, and otherwise rework typical stories. All this work shows that, in order to study the social relations established through educational language use, we must attend to the sometimes unexpected ways that educators and students position themselves with respect to both established and emerging models of identity. Because educational processes are important sites for the production and transformation of social identities, this linguistic anthropological work on creative educational language use addresses broader anthropological concerns about how both established and unexpected social regularities emerge in practice.

IDEOLOGY

Speakers and hearers must have two types of cultural and linguistic knowledge to produce meaningful language use in practice. They must know what linguistic and paralinguistic signs index or mean, and they must be familiar with types of speech events and the types of people who characteristically participate in them (Gumperz, 1982; Silverstein, 1992). All scholarship on language in use attends, explicitly or tacitly, to the second type of knowledge – to more widely distributed social and cultural patterns that form the background against which both routine and innovative usage occurs. Language users rely on models that link types of linguistic forms with the

types of people who stereotypically use them, even when the model is deployed in unexpected ways or transformed in practice. Silverstein (1979) describes these models of typical language use as “linguistic ideologies,” and they have also been called “language ideologies” (Schieffelin, Woolard, and Kroskrity, 1998). Any adequate account of language use must analyze language ideologies and describe how they become salient in practice.

Language ideologies systematically associate types of language use with socially located types of people, and the concept allows linguistic anthropologists to explore relations between the emergent meanings of signs and more enduring social structures. Language ideology has been an important topic for the linguistic anthropology of education because educational processes establish associations between “educated” and “uneducated,” “sophisticated” and “unsophisticated,” “official” and “vernacular” language use and, accordingly, types of students. An understanding of language ideologies thus helps explain how educational processes move young people toward diverse social locations, and linguistic anthropological work on these processes helps show how social individuals and group members are produced.

Jaffe (1999) uses the concept of language ideology to trace the policies and practices involved in the recent revitalization of Corsican. She describes one essentialist ideology that values French as the language of logic and civilization, another essentialist ideology that values Corsican as the language of nationalism and ethnic pride, as well as a less essentialist ideology that embraces the use of multiple languages and multiple identities. Her analyses show how schools are a central site of struggle among these ideologies – with some trying to maintain the centrality of French in the curriculum, some favoring Corsican language revitalization, and others wanting some Corsican in the schools but resisting a new standard Corsican as the language of schooling. Jaffe explores both predictable sociohistorical patterns, like the struggle of a colonized people to value their own language, and less familiar ones like the celebration of “authentic” Corsican by “natives” who cannot speak the language well.

Bucholtz (2001) and Kiesling (2001) use the concept of language ideology to explore peer relations and ethnic stereotypes among white Americans. Bucholtz (2001) shows how many white youth adopt aspects of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and thereby mark themselves as “cool.” She describes how “nerds” reject coolness and mark this rejection by refusing to adopt any features of AAVE. Nerds even use what Bucholtz calls “superstandard” English, which includes scrupulous deployment of schooled articulation, grammar, and lexis. Bucholtz describes ideologies that associate types of language use – superstandard, borrowing a few features of AAVE, or speaking mostly AAVE – with types of people – nerds who reject coolness, white students trying to be cool, and white students who go “too far” toward a racialized (and stereotyped) other, according to some peers. Kiesling (2001) describes the speech of white middle-class fraternity brothers, exploring how racially-linked features of their speech serve interactional functions and reproduce social hierarchies. He shows how fraternity members assert intellectual or economic superiority over each other by marking interlocutors as metaphorically “black.” When participants boast about basketball skills, for example, Kiesling also shows how they assert physical prowess over each other by themselves speaking like black men and inhabiting a racialized stereotype of physical

masculinity. As they jockey for position in everyday life, the fraternity brothers use AAVE to momentarily construct stances of toughness, while reinforcing ideologies of AAVE speakers as less rational, economically distressed, and physically imposing.

Bokhorst-Heng (1999), Berkley (2001), and Stocker (2003), apply the concept of language ideology to educational situations outside of Europe and North America. Stocker (2003) describes a monolingual Spanish-speaking group in Costa Rica that is believed to speak a stigmatized dialect – despite the fact that their speech is not linguistically distinguishable from their neighbors’ – because they live on an artificially bounded “reservation” and are perceived as “indigenous.” She shows how high school language instruction reinforces this ideology. Bokhorst-Heng (1999) describes how Singapore used schools to make Mandarin the “mother tongue” of ethnically Chinese Singaporeans. In 1957 less than 0.1% of ethnically Chinese Singaporeans spoke Mandarin as their home dialect, but in the 1970s the government selected Malay, Tamil, and Mandarin as the “mother tongues” of all Singaporeans. The government created an image of Singapore as a multicultural state composed of three homogeneous subgroups and tied this image to the three “home” languages that students were to use in school. Berkely (2003) describes adult Mayan speakers at school learning to write “authentic” local stories in their language. He shows how this brought two ideologies into conflict: an ideology of literacy as cognitive skill that emphasized the authority of the young female teacher; and a traditional ideology that presented older men as empowered to tell stories on behalf of others. Berkely shows how the teacher and elders creatively navigated this conflict, with older men telling stories that younger people learned to write down.

Some linguistic anthropologists of education use the concept of language ideology to study broader power relations. Blommaert (2005) argues that linguistic anthropological work can both analyze language use in practice and explore enduring power relations that are themselves created partly through language. He focuses on “structural inequalities within the world system” (p. 57), like differential access to dominant languages and bureaucratic procedures that systematically disadvantage many from the global South. He also describes how refugees and other disenfranchised people are systematically denied “voice” in educational and other institutional settings. Similar linguistic anthropological work describes various ways in which educational institutions establish or reinforce power relations (Harris and Rampton, 2003; Varenne and McDermott, 1998).

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

English. The school does so by promoting a French monolingual ideal which is adhered to by the “Bilingual students” in monitored areas of the school, while the “colonized French students” find themselves alienated by the prevalent use of English in the majority of school spaces, and “Quebec students” witness the overt rejection of their language and identity in everyday school practices. Blommaert (1999) describes how the Tanzanian state has used language planning for nation-building, trying to make a common nation out of a multilingual society by establishing Swahili as the primary language of government and education. In the process, language planners both deliberately and inadvertently created “symbolic hierarchies,” making some types of speakers sound more authoritative.

Other linguistic anthropological work on education and power has addressed literacy (Bartlett *et al.*, Chapter 10, below; Blommaert, Creve, and Willaert, 2006; Bloome *et al.*, 2004; Collins and Blot, 2003; Street, 1984). Street (1984) distinguishes between a theory of literacy as “autonomous” – which casts it as a cognitive skill independent of cultural contexts – and theories that emphasize the diverse cultural contexts and activities in which writing is used. He shows how governments and formal educational institutions favor the autonomous view, and how this disadvantages “less literate” peoples and students with non-mainstream literacy practices. Collins and Blot (2003) follow Street in exploring literacy and power, but they also describe how local practices are embedded in global processes like colonialism and neoliberalism. They analyze interdependencies between local uses of literacy and larger sociohistorical movements, describing the hegemony of the literate standard and how this has provided cultural capital to some groups while disadvantaging others. They argue against the common assumption that schooled literacy always provides intellectual and economic salvation for the “less developed,” and they show how this assumption devalues nonstandard literacies and has been used to justify exploitation.

Many other linguistic anthropologists have explored how educational institutions create social relations as they employ and transform language ideologies (Wortham and Berkley, 2001), showing how schools differentially value or attend to students from certain groups (Pollock, 2004, 2008; Warriner, 2004), how schools maintain authorized accounts of appropriate and inappropriate speech (Jackson, 2009), how governments use school systems to establish visions of national language and identity (Hult, 2005), how academic ideologies shape language revitalization efforts (Collins, 1998), and how individuals draw on language ideologies that circulate in schools to identify others and value them differentially (Baquedano-López, 1997; Shankar, 2008). Linguistic anthropological work on educational language ideologies thus helps to describe the important role schools play in producing differentially valued social groups.

DOMAIN

Work on language ideology shows how language in use both shapes and is shaped by more enduring social relations. We must not, however, cast this as a simple two-part process – sometimes called the “micro–macro dialectic” – in which events create

structures and structures are created in events (Wortham, 2006). Agha (2007; Agha and Wortham, 2005) provides a useful alternative conceptualization. He argues that all language ideologies, all models that link linguistic features with typifications of people and events, have a “domain.” These models are recognized by only a subset of any linguistic community, and this subset changes as signs and models move across space and time. There is no one “macro” set of models or ideologies, common to a group. Instead, models of language and social life are sometimes recognized only by a few, sometimes only in a local community, and sometimes across a global language community. Furthermore, the set of people who recognize the model changes as it moves across space and time. In analyzing language and social life, then, we must describe how models drawn from different spatial and temporal scales become relevant, and we must describe how models move across events (Agha, 2007; Agha and Wortham, 2005; Wortham, 2005, 2006). Instead of focusing only on speech events, or simply connecting micro-level events to macro-level structures, we must investigate the many scales of social organization relevant to understanding language in use. We must also, as Agha (2007) and Wortham (2005, 2006) argue, follow the chains or trajectories across which individuals, signs, and ideologies move.

In their study of “untracking” as an educational reform, for example, Mehan *et al.* (1996) go beyond a simple combination of local events and “macro” patterns. They explore various realms that influence “at-risk” students’ school success – ranging from properties of the student him or herself, to parents, family, the classroom, the school, peer groups, the local community, as well as national educational policy and broader socioeconomic constraints. Instead of describing “micro” and “macro,” Mehan and his colleagues describe how resources from many spatial and temporal scales facilitate or impede students’ academic success. They give a complex account of how “intelligence,” “educational success,” and other aspects of identity are constructed in practice, describing how resources from various layers of social context together facilitate a student’s path. Similarly, Barton and Tusting (2005) attend to various “middle” scales that exist between micro and macro, exploring the multiple, changing groups relevant to language and social identities, and following the trajectories that individuals and texts take across contexts.

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

in the school's terms. Rogers (2003) also follows an individual student's trajectory, across two years, as the student and her family negotiate with authorities about whether she is "disabled." Rogers shows how both institutionalized and local models and practices facilitate the transformation of this student from "low achieving" to "disabled," and she follows the links among official texts, conferences, tests, family conversations, and other events that helped constitute this student's movement toward disability.

Systematic work on what Agha (2007) calls domain, and on the trajectories across which signs and ideologies move, has emerged only recently. In contrast, research on form, use, and ideology – aspects of the total linguistic fact that allow us to treat the speech event as the focal unit of analysis – has been occurring for decades. It has become clear, however, that we cannot fully understand how language constitutes social relations unless we move beyond the isolated speech event and attend to language use across domains and trajectories. Even the most sophisticated analyses of linguistic forms, in use, with respect to ideologies, fail to capture how ways of speaking, models of language and social life, and individual identities emerge across events. Recent work on new media speech genres in classroom discourse (Rymes, 2004) and web-based communication by educational institutions (Urciuoli, 2009) examines the increasing influence of layered mass-mediated discourses on educational processes. New linguistic anthropological studies like these on domains and trajectories in educational institutions will continue to show how educational processes play important roles in the emergence of social relations.

CONCLUSIONS

Language use is not a passive means for representing or conveying educational experience, but an active force in shaping it. Language plays a central role in the social and cultural production accomplished through educational processes. Linguistic anthropologists study linguistic forms, in use, as construed by ideologies, and as those forms and language ideologies move across domains. Linguistic anthropological research on education illuminates educational processes and shows how language and education contribute to processes of broad anthropological concern. Educational language use produces social groups, sanctions official identities, differentially values those groups and identities, and sometimes creates hybrid identities and unexpected social types. Linguistic anthropological accounts of how these processes occur can enrich the anthropology of education and the field of anthropology more broadly.

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CHAPTER 10

The Anthropology of Literacy

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Literacy is not just about reading and writing; it is about respect, opportunity and development ... Literacy gives people tools with which to improve their livelihoods, participate in community decision-making, gain access to information about health care ... Above all, it enables individuals to realize their rights as citizens and human beings.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,
International Literacy Day,
September 8, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Literacy figures prominently in national and international discourses about human rights, civic participation, education, and development. In conversations about development, it is often a taken for granted assumption that literacy confers invaluable social and economic benefits, and that it empowers both individuals and communities. Within the context of education, literacy – often defined simply as the ability to read and write – is seen as a basic set of skills necessary for students' academic success and access to employment and higher education. Thus, popular conceptions promote literacy as a universal good, and much social and political effort goes into creating opportunities for children, youth, and adults to develop “literacy skills” in myriad

settings. It is not surprising then that literacy is a heavily researched topic – one that is approached from multiple disciplinary angles, which have generated varying conceptual understandings of literacy’s role in educational and social change processes. How have anthropologists participated in these conversations? How have they challenged dominant conceptions of literacy? What has an anthropological lens offered in the way of theoretical insights, methodological approaches, and pedagogical strategies?

This chapter explores how anthropologists have approached literacy and discusses this literature’s unique contributions to understanding complex processes of education and “development.” The anthropology of literacy is far from a monolithic trajectory of research approaches and practices. It has a long and divergent history rooted in lively debate and discussion around how to conceptualize literacy and its role in social, political, cultural, and educational practices. As such, the chapter begins by tracing its historical antecedents and reviewing studies that were premised on the “literacy thesis” and divided the world into literate and oral/illiterate societies. It then moves on to describe the paradigm shifts that took place when anthropologists began to problematize these oral/literate dichotomies and conceptualized literacy as a social practice. These “New Literacy Studies,” based in the anthropology of literacy, recast notions of literacy, moving from literacy as a fixed category and discrete set of skills to literacy as situated practices with social, political, and ideological significance. The idea of literacy as social practice then became a central tenet for anthropologists using ethnographic methodologies to examine people’s interactions and meaning-making with literacy. This chapter highlights some of the most influential strands of anthropological research on literacy that draw on various theoretical frameworks to analyze literacy’s relationship to structures of power, language, identities, and technology.

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

Historically, the anthropological study of literacy was predicated upon a “great divide” between so-called literate and non-literate societies and assumptions about the “consequences” of literacy for individual cognition and society-wide economic, political, and social development (Luria, 1976). Scholars working in this vein assumed, erroneously, a stark distinction (for individuals and for societies) between literacy and orality. In his attempt to deny absolutist claims about fundamental differences in human capabilities, anthropologist Jack Goody inadvertently created yet another “great divide” when he posited that human differences in cognition and cultural conditions could be attributed to literacy. In a landmark essay, Goody and Watt (1963) argued that the alphabetic literacy, which originated in Greece and was subsequently developed in Europe, generated a detachability that fostered the ability to distinguish between myth and history as well as the capacity to subject tradition to skepticism. Such claims resonated with writers such as Ong (1982), who distinguished between primarily oral thinking, considered to be memory-based, empathetic, and situational, and literacy-based thinking, considered to be record-based, objectively distanced, abstract, and analytic. Similarly, Olson (1977) argued that alphabetic literacy detached meaning from context, promoting scientific inquiry. For these and similar authors, literacy “transforms human thinking, relationships to language, and relationships to

and representations of tradition” (Collins, 1995: 77–78). As challenges to the various theses arose, Goody and others were forced to specify rather arbitrarily that the so-called consequences of literacy only derived from full alphabetic literacy, and not the “restricted literacies” of other scripts (Goody, 1968; see also 1977).

The claims forwarded by Goody, Ong, and others were roundly critiqued in subsequent studies. Various scholars demonstrated the fluidity of interaction and considerable overlap between orality and literacy (Akinaso, 1985, 1992; Basso, 1974; Boyarin, 1993; Tannen, 1982, 1984). Likewise, many have rejected the claims that “literate thinking” is abstract and context free, while “oral thinking” is concrete and context bound (Finnegan, 1988; Scribner and Cole, 1981). In her comparative ethnography of literacy in three communities, Heath (1983) revealed how literacy events were shaped by important factors such as micro-level parental and religious authority structures and social interaction routines. Further, scholars demonstrated that some of the changes attributed to literacy were prompted, instead, by schooling (Scribner and Cole, 1981; see also Bledsoe and Robey, 1993).

The claims for society-wide “consequences” were equally critiqued. Gough (1968) debunked the notion that alphabetic literacy in Ancient Greece heralded a revolution in human thinking; he examined the use of logographic writing systems in India and China, and showed (for example) how China developed systematic science without alphabetic literacy. In a historical analysis of literacy in medieval England, Clanchy (1979) found that the emergence of a so-called “literate mentality” was facilitated by political changes, which introduced requirements of written documentation for proof of land ownership. Far from being a neutral and objective mechanism for social progress, literacy was used as a tool for social control and political manipulation by Norman conquerors attempting to establish their land rights in England. Graff’s (1979) landmark historical analysis of nineteenth-century literacy in the United States, Canada, and England found that the contribution of literacy to economic prosperity was “sometimes limited and often contradictory” (1987: 356; see also Graff, 1979). Graff (1987) condemned the continuing popularity of “the literacy myth,” in which a wide variety of social, political, and economic goods are attributed to literacy. Collectively, these studies refute the notion of literacy as a monolithic phenomenon with predictable consequences.

NEW LITERACY STUDIES

The paradigm shift within the anthropology of literacy studies culminated in the systematic, ethnographically informed critiques offered by Brian Street. Street rejected what he called the “autonomous model of literacy,” which treats literacy “as independent of social context, an autonomous variable whose consequences for society and cognition can be derived from its intrinsic character” (Street, 1993: 5). The autonomous model ignores the incredible diversity of literacy practices while privileging certain kinds of literacy and certain ways of using literacy.

In contrast, Street recommended what he called the “ideological model,” which “view[s] literacy practices as inextricably linked to cultural and power structures in society, and recognize[s] the variety of cultural practices associated with reading and writing in different contexts” (Street, 1993: 7). This ethnographically informed perspective,

which many have come to call New Literacy Studies (NLS), problematizes singular definitions of “literacy,” emphasizing the historicity (Freebody, 2005) and multiplicity of literacies and of literacy practices, or “the socially regulated, recurrent, and patterned things that people do with literacy as well as the cultural significance they ascribe to those doings” (Brandt and Clinton, 2002: 342); such practices vary by language, script, domain, role, network, participants, context, and other factors (Barton and Hamilton, 2000; Baynham, 1995; Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; New London Group, 1996). From this analytical perspective, literacy cannot and should not be defined a priori, as it is by most conventional measures of literacy; instead, what counts as literacy results from complex sociocultural negotiations (Hamilton and Barton, 2000).

Further, the “consequences” of literacy practices cannot be predicted, because they depend upon the ways in which literacy is “taken hold of” in particular contexts (Kulick and Stroud, 1993). Rather than assuming causality, anthropologists of literacy analyze the interaction between literacy practices, cultural practices, sociohistorical frameworks, and political and economic structures. So, for example, Street (1984) showed how school, religious, and commercial literacies, linked to distinct institutions, differentially positioned their users socially and economically in the 1970s in Iran; Robinson-Pant (2001, see also 2004) examined the linkages between literacy and women’s health and economic opportunities in Nepal during the 1990s; Rockhill (1993: 156) discussed how, for Latina immigrant women in the United States, literacy is “lived as women’s work but not as women’s right,” or rather how women are required to do certain literacy tasks as part of their domestic labor but are not allowed to learn English-language literacies that would threaten their husbands’ control. Kalman (1999) investigated how scribes and clients in Mexico City, in interactions permeated by class, gender, and educational differences, “bring together their knowledge of the social world, their knowledge of the functions of texts and documents, and their reading strategies to be used in the creation of the document in order to achieve a desired [textual] effect” (p. x); Maddox (2005) considered how women’s expanding secular and religious literacy practices affected gender roles and intrafamilial dynamics in Bangladesh; and Aikman (1999) critiqued the limited success of an intercultural bilingual schooling initiative in the Peruvian Amazon and found that the project did not take into account the range of literacy practices and the cultural meanings of literacy among the Harakmbut people. Aikman calls for a more participatory approach to development that works with the local community to create literacy development strategies that help maintain indigenous languages and cultural identities.

In addition, an NLS approach stresses the cultural production of the meaning of literacy for learners, teachers, policy-makers, and others (e.g., Bartlett, 2010; Papen, 2005). Gee (2007) emphasized the serious sociocultural negotiation of identity and self that all people do when they engage particular literacy practices. Other scholars have shown how contexts such as schools, religious organizations, and families radically alter what counts as literacy and how it is practiced (e.g., Barton and Hamilton, 1998; Barton, Hamilton, and Ivanic, 2000; Hull and Schultz, 2002). Sociocultural approaches to literacy are integrating the concept of (continuously, culturally produced) *identity* to think about the purposeful ways in which individuals endeavor to position themselves through (and/or in conjunction with) literacy practices in social and cultural fields. As Matthews and Kesner state, “becoming literate is as much

about the interaction one has with others around oral and written language as it is about mastering the alphabetic system” (2003: 211). Jimenez (2000) showed that bilingual students’ understanding of their identities influenced their language and literacy development. Moje (1996) demonstrated that teacher–student relationships are critical contexts for the teaching and learning of content–area literacies. Such interactions matter, in part, because doing literacy is not merely about mastering a code, but is also about developing command of literacy practices that are recognized as “legitimate”—that is, situationally defined, arbitrarily sanctioned forms of reading or writing with (real or implied) legitimate audiences (Bourdieu, 1991; Heller, 1996). For example, Moje (2000) discussed her informants’ intricate, complicated, and unsanctioned graffiti literacy practices – practices which earned them the admiration of their peers, but only vilification from others (including their teachers). Relatedly, Finders (1997) found that girls in junior high school worked to display “legitimate” literacy to their teachers through their academic writing and to their peers through the books that they carried (but didn’t read); Mahiri and Godley (1998) revealed how one woman’s sense of herself, her intelligence, and her relationships with family and community shifted radically when a physical disability made her unable to write. Thus, doing literacy necessitates crucial social work to *seem* and *feel* like a legitimate person practicing literacy in a legitimate context for a legitimate audience (Bartlett, 2007b).

Thus, the paradigm shift occasioned by NLS led to new types of questions, including what role literacy practices play in cultural production, or how the meanings attached to literacy inform cultural politics and subjectivities. For example, in her research on literacy in Western Nepal, Robinson-Pant (2000) interrogated the relationship between literacy and development in a much more nuanced way than much of the agency-sponsored quantitative research that is used to justify international literacy projects. Whereas those studies focused on the quantifiable economic impact of literacy, Robinson-Pant (2000) asked: “What kind of literacies and languages were used by different groups in this community? What kind of everyday literacy practices do women participate in and which are they excluded from? What does literacy mean to women, to men, to younger people, etc.?” (p. 351). In addition, a growing number of scholars augment the central tenets of NLS with conceptual frameworks such as “figured worlds” (Bartlett and Holland, 2002), spatial theory (Comber and Nixon, 2008; Sheehy, 2009), hybridity (Kostogriz and Tsolidis, 2008), and Bakhtinian notions of intertextuality (Maybin, 2000). The work of Collins and Blot (2003) builds on NLS by developing more fully the relationships between text, identity, and power.

Lately, scholars have offered important criticisms of NLS. Maddox (2007) suggested that the “polarization between [autonomous and ideological] approaches” has become a “new great divide” in anthropological studies of literacy (p. 253). He argues that scholars’ decisions to emphasize the context of literacy while rejecting the notion of consequences for literacy has obstructed the generation of cross-cultural generalizations. In more recent work, Maddox (2008) proposed the adaptation of a “capabilities” approach (grounded in the work of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum) to literacy’s intrinsic and instrumental value as a key determinant of human development. Other scholars, most specifically Brandt and Clinton (2002), argue that ethnographic studies of literacy “exaggerate the power of local contexts [and human agency] to define the meaning and forms that literacy takes” (p. 337). Instead, drawing on

Latour, they argue that text has a materiality, a “thingness,” that transcends the local and human intention; they call for ethnographic studies that consider “technologies as actants at the scenes of reading and writing, as active and ideological social agents toward which readers and writers orient” (Brandt and Clinton, 2006: 255). Brandt and Clinton (2006) recommend that, rather than examining the “consequences” of literacy, scholars examine how texts and literacy practices mediate social processes. In other words, for Brandt and Clinton, literacy as a technology provides certain “affordances” or “potentialities”; its “uptake” by people is (in turn) shaped by cultural, social, political, and economic forces. For example, Hamilton’s (2009) institutional ethnography on Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) traces how adult literacy assessment tools circulate as cultural artifacts that shape social relationships. In her analysis, Hamilton demonstrates “how texts themselves are central to such projects of social ordering and to the constituent processes of aligning and materialising identities” (p. 239).

Other critiques stem from skepticism about the applicability of NLS, and the anthropology of literacy more generally, to educational policy and practice. McCabe (1998) accuses Street and his colleagues of an extreme relativism and disconnected academic stance of little value to teachers. Westwood (2009) argues that teachers need a “simple” view of literacy to directly assess the technical and component skills involved in reading and writing in order to tailor instruction to the specific needs of their students. Stephens (2000) seeks to reconcile the tension between theory and practice with a view of “*literacy for education* that would draw on academic research while taking into consideration the more practical concerns of practitioners.” Within such a view, argues Stephens, the descriptive tendencies of academia and the prescriptive approaches of action-oriented educationists “would thus be conjoined, not in one seamless and undifferentiated whole, but as different modes of thinking and action required by the teacher at different moments in the pursuit of educational ends” (p. 21). The dilemmas of blending theoretical and practical concerns challenge not only the anthropology of literacy but also the anthropology of education as a field.

CRITICAL LITERACY

A second major strand of work in the anthropology of literacy hails from critical literacy. From the 1960s through the 1990s, Brazilian literacy theorist Paulo Freire condemned the denial of literacy to the oppressed, critiqued the notion of education (or literacy) as neutral, and promoted a “consciousness-raising” (rather than “banking”) form of literacy instruction that would encourage students to “read the word and the world,” that is, to simultaneously learn to read and to critique social relations of inequality, in order to act to change them (Freire, 1970, 1975, 1976; Freire and Macedo, 1987).

Freire’s philosophy provides the bedrock foundation for educational work in critical literacy. Critical literacy “uses texts and print skills in ways that enable students to examine the politics of daily life within contemporary society with a view to understanding what it means to locate contradictions within modes of life, theories, and substantive intellectual positions” (Lankshear and McLaren, 1993: 36). According to

this position, “the meanings constructed in text are ideological and involved in producing, reproducing and maintaining arrangements of power which are unequal” (Kamler and Comber, 1996: 1; see also Comber, 1994). In this view, developing critical readers and writers requires “enabling them to detect and handle the inherently ideological dimensions of literacy, and the role of literacy in enactments or productions of power” (Lankshear, 1994: 1). Adherents of critical literacy maintain that literacy can empower learners by giving students not only tools and techniques for analyzing texts but also the power to “speak back” by producing their own texts (Giroux, 1988; Purcell-Gates and Waterman, 2000).

It is important to note that some proponents of critical literacy focus much more on the critical analysis of texts, whereas others place a greater emphasis on using literacy skills to engage in collective social action. The “four resources” model was developed by Freebody and Luke (1990, 2003) and provides a framework for teaching critical literacy using four distinct sets of practices: coding (developing resources as a code-breaker); text-meaning (developing resources as a text participant); pragmatics (developing resources as a text user); and critical practices (developing resources as a text critic and analyst). Auerbach’s (1992) approach to teaching critical ESL literacy, on the other hand, is based on Freirean notions of dialogue, egalitarian teacher–student relations, problem-posing, and social change outside of the classroom.

Yet much of the work in critical literacy maintains what Street called “autonomous” ideologies about the consequences of literacy, which overstate and oversimplify literacy’s effects. For example, Freire’s discussion of literacy as a tool for liberation suggests an autonomous *consequence* to literacy. As noted by Carrington and Luke (1997), “many proponents of critical approaches to literacy might argue that: reading and writing one’s ‘stories’ (x), leads to an analysis of the social, cultural and economic order (y), which in turn can yield “transformative” social actors and action (z)” (pp. 97–98). Indeed, some seem to believe that critical literacy provokes a “virtuous spiral of progress” and development (Fiedrich, 2004: 228–230). Anthropologists have contributed ethnographic studies that debunk the assumptions of critical literacy. For example, in their study of attempts to implement a peripatetic adult literacy program with Indian nomads, Dyer and Choksi (1998) demonstrate that there is no straightforward relationship between literacy and empowerment; Zubair (2003) contrasts the meanings of literacy for a group of Pakistani women to the versions of literacy presented in their classroom guided by critical literacy. To remedy the limitations of a critical literacy that lacks sufficient empirical foundations, Bartlett (2010) recommended the fusion of NLS, feminist post-structural theory, and critical literacy into what she called New Critical Literacy Studies. This framework troubles autonomous assumptions about what literacy is and what literacy does by critiquing dualisms, moving from a concept of power as possession to a concept of power as circulating, and continually analyzing the cultural politics of literacy.

Emerging ethnographic perspectives within critical literacy studies – still a contested field of research and practice – illuminate how teachers and students negotiate and make meaning of the practice of critical literacy and examine how classrooms become key sites of struggle over language, knowledge, and power (Comber, Thomson, and Wells, 2001; Jones and Enriquez, 2009; Lalik and Oliver, 2007; Van Sluys, Lewison, and Flint, 2006). According to Rogers (2002), “the usefulness of locating

critical literacy in specific networks of practice – local, institutional, and societal – offers the possibility of locating and critiquing the process of learning how to be critical” (p. 784). Similarly, Iyer (2007) argues that the success of Freebody and Luke’s “four resources” model depends largely on the extent to which teachers and students can go beyond a textual analysis to “engage in postcritical negotiations of the text, contribute to new meaning possibilities, and adopt an ongoing critical stance” (p. 161). Like New Critical Literacy Studies, these reflections and recommendations demonstrate the continuing contributions of anthropological theory and fieldwork to pedagogical practice.

MULTILINGUAL LITERACIES

A third major area of study in the anthropology of literacy concerns multilingual literacies. According to Nancy H. Hornberger (1990), biliteracy can be defined as “any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing” (p. 213). The empirical study of multilingual literacies for more than three decades has demonstrated a view of literacy and biliteracy as situated, contested, social practices – where languages (and linguistic competencies) are more related than distinct, where orality and literacy are related points on a continuum rather than polar opposites, where context is defined not only situationally and ideologically but also interactionally (taking into account the positions and positioning of interlocutors), and where the analysis of contemporary linguistic ecologies is influenced by questions of discourse, ideology, and power.

Much of the work on biliteracy/multiliteracy reflects a language socialization perspective (e.g., Bayley and Schecter, 2003; Schieffelin and Gilmore, 1986; Zentella, 2005; see also Baquedano-López and Hernandez, Chapter 12, below) that documents the repertoires and resources of multilingual families and communities in order to respond to the dominant deficit approach regarding bilingual and biliterate learners. From highlighting a community’s linguistic resources (e.g., González *et al.*, 2005; Moll *et al.*, 1992; Orellana *et al.*, 2003; Reyes and Moll, 2008; Reyes *et al.*, 2009), analyzing the Spanish-language resources of a minoritized group across the United States (e.g., Mercado, 2003, 2005; Valdes *et al.*, 2006; Zentella, 2005), or reconceptualizing the literacies of Latina/o youth (e.g., Martinez-Roldan and Franquiz, 2008), such work has influenced teacher education and qualitative research alike.

The study of multilingual literacies has also revealed an interest in the multiple connections that are fostered between individuals, groups, institutions, systems, or ideologies through biliteracy development itself (e.g., Bartlett and García, forthcoming; De La Piedra, 2006; Ernst-Slavit, 1997; García, Skutnabb-Kangas, and Torres-Guzmán, 2006; Hornberger, 2006, 2009; Mercado, 2003; Watahomigie and McCarty, 1996). Attention to the value of particular interactional dynamics between speakers as representatives of particular communities of practice has moved the field towards understanding how processes – individual, social, ideological, material – are both connected and internally contradictory.

Another development in the study of multilingual literacies is the demonstrated interest in exploring different kinds of movement (of people, ideas, goods, and

practices) in relation to literacy practices, identity issues, and educational opportunities (e.g., Rubinstein-Ávila, 2007; Warriner, 2007b, 2010). Bartlett (2007a) analyzes the experiences of one transnational student from the Dominican Republic who moved to New York City, discussing how she “drew upon the locally defined model of school success to position herself – and be positioned – as a successful student through bilingual literacy practices” (p. 215). Rubinstein-Ávila (2007) explores in rich, ethnographic detail, “how living in a transnational space affects immigrant students’ literacy practices and their values, perspectives, beliefs, and actions in relation to literacy” (p. 571). Drawing on insights from semiotics, the anthropology of space and place, sociology, sociology of language, and cultural studies, literacy scholars have recently examined how far-reaching, global processes are manifested locally – including the specific ways that literacy and identity trajectories might be traced across time and space; how multiple literacies and identities are created, narrated, and transformed by individual actors living in particular contexts; and the importance of thinking and writing in “spatial terms” while investigating such processes. Warriner (2007a) writes that, “examining the literacy practices of different immigrant learners across contexts of home, school and community through a transnational lens ... [illuminates] the specific ways that literacy practices, as one type of ‘situated cultural practice,’ influence and mediate situated learning, social identity formation and transformation, and historically structured processes” (p. 213). This work demonstrates how multilingual literacies are always instances of social practice that are uniquely realized in specific situational contexts *and* subject to influences (material, discursive, and ideological) that are broadly defined and widely circulating.

Recent research on multilingual literacies has focused on the relationship between transnational processes, social practices, and the social identities of multilingual learners. Of particular interest is the influence of literacy in and through two or more languages on the locally specific ways that multilingual peoples might live, work, and learn together. In spite of advances made, it is clear that more work needs to be done to understand the actual processes involved in bilingual/multilingual literacy development. In particular, the complicated relationship between first language literacy and second language learning/literacy must be investigated, in part because the exact nature of that relationship is still little understood (August and Shanahan, 2006; Berriz, 2000; Caldas, 2006; Dworin, 2003; Gort, 2006; Lanauze and Snow, 1989; Pérez and Torres-Guzmán, 2002). An important focus of such work will be on how different literacies interact during literacy/biliteracy development, the nature of this interaction, and the potential implications for language policies, pedagogical practices, and theories of learning and language learning. One important contribution to this topic is provided by García’s (2009) notion of “translanguaging,” and rich descriptions of bilingualism and biliteracy as critical components of multilingual schools in an age of “glocalization” (García, Skutnabb-Kangas, and Torres-Guzmán, 2006, 2008). Other work has highlighted the creative construction of identity through multiliteracies pedagogy as well as, for instance, the various ways we might “reimagin[e] multilingual America” by examining the lived experiences of indigenous youth in North and Central America (López, 2006; McCarty, Romero-Little, and Zepeda, 2006).

Related research has provided important insights on the social, linguistic, and political implications of educational policy-making. These studies have examined the

monolingual assessment of emerging bilinguals (Escamilla, 2006; Menken, 2008); the impact of US language education policy from *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) to No Child Left Behind (Hornberger, 2006); or questions of class in relation to mother tongue education in India (Mohanty, 2006). In the United Kingdom, researchers have investigated the language and literacy practices of immigrant groups across different contexts in ways that add to our understanding of the processes and consequences involved (e.g., Gregory and Williams, 2000; Martin-Jones and Saxena, 2003; Martin-Jones, Hughes, and Williams, 2009; Pahl and Rowsell, 2006).

The value of multilingualism and multilingual literacies in various linguistic ecologies (social, educational, and workplace) is a topic that continues to attract great interest in both scholarly and public conversations (Hornberger, 2009). Even though research conducted on bilingual/multilingual literacies for more than three decades now has provided nuanced accounts of the nonlinear dimensions of literacy development, it is still not entirely clear how multiple literacies interact or how precisely biliteracy/multiliteracy might facilitate language revitalization efforts, intergroup connections, and academic achievement in socially situated ways. Moreover, there is a great deal to learn about how different levels of context (social, cultural, interactional, ideological, institutional) influence the development of biliteracy and multiliteracy in various linguistic ecologies worldwide.

MULTIMODALITY AND DIGITAL LITERACIES

Two final areas of great interest to anthropologists of literacy are digital literacies and multimodality. These interrelated concepts inform one another and share a common theoretical genealogy. “Digital literacies” is a term grounded in the principles of multiliteracies and multiple literacies. The New London Group (1996) introduced the term multiliteracies to recognize global trends of increased linguistic and cultural diversity and the increased “complexity of texts with respect to nonlinguistic, multimodal forms of representation and communication, particularly, but not limited to, those affiliated with new technologies” (Jewitt, 2008: 245). Multiple literacies harkens back to Street’s (1995) early rejection of a singular standard of school (or “pedagogized”) literacy and his and other NLS scholars’ advocacy of a plural view of literacies. In a similar vein, recent research about multimodality has re-emphasized the significance of non-linguistic modes in literacy practices and texts. Two ideas are important to consider when applying a multimodal approach to the study of literacies. First, it is important to recognize that reading and writing have always involved multiple modes of communication and expression. Second, the ability to bring a variety of modes – e.g., print, image, sound – together in the same text not only changes the way a text can be conveyed, but also opens up new possibilities for what kinds of meaning can be conveyed (Hull and Nelson, 2005; Jewitt and Kress, 2003). Several researchers (Hull and Nelson, 2005; Jewitt, 2006; Kress, 2000; Pahl and Rowsell, 2006) have continued to study the evolution of a theory of multimodality, which highlights the design of texts by attending to the modes involved in textual production. Adding to these conceptual understandings, Leander and Sheehy (2004) bring theories of spatiality together with studies of literacies to suggest a view of context as lived and dynamic,

and actively made across time. Their spatialized framing of literacies allows us to consider the digital spaces to which digital literacies are tethered.

This intersection of multimodality and digital literacies refers to ways in which various modalities, new technologies, and literacy practices interact. In this sense, “digital” signals technologies that facilitate the production, manipulation, and dissemination of signs and symbols of communication. Much of the research about digital literacies has focused on the practices of youth, who are actively participating across diverse digital spaces that exist online and offline, including attention to practices associated with creating and maintaining blogs, wikis, and social networking profiles (Livingstone, 2008); the production and exchange of popular culture texts (Black, 2005; Staples, 2008; Thomas, 2007a); gaming and virtual worlds, in which participants confront new situations, assume a range of roles and identities, and find themselves in a variety of communicative interactions (Gee, 2003; Squire, 2008; Thomas, 2007b); the use of instant messaging for a range of purposes (Jacobs, 2007; Lewis and Fabos, 2005); the manipulation of and participation in photo- and video-sharing sites (Wesch, 2008); and the range and variation of composing practices involved with digital storytelling (Hull and Katz, 2006; Kajder, 2004; Ranker, 2008; Skinner and Hagood, 2008). New technologies afford increasingly participatory, distributive, and collaborative literacy spaces that are of great interest to anthropologists of literacy (Lankshear and Knobel, 2007; Vasudevan, 2009).

Attention to digital literacies has forced the review of several key concepts and assumptions. In his highly popular video, Wesch (2007) analyzes the participatory culture of Web 2.0, suggesting that the concepts of authorship, identity, aesthetics, and perhaps even love must be rethought in light of the communicative, archival, and design affordances of evolving Internet technologies. Recent studies of adolescents’ literacies resonate with Wesch’s claims and illustrate a range of emerging practices across a diverse digital landscape encompassing spaces online and offline. These emerging literacies are evident in the sophisticated layering of semiotic forms – print, images, sounds – involved in the production of genres of texts such as anime music videos (Ito, 2006), anime and manga (Lam, 2006), and digital stories (Hull *et al.*, 2006). In these compositions, we see evidence of digital remixing (Knobel and Lankshear, 2008) where “original” material is cut, copied, edited, and rearranged to create new texts. In her review of digital literacies within the context of electronic networks and the Internet, Lewis (2007a) advances three claims as necessary for making sense of the digital literacies of youth: “digital literacies are technologically and socially mediated, multimodal, and both local and global” (p. 239). This heuristic offers an effective frame for analyzing the rapidly changing terrain of literacies in an increasingly digitized and mediatized world. Ito and colleagues (2010) underscore this point with their three-year ethnographic study of youth culture and media use. Sustained exploration of the digital lives of youth illustrates how social networking drives engagement with these digital spaces and technologies. Adolescents’ literacy practices are mediated by the technology necessary for creating online profiles, commenting on others’ profiles, and communicating with known and unknown audiences. (e.g., boyd and Ellison, 2007; Livingstone, 2008; Wilber, 2007). Youth are aware of, and writing to, multiple audiences and adapting the form and content of their writing to meet the diverse demands and expectations of those audiences (Lunsford, 2006, 2007).

Several studies identify the value of online spaces for nurturing the literacy practices of adolescents considered to be underachieving from the perspective of the school. Lam (2006) found online technologies such as chatrooms to be especially significant for the English language and literacy practices of the Chinese working-class adolescent girls in her study. Lam asserts that the girls engaged in “transcultural flows” as they crossed “socially constructed boundaries” established in their school experiences and used the “hybrid language produced” in their chatroom discourse to “disrupt the monolingual coherence of the English code” (p. 182). Black’s (2005, 2009) exploration of the self-initiated world of fan fiction revealed a repositioning of adolescents, who were linguistically marginalized in schools, as engaged contributors to an online affinity space (Gee, 2003). Black observed the ways in which English-language learners (ELLs) engaged in language and literacy development through their active participation in fanfiction.net, including sharing, exchanging, discussing, and co-authoring texts. The nature of their participation largely revolved around reading, composing, and commenting on others’ fan fiction.

Finally, digital literacies research is following the use of portable technologies such as digital cameras, smartphones, and multifunction handheld video game consoles, tools that exponentially increase the spaces and modes of digital participation and amplify our understandings of culture as mobile (Leander and Vasudevan, 2009). Thus, in addition to online spaces, digital literacies are also evident in the composition of meaning and texts involved in media production and consumption in spaces such as youth media programs (Goodman, 2003; Chavéz and Soep, 2006). Youth write scripts and interview protocols to plan out video and radio documentary work, and they blend these practices with the affordances of digital remix culture to produce a variety of multimedia texts. While some of these texts are produced within the boundaries of organized spaces such as after-school programs, there is an abundance of digital play evident across video sharing sites (Ito *et al.*, 2010). Mobile technologies are also changing the way we consume texts, as evidenced in the practices of reading electronic books on portable devices (McCurry, 2005, cited in Carrington and Marsh, 2005) and exchanging multimedia text messages (Ito and Okabe, 2005).

CONCLUSION

The advent of NLS shifted the literacy paradigm, making anthropology central to the study of literacy practices. The approach has found synergy with critical literacy, questioning assumptions about literacy’s “effects” while providing new avenues for considering linkages between social structures, cultural practices, and literacy. Though the theory–practice tension remains palpable in the field, the anthropology of literacy offers ethnographic ways of seeing that help educators and others cultivate an asset-based perspective on their students’ literacy practices – a perspective that has proven especially important in the instruction of language minorities and others who have been historically excluded from traditional pedagogical approaches. Two strands of research – multilingual literacies and digital and multimodal literacies – represent important arenas for the potential contributions of the anthropology of literacy to both theory and pedagogy, posing as

they do key questions about language, movement, space, and place. These avenues of research call upon us to radically reconceptualize authorship, context, and the mutually constitutive relationship between practices and global processes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This chapter owes much to the excellent review of the field previously completed by Collins (1995). We also gratefully acknowledge the formative feedback provided by the editors.

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CHAPTER

11

The Anthropology of Language Planning and Policy*

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Language planning and policy (LPP) is both a field of study and a site of social practice. As an informal activity, LPP “is as old as language itself” and is integral “in the distribution of power and resources in all societies” (Wright, 2004: 1). Education in and out of school is a primary domain in which language policies perform this social role. As a field of study, LPP is highly interdisciplinary, bridging knowledge traditions in sociolinguistics, educational/applied linguistics, the sociology of language, and linguistic and educational anthropology. In this chapter we explore this interdisciplinary field, focusing on the distinctive contributions of anthropology to its growth and development. We begin with a brief genealogy of the field and an explanation of key concepts that have guided it. We then consider how LPP has been approached from a sociocultural perspective, providing key ethnographic examples and paying special attention to studies that examine contexts of Indigenous language revitalization and dominant/non-dominant language contact. We conclude with a discussion of promising new directions in anthropologically informed LPP research and practice.

LPP FOUNDATIONS

The field of language planning and policy is relatively young, having grown out of pragmatic concerns with solving language “problems” in decolonizing multilingual polities

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during the second half of the twentieth century. As Wright recounts, “among the many and complex problems left by the departing colonial powers [was] a requirement to solve the logistics of communication in order to govern ... and ... to modernize, to provide the minimum needs of the population” (2004: 8). Thus, the principal questions were which languages to develop – colonial, Indigenous, or other lingua francas – for which purposes in the context of nation building (Ricento, 2006: 13). In an early treatment of the topic, Joshua Fishman, a cofounder of the field of sociolinguistics and a leading LPP scholar, presented the issues confronting the new field this way:

A widespread problem of new nations is that their political boundaries correspond rather imperfectly to any pre-existing ethnic-cultural unity ... Thus language may and has become a symbol of supralocal ethnic-cultural identification ... at the nationality level ... just as it may ... become a symbol of contranational ethnic-cultural identification on the part of smaller groups who ... develop a localized nationality consciousness of their own. (1968: 6)

Fishman’s description suggests an enduring concern in LPP research and practice: competing ideologies of “one nation/one language” versus the value of individual and societal multilingualism. As we will see, these issues continue to occupy a central place in anthropological work in the field.

In addressing these issues, early LPP scholarship reflected a belief in the efficacy of language planning (Wright, 2004: 9). Einar Haugen, the first to use the term “language planning” in the scholarly literature, described it as the “exercise of judgment in the form of choices among available linguistic forms” and the “evaluation of linguistic change” (1972 [1966]: 512). Language planners, Haugen posited, were basically decision-makers. This framework was later elaborated by Robert Cooper in a series of questions that continue to inform inquiry in the field: “What *actors* attempt to influence what *behaviors* of which *people* for what *ends* under what *conditions* and by what *means* through what *decision-making processes* with what *effect*?” (1989: 98). With the goal of solving language “problems,” early approaches to LPP were largely linear, macrosocial, and technocratic (identify the problem, formulate the policy, implement and evaluate it, and revise accordingly). This approach can be described as *rationalistic*, its premise being that LPP involves the weighing of alternatives by rational agents (Ricento and Hornberger, 1996). Tollefson (2006) terms this a neo-classical approach, in that LPP is conceived as ideologically neutral and the primary unit of analysis is the ahistorical and decontextualized individual.

In a departure from these earlier assumptions, more recent scholarship interrogates the ideological, social–structural, and historical bases of LPP, emphasizing relationships among language, power, and inequality. Drawing on the work of critical theorists Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, Anthony Giddens, and Jürgen Habermas, critical LPP scholars view policies as ideological constructs that reflect and (re)produce the distribution of power in the larger society. Tollefson (2002) characterizes this as a historical–structural approach, tying it to the broader field of critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 2001). The goal is “to critically ‘read’ language policies” as a way of ferreting out their social, political, and economic meanings within particular historicized contexts. The critical perspective is committed to praxis: “Linguists are seen as responsible not only for understanding how dominant social groups use

language for establishing and maintaining social hierarchies, but also for investigating ways to alter those hierarchies” (Tollefson, 2002: 4).

The planning–policy interface

In both rationalistic and critical paradigms, language policy has alternatively been viewed as arising *from* planning interventions – as, for example, in Kaplan and Baldauf’s notion of policy as a “body of ideas, laws ... rules and practices intended to achieve the planned change in the society” (1997: xi) – or giving rise *to* language planning, as in Ricento’s definition of planning as the “development, implementation, and evaluation of specific language policies” (2006: 18). In each case, the emphasis has been on official, government-sponsored, text-based policies – a view of LPP that ethnographic research has problematized, and which we return to later in this chapter. Here, we want to point out the integrative LPP frameworks put forth by Baldauf (2006) and Hornberger (1994), which cross-index *types* of language planning with language policy *goals*. Consider, for example, three core LPP activities: (1) *status planning* – the planned use of certain languages for certain purposes in certain domains (e.g., schooling, the court system, the work place); (2) *corpus planning* – decisions about linguistic norms and forms (e.g., creating or standardizing a writing system, developing language teaching materials); and (3) *acquisition planning* – decisions about who will acquire the target language(s) and how (e.g., at home, at school, and/or through community-based activities). Each goal clearly implicates the others. Elevating the status of a language or variety via official policies – as, for instance, with the co-officialization of French and English in Canada or of Māori, New Zealand Sign Language, and English in Aotearoa/New Zealand – has ramifications for the development of writing systems and print literacy (corpus planning), and for activities such as the preparation of language teachers (acquisition planning). Similarly, corpus and acquisition planning can exert a powerful influence on how language statuses are perceived. In the 1980s, for example, a grass roots Native American corpus and acquisition planning movement led to the enactment of tribal and federal policies in support of Native American languages; those policies, in turn, spurred new local-level corpus and acquisition planning (Warhol, 2009, 2010; Zepeda, 1990).

For anthropologists, these activities and LPP itself are viewed not as discrete acts, but as mutually constitutive, interdependent, and co-occurring sociocultural processes: “modes of human interaction, negotiation, and production mediated by relations of power” (McCarty, 2004: 72). The “policy” in these processes resides in the ways in which they normalize or marginalize some linguistic codes, thereby governing speakers’ language practices and social positioning. Ricento and Hornberger use the metaphor of “unpeeling the onion” to describe these processes: like an onion, LPP is a “multilayered construct,” implicating multiple agents and levels that “permeate and interact with each other in...complex ways” (1996: 419).

Linguistic ecological models of LPP

This complexity has been conceptually elaborated in ecological models of LPP. Voegelin, Voegelin, and Schutz (1967) and Haugen (1972b) are credited with introducing the ecology metaphor in the field of linguistics. “The key property of

any ecology is structured diversity,” Mühlhäusler notes, and “ecological language planning advocates the rebuilding of self-regulating diversity” (2000: 306, 310). Recognizing that in any sociocultural setting, “some languages are more equal than others,” an ecological approach “draws attention to the role of [LPP] in dynamic relationships among speakers, social contexts, and languages” (Hornberger and Hult, 2008: 282, 292). Some scholars include in an ecology-of-language paradigm the promotion of human rights, multilingualism, and equality in communication (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996). Later in this chapter we discuss the use of this conceptual framework by ethnographers in examining multilingual education policy and practice.

Language revival, revitalization, and reversal as key LPP goals

In studying linguistic ecologies characterized by asymmetrical power relations, a core concern revolves around efforts to revive, revitalize, and reverse language loss, or shift to the dominant language, among speakers of minoritized languages. Language *revival* seeks to restore oral and/or written functions for a language no longer spoken but for which there is a vital heritage language community and oral and/or written documentation – what LPP scholars and practitioners call “sleeping” or “dormant” languages (Hinton and Hale, 2001; Leonard, 2008). In Massachusetts, for instance, the Wópanáak Language Revitalization Project is using historic Native-language diaries, correspondence, and the 1663 Eliot Bible (the first bible published in a Native American language) to reconstruct and assist tribal members in learning Wópanáak – also called Wampanoag or Massachusett – whose last native speaker died in 1908 (Ash, Fermino, and Hale, 2001: 28–32). Language *revitalization* or *regeneration* refers to activities that engender new vitality in a language still spoken but typically by a relatively small number of people beyond child-bearing age – what linguists call “moribund” languages. The Māori and Hawaiian language immersion programs, in which children are immersed and taught in the Indigenous language from a very early age, are among the most successful models of school-based language revitalization (May, 1999). When schools are not a viable option, as in the case of demographically small Native American communities, the master–apprentice model of second-language learning has proven to be quite effective. In this approach, older speakers and younger language learners work together over months and years, engaging in everyday activities such as taking walks or going to the store and communicating always in the heritage language (see Hinton and Hale, 2001 for a discussion and examples). *Reversal of language shift* (RLS), a concept developed by Fishman (1991, 2001), aims to stem the tide of society-wide language loss by creating authentic new social contexts for intergenerational language transmission. In Wales, for instance, the Twf (Growth) project works through the national health care system to provide prospective parents and parents of young children with language teaching support that can be used in raising children bilingually (Edwards and Newcombe, 2005). Modern Hebrew, French in Québec, and Catalan in Spain are also widely viewed as RLS “success stories.”

Revival, revitalization, and RLS can be glossed with the covering term, language *reclamation*, which suggests the causes of the loss rooted in asymmetrical power rela-

tions and histories of linguistic and cultural oppression. Revival, revitalization, and RLS are distinguished from language *maintenance*, which promotes intergenerational transmission of a language still spoken by significant numbers of members of all generations.

Language orientations, attitudes, and ideologies

As the foregoing discussion suggests, decisions about language are always context-dependent and, hence, both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic. LPP scholars have used the notions of language orientations, attitudes, and ideologies to theorize these processes. In a classic treatment of the subject, Ruiz (1988: 4) introduced the notion of language orientations – dispositions toward the role of language(s) in society that are “largely unconscious and prerational because they are at the most fundamental level of arguments about language.” For instance, what Ruiz calls a language-as-a-problem orientation is the hallmark of US bilingual policy, which aims not to produce bilinguals but to promote linguistic assimilation and ameliorate presumed deficits (“limited English proficiency”) in children learning English as a second language. In contrast, official policies informed by a language-as-a-resource orientation promote bilingualism/multilingualism for all. Examples of a resource approach are two-way or dual-language immersion programs in which children from dominant and non-dominant language backgrounds learn together through each other’s mother tongue, becoming bilingual and achieving academically through two languages (for an ethnographic case study see Freeman’s (1998) study of the Oyster Bilingual School in Washington, DC).

Language orientations constitute the social-psychological apparatus for the formation of language attitudes – individual feelings about one’s own and others’ language(s). Wallace Lambert and his associates in Canada conducted one of the first studies of language attitudes, in which Francophone and Anglophone subjects were asked to rank different speakers on personality traits such as height, intelligence, dependability, sociability, and likeability (Lambert *et al.*, 1960). Both groups ranked English speakers more highly on these traits, while French speakers were ranked more highly on such traits as “religiosity.” The fact that French speakers devalued their own speech, these researchers concluded, reflects widespread stereotypes associated with French- and English-speaking Canadians. In a subsequent study of teachers’ ratings of African American and White children’s videotaped speech, Fasold (1984) found similarly that teachers rated White middle-class students’ speech more highly. Baugh (2000) later linked findings such as these to deep-seated linguistic prejudice that breeds linguistic shame among speakers of minoritized (and racialized) languages and varieties. To the extent that they are part of the wider sociolinguistic ecology, language attitudes are fundamental elements of formal and informal language policies.

This work has been extended in linguistic anthropological research on language ideologies – “sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use” (Silverstein, 1979: 193). Woolard (1998: 3) describes language ideologies as culturally mediated “ideas about language and ... how communication works as a social process.” Ideologies about

language are tacit, taken-for-granted assumptions about language statuses, forms, users, and uses that, by virtue of their “common sense” naturalization, contribute to linguistic and social inequality (Tollefson, 2006: 47). Like orientations and attitudes, ideologies are not about language per se, but rather about individual and collective identities and power relations. In her ethnographic study of Hopi youth language ideologies, for example, Sheilah Nicholas (2009) describes an elder’s equation of not speaking Hopi with not being “fully” Hopi. “Our ideas about language(s) are, in other words, not neutral,” Heller emphasizes; “we believe what we believe for reasons which have to do with the many other ways in which we make sense of our world” (2007: 15; see Wortham and Reyes, Chapter 9, above).

These beliefs are perhaps most evident in education, where debates surrounding the medium of instruction have long dominated policy discourses. As McGroarty (2002) points out, these debates are less about language (and, we would add, education) than about widespread assumptions linking competence in the national language to national loyalties. Language ideologies have also been specifically linked to discourses of language endangerment, where endangerment references not just a particular linguistic code but larger struggles over political and human rights, rights to traditional territories, and global threats to the nation-state (Duchêne and Heller, 2007; Kroskrity and Field, 2009).

Later in this chapter we examine ethnographic research that illuminates the ways in which language ideologies and attitudes shape and are shaped by language policies as these are constructed in social practice. We turn now to the larger theoretical, epistemological, and methodological framework for that research.

THE CRITICAL SOCIOCULTURAL “TURN”

The research discussed above signals more recent sociocultural approaches to the study of language planning and policy. To rephrase Heath, Street, and Mills’ (2008: 7) discussion of “culture as a verb,” language policy is also best understood as a verb; policy “never just ‘is,’ but rather ‘does’” (see also Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead’s parallel discussion of education policy (2009: 771)). One crucial implication of this approach is that LPP research is not restricted to or even focused primarily on official policy declarations or texts. This is not to ignore the consequential nature of government acts or texts, but to place them in their larger social and historical context. Language policy “exists even where it has not been made explicit or established by authority,” Spolsky writes, and can be inferred from people’s language practices, ideologies, and beliefs (2004: 8). Schiffman (1996), Shohamy (2006), and others distinguish between overt and covert, *de jure* and *de facto* language policies: language policy “can exist at all levels of decision making about languages,” Shohamy stresses, “as small as individuals and families making decisions about the languages to be used ... at home” as well as in “schools, cities, regions, nations, territories, or the global context” (2006: 48). King and Haboud’s (in press) research on Quichua family language policies, Menken and García’s (2010) qualitative explorations of teachers as language policymakers, Ramanathan’s (2010) studies of language policy and health, and Shohamy and Gorter’s (2008) exploration of urban signage or “linguistic

landscapes” exemplify the range of research being conducted within this broadened definition of the field.

The shift in focus to a more dynamic, process-oriented view of language policy reflects a concomitant shift in scholarly attention from the universal to the local (Baldauf, 2006; Canagarajah, 2005). Noting this shift in the field as early as 1996, Hornberger wrote that:

in sociolinguistics more generally, and indeed the social sciences as a whole, scholarly attention has steadily shifted toward the individual and the local community as active agents in dialogue and interaction with their social environment, and away from a governmental, institutional, or societal level focus. (1996: 11)

At the same time, scholars who take a sociocultural approach continue to be concerned with the relationships among LPP micro and macro processes, inspecting the interstices of the metaphoric LPP onion as well as the onion as an organic whole.

These shifts coincide with corresponding critical-sociocultural “turns” in language and literacy and policy studies. The New Literacy Studies advanced by Street (1984), Gee (2008), Collins and Blot (2003), Lankshear (Lankshear *et al.*, 1997), and the New London Group (1996; see Bartlett *et al.*, Chapter 10, above) countered dominant views of literacy as a decontextualized, politically neutral, technical, and hence “standardizable” skill. Instead, this research shows how multifarious literacy practices emerge within local sociocultural settings. Similarly, the anthropology of policy has illuminated how decontextualized reifications of static text-based policy cloak the power relations through which policies are naturalized (Shore and Wright, 1997: 8). Applying this approach to education policy, Sutton and Levinson (2001) and Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead (2009: 768–769) advocate for a view of “the entire policy process as a complex set of interdependent sociocultural practices” – a “practice of power.”

With its overriding concern with cultural interpretation, ethnography is ideally suited to critically analyze these complex processes, exposing how explicit and implicit policy-making works within intersecting local, regional, national, and global social spaces. As Canagarajah points out, “Whatever the type or level of policy-making addressed, ethnography can bring out surprising findings about language relationships that elude those acting from outside the community” (2006: 159). In the next section we examine the contributions of ethnography as a form of inquiry in the field of LPP.

ETHNOGRAPHY AND LANGUAGE POLICY

In 2007, Hornberger and Johnson introduced the ethnography of language policy, explaining that it can:

include textual and historical analyses of policy texts but must be based on an ethnographic understanding of some local context. The texts are nothing without the human agents who act as interpretive conduits between the language policy levels (or layers of the LPP onion). (2007: 528)

In a subsequent exposition they add that “casting an ethnographic eye on language planning at individual, classroom, school, community, regional, national, and global levels can and does serve to uncover the indistinct voices, covert motivations, embedded ideologies, invisible instances, or unintended consequences of LPP as it is created, interpreted, and appropriated in particular contexts” (Hornberger and Johnson, 2007: 24; see also Johnson, 2009).

We can trace the use of ethnography in LPP research to the field of educational linguistics and the union of educational and linguistic anthropology that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. From educational anthropology came a view of education as a cultural process. From linguistic anthropology came a view of talk as the very foundation of human social life, which was reflected in the ethnography of communication pioneered by John Gumperz and Dell Hymes (1964). Out of these interdisciplinary unions came seminal ethnographic studies of language use in educational settings (Cazden, John, and Hymes, 1972; Green and Wallat, 1981), children’s language practices in and out of school (Gilmore and Glatthorn, 1982), and culturally diverse ways of speaking and learning (Heath, 1983; Philips, 1983).

More recently, the linguistic anthropology of education, introduced by Stanton Wortham and Betsy Rymes (2003), and the sociocultural linguistics proposed by Mary Bucholtz and Kira Hall (2008), have built on these foundations, emphasizing the ethnographic study of language use in practice and a political commitment to research about minoritized languages and speech communities. In tandem with these research currents is a burgeoning ethnographic literature in educational/applied linguistics, applied anthropology, and the sociology of language – examples of which we discuss later in this section.

Extending traditional elements of ethnographic inquiry (Wolcott, 2008), the bulk of this work focuses squarely on the role of LPP in (re)producing power hierarchies. This critical–ethnographic work also stipulates that the researcher reflexively examine her or his subject position – a crucial epistemological and methodological stance in light of the fact that much LPP research is conducted among minoritized speech communities. Offering a lens into the interaction of grass roots or “bottom up” language planning (Hornberger, 1996) with top-down, official policy processes, critical ethnographies join research with praxis. In the next section we consider examples of this research, focusing on studies undertaken in Indigenous settings in the Americas.

LPP for linguistic diversity in education: critical-ethnographic cases and contexts

A major artery of LPP research addresses the viability of minoritized languages and speech communities in the face of larger homogenizing and stratifying social forces. Of some 6,800 languages currently spoken on the planet, as many as 90% are predicted to fall silent by century’s end. Of these, most will be Indigenous languages (UNESCO, 2003). The macro-level causes reside in asymmetrical power relations and are well documented around the world. As Fishman notes, languages do not fall silent of their own accord but are forced out of their most intimate domains by the domination “of the weak by the strong, of the unique and traditional by the

uniformizing” (1991: 4). What is less well understood – and what ethnography is so well equipped to explore – are the grounded, everyday realities of shift, maintenance, and revitalization, their ideological bases, and the implications for LPP.

In 1988, Hornberger published the first book-length ethnographic study to address these issues, a case study of bilingual education policy and practice in the largely Indigenous and rural Department of Puno, Peru. With the goal of understanding the relationship between official policy and local language practices, she explored whether Indigenous language maintenance can be planned and whether schools can be effective agents for language maintenance. At the center of the LPP “onion” in this case were local language uses and ideologies that positioned Quechua as the extra-school or home-community language, and Spanish as the language of schooling. At the same time, the decreasing isolation and low social status of Quechua speakers mitigated against the micro-level (*ayllu*, or community-level) language transmission nexus, while problems of local implementation and overall government instability undermined macro-level policies for Quechua maintenance. Weighing these interlocking factors, Hornberger concluded that if bilingual education were to contribute to language maintenance, it would have to be an enrichment or two-way bilingual-bicultural program for Quechua and non-Quechua speakers. This study was one of the first to demonstrate that while official, macro-level policies can open up what Hornberger later termed “ideological and implementational spaces” for bilingual/multilingual education (Hornberger, 2006), those policies are not unproblematically adopted by local social actors and may fail without local-level support.

Building on Hornberger’s work in Peru, King (2001) used ethnography to examine revitalization prospects for Quichua in Ecuador. Situating her work in a reversal-of-language-shift framework and adopting an ethnography of communication approach, King compared two Quichua communities in the same region, one (urban) in which a shift to Spanish was far advanced, and another (rural) that was rapidly moving from Quichua monolingualism to Spanish monolingualism. Despite Ecuador’s official policy of bilingual-intercultural education, for members of both communities, “Quichua remain[ed] on the periphery of their daily lives” (King, 2001: 185). Youth were not being raised in Quichua and the schools were not implementing a program that would enable children to achieve communicative competence in the Indigenous language. King also examined the ideological tensions surrounding “authentic” Quichua, which was associated with elders and an uneducated lifestyle, and the “unified” or standardized Quichua developed to teach literacy in school. In this linguistic ecology, these varieties have been ideologically and materially pitted against each other, thereby contributing to language shift. The school affords “an important foothold” for Quichua maintenance, King concluded, but is insufficient to overcome the extreme economic and social pressures favoring Spanish. King’s research shows how those pressures are reflected in conflicting ideologies that, on the one hand, link Quichua to local ethnic identities, and, on the other, position Spanish as the language of the *buena gente* or “decent people” (2001: 39).

Critical-ethnographic studies in Native North America have illuminated ideological tensions and language planning dilemmas distinctive to the social and legal-political positioning of Native peoples in the United States and Canada. Based on ethnographic research conducted over a 20-year period in the Navajo community

of Rough Rock, Arizona, McCarty (2002) analyzed the interaction of federal Indian policy with bilingual–bicultural program implementation in the first American Indian community-controlled school. Through a fortuitous (and fleeting) alignment of top-down government legislation and a grass-roots Indigenous political resurgence, Rough Rock emerged as the first Native American community to take charge of the local school and to embrace the Indigenous language and culture as both a right and a resource for children’s learning. McCarty offered an ethnographic portrait of language education planning shaped by federal policies combined with the goals, needs, and practices of the local community. Highlighting the realities of the Indigenous self-determination movement as it confronts a powerful neocolonial federal bureaucracy, this work shows the challenges and possibilities inherent in local efforts to remake school into “a place to be Navajo.” It also illuminates the workings of local language ideologies in practice, showing that while bilingual–bicultural schooling in itself is insufficient to sustain Navajo language use among the young, it is nonetheless a critical resource in the community’s fight for educational, linguistic, and cultural self-determination.

House (2002) also studied language policy and practice on the Navajo Nation at the oldest tribally-controlled institution of higher education, Diné College. While House found that discourses abound on the importance of Navajo language and culture maintenance, as in the cases of Rough Rock and Quichua/Quechua there are discrepancies between official policy and local social practices. A major challenge, House asserts, is the prevalence of an essentializing discourse on Navajo language and culture and the positioning of Diné College as the epitome of “Navajo-ness,” which undermines meaningful solutions to Navajo language shift. At the same time, House documented widely circulating discourses equating English with socioeconomic advantage and prestige. Young Navajos in House’s study also spoke of feeling disconnected from their elders and being ridiculed for their lack of fluent Navajo. House’s study reveals competing and often contradictory discourses and ideologies regarding Navajo language revitalization, and the construction of linguistic and cultural identities that obstruct the ability of local social actors and institutions in their RLS efforts.

Patrick’s (2003) ethnographic study of Inuit language practices, ideologies, and persistence adds important comparative insights to these findings from the United States and Latin America. Canada’s official language policy reflects a “two founding people” (English/French) ideology that has marginalized Indigenous peoples in their homelands and that ignores the 50 to 60 Indigenous languages still spoken. In this context, the maintenance of a distinct Inuit identity is tied to claims to Indigenous lands, self-government, and status under Canadian law. Focusing on the quadrilingual (Inuktitut, Cree, French, English) Inuit community of Kuujjuarapik in Nunavik (Arctic Québec), Patrick analyzed the persistence of Inuktitut “despite increasing pressure from English and French” (2003: 205). In this setting, English, French, and Inuktitut compete within the regional linguistic market. Yet Inuktitut is the language used most frequently within the home and workplace, and is the language of local political life and Inuit cultural identity. Advocating for the importance of community voice in LPP efforts to promote Indigenous language survival, Patrick offers an optimistic assessment of the future of Inuktitut, “because

politics, identity, and language learning have become linked to both traditional and modern economic pursuits” (2003: 215).

Tulloch (2004) examined Inuit youth language attitudes in three Nunavut Baffin Island communities where Inuktitut is the first official language and enjoys explicit government promotion. There, Inuktitut is the mother tongue of the majority of youth, who not only speak and understand the language well, but read and write it. Yet Inuit youth express insecurity in speaking their mother tongue; “they recognize language loss in their own lives and attribute it to the encroaching presence of English” (2004: 5). Arguing that language attitudes are key to understanding language choices (and hence to LPP), Tulloch documents the complex interaction of youth’s perceived linguistic competence, language use, and language attitudes. As Patrick found for Kuujjuarapik, Inuktitut in these Baffin Island communities is the language of access to family, community, Inuit history, elders, and jobs. At the same time, English is perceived by youth as both “cool” and necessary for life opportunities in Nunavut and beyond. The future of Inuktitut “is hopeful, but uncertain,” Tulloch concludes, as youth “witness language loss first-hand in their own lives as they transfer to English as their dominant language” (p. 415).

Since Hornberger published her 1988 account, the ethnography of language policy has continued to grow, as exemplified by: Davis’s (1994) ethnography of communication in multilingual Luxembourg, Aikman’s (1999) exploration of intercultural education and mother tongue literacy among the Arakmbut in the Peruvian Amazon, Heller’s (1999) “sociolinguistic ethnography” of French-speaking adolescents in English-speaking Canada, Jaffe’s (1999) examination of language politics in Corsica, Ramanathan’s (2005) critical ethnography of vernacular-medium education in Gujarat, and Wyman’s (in press) analysis of Yup’ik youth culture and language survivance in the Far North. Central to these studies is a focus on LPP as a dynamic socio-cultural process that operates simultaneously at the micro-level of individuals in face-to-face interaction, the meso-level of local communities of practice, and the macro-level of nation-states and larger global forces.

Much of this research engages a lingering debate on the role of schools in structuring diversity in complex sociolinguistic ecologies, and specifically whether schools can “save” endangered mother tongues (Hornberger, 2008). Fishman (1991, 2001) and others have argued that schools play a secondary or tertiary role in achieving these LPP goals; the primary RLS mechanism, Fishman emphasizes, is intergenerational language transmission in the family and home. Others, ourselves included, have argued that while schools alone cannot “save” endangered languages, schools and their medium-of-instruction policies can be “strategic tools” for language reclamation (McCarty, 2008). In many Native American communities, for instance, schools are *the* dominating economic and political institutions, making the politics, language, and culture of the school key resources for locally directed language reclamation. At the same time, as we have seen in the cases profiled here, school-based language reclamation privileges certain forms of knowledge production, communicative interaction, and meaning-making, restructuring and resignifying the very language practices it is intended to promote.

Given these complexities, it seems to us that the most reasonable response to the question of whether schools can “save” endangered languages is a nuanced “No, *but*” No,

schools cannot substitute for intergenerational transmission in the home, but when aligned with other social institutions, schools can reinforce home- and family-based efforts. No, schools cannot fulfill a total language-implanting role, but they can be platforms for corpus and acquisition planning and for elevating the status of an endangered language by using it to mediate academic content. No, schools cannot bring a threatened language back to life, but when we look around the world we find few instances of successful language revitalization in which schools have not played a prominent role (McCarty, 2008: 161, 175).

Finally, as the ethnography of language policy teaches, language reclamation is not solely or even primarily about language per se. Revitalizing an endangered language is an affirmation of identity, community-building, and healing from past injustices. It is an act of (re)imagining individual and collective futures in which the language of heritage plays an integral part. In short, language reclamation is part of a larger democratizing project aimed at social justice, emancipation, and human rights. Schools are clearly contentious arenas in which to carry out such goals; using schools for these purposes challenges their very function as instruments of the state. More research is needed in this area, and on the ways in which these new forms of schooling are taken up by their intended beneficiaries – the children and communities whose linguistic futures are at stake. In our final section we consider emerging directions in LPP research and practice along these lines.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE NEW LANGUAGE POLICY STUDIES

The foregoing sections have outlined the parameters of a new approach to language policy studies in which critical ethnography is central, and policy is examined “in relation to actual language use” (Collins, 2011:128). One exciting focus of these new policy studies concerns youth negotiations of shift, maintenance, and revitalization. In contrast to conventional views of young people as “unfinished” or “pseudo-adults,” this research attends to youth agency in interpreting and articulating mixed societal messages about their heritage languages and identities (McCarty and Wyman, 2009). In her ethnographic studies among Navajo and Pueblo youth, Lee (2009) found that despite competing ideologies of heritage language respect, stigmatization, and shame, many youth demonstrated a “critical Indigenous consciousness,” actively transforming the *de facto* language policies in their homes and communities. Working with Nahuatl young adults in Tlaxcala, Mexico, Messing (2009) documented two competing ideological orientations she described as *pro-Indígena* (pro-Indigenous) and *menosprecio* (denigration), through which children are socialized and which govern their and their families’ language choices. For most youth, Messing states, “linguistic insecurity in the Native tongue is common, and the desire to orient toward identities external to the community is strongly influenced by national and international media messages and local racism” (Messing, 2009: 353). At the same time, Messing describes the malleability of these “post-conquest” ideologies and their potential to inform “culturally relevant, youth-focused, and technologically advanced language revitalization” (2009: 361).

Our own research has investigated language-ideological crosscurrents among Indigenous youth in the US Southwest. In a five-year (2001–2006), multi-sited

ethnographic study, we found that the linguistic ecologies in which American Indian youth are growing up are much more heteroglossic than is conveyed by the notion of shift as the replacement of one linguistic code by another. In early- to late-shift settings, most youth were exposed to one or more Indigenous language varieties alongside multiple varieties of English and in some cases Spanish. Even in settings where the Native language was considered “moribund,” youth were likely to be “overhearers” and even “understanders” of one or more Indigenous languages and varieties. In these contexts, youth deployed hybrid sociolinguistic repertoires for specific purposes in the context of peer, school, and community cultures. At the same time, the youth were negotiating conflicting societal discourses that simultaneously valorized and demonized their heritage languages. Youth took up these conflicts in different ways – resisting, accommodating, and sometimes feeling compelled, in one youth’s words, to “forsake who you are.” The net effect was to curtail opportunities for rich, natural youth–adult interaction in the Indigenous language and to construct a *de facto* policy that the Indigenous language is best “left behind” (McCarty *et al.*, 2009: 303).

A parallel body of research investigates heritage language education informed by a resource orientation (Ruiz, 1988). Drawing on ethnographic work in one of the oldest Māori-medium schools, Hill and May (2011) examine how educators reshaped the school language policy to promote students’ biliteracy and academic achievement simultaneously with Māori language and culture revitalization—this is an area in which there has been little previous research. In North Wales, Martin-Jones’s research among Welsh-speaking young adults show the potential for “focused, ethnographically informed studies of the bilingual literacy practices of local teachers and students in language revitalization contexts” to bridge the gap between college and home literacies, thereby helping to foster national language revitalization goals (in press). In the southwestern United States, Combs, González, and Moll (in press) have used critical ethnography to foreground the links between macro-level discourses of English-only and “immigration as dangerous waters,” and micro-level interruptions of those discourses by bilingual teachers who reposition Latino children’s home language as a resource for learning. And in an ongoing ethnographic study at a trilingual Navajo/Spanish/English school, McCarty *et al.* (2011) document the transformations in children’s academic and cultural–linguistic futures brought about by an explicit reorientation of the school language policy from a “language-as-a-problem” to a “language-as-resource” approach (Ruiz, 1988).

This research exemplifies critical–ethnographic investigations into language planning and policy “from the bottom up” (Hornberger, 1996). But we also need a comparative perspective that places local accounts gleaned from rigorous ethnographic investigation in the context of larger shifts entailed by decolonization (Brock-Utne and Hopson, 2005), globalization (Blommaert, 2010), immigration, and diaspora. How are sociolinguistic resources stratified across time, space, and place in complex sociolinguistic ecologies? How are globalizing processes (re)configured in local language practices and ideologies? How can globalization from the bottom up create new policymaking windows of opportunity that provoke agency in reclaiming linguistic human rights? And finally, what are the implications of this work for planning linguistic diversity in education? (Hornberger and McCarty, forthcoming).

We conclude by suggesting a new avenue of LPP research that builds on this work, thus blurring the distinction between bottom-up and top-down. Using critical ethnography, Warhol (2009, 2010) explored the language policy cycle of the hallmark US policy in support of Native American languages: the Native American Languages Act (NALA) of 1990/1992. While the focus of this research originated in official government policy, NALA evolved from grass-roots activism by the Native educators and community members the policy would ultimately benefit. The policy *process* undergirding the policy *text* elucidates the ways in which bottom-up and top-down practices merge to transform asymmetrical power relations. In this case, the result was a new resource for language revitalization that reverses two centuries of official federal policy and embodies the voices of Native peoples.

The NALA case also highlights the praxis potential of this approach to language policy research. At its core, LPP is all about choice: what language(s) will be learned, by whom, for what purposes, and with what individual, group, and societal consequences (Spolsky, 2004: 42). As the ethnography of language policy shows, those choices are never unfettered, but rather play out within larger power regimes that structure individual agency and institutional conditions. The challenge for the new language policy studies is to illuminate with precision how the right to choose is both constructed and obstructed in social practice, and to show the implications for linguistic justice in our multiply stratified and unequal world.

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CHAPTER 12

Language Socialization across Educational Settings

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OVERVIEW

Language Socialization (LS) research concerns itself with two identified components of the socialization process: socialization *through* the use of language and socialization *to* use language (Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986). Grounded in interdisciplinary research from human development and linguistic anthropology, LS researchers study the ways participants in socialization interactions, whether in expert or novice roles, negotiate the acquisition and display of skills for competent participation in community. LS research adheres to a set of methodological principles to examine the acquisition of linguistic and cultural practices across social settings. These principles include an ethnographic perspective through sustained fieldwork, a longitudinal research design, and the collection and analysis of audio and/or video data in naturalistic settings (Garrett and Baquedano-López, 2002; Kulick and Schieffelin, 2004). The studies, often following a small sample of focal participants across multiple sites, provide us with detailed descriptions and interpretations on the subtleties of the language socialization process in ways that a large-scale study could not achieve. The work that we review in this chapter theoretically and empirically engages the methodological principles of LS and contributes insights into the ways in which linguistic and cultural competencies are acquired through routine and moment-to-moment interactions, thereby expanding our understanding of education in its broadest sense.

We begin our essay with a discussion of the scope of LS research and we provide a historical overview of the major theoretical and methodological influences that have

shaped the LS approach. We organize the remainder of the chapter into two analytical themes. The first examines LS research relevant to discussions that center on continuities and discontinuities in academic literacy socialization at home and school. The second section examines socialization in contexts of migration and diaspora, in particular the ways in which language and literacy practices shape the development of social identities. We also discuss a strand of LS research, religious socialization, as an example of out-of-school education that offers insights into literacy and language development. Through a discussion of LS research addressing educational issues and concerns, this chapter examines the contributions of a recent theoretical and methodological approach to an understanding of socialization as a process mediated through language across social domains, including the home and school, and as a process that shapes the linguistic and social development of individuals across the lifespan.

THE SCOPE OF LANGUAGE SOCIALIZATION RESEARCH

LS research departs from other theories of learning and development through its focus on language as the principal tool for developing linguistic and cultural competencies. Language competency is a broad notion that has been described as both the development and knowledge of grammatical rules and structures (Chomsky, 1965) and as a component of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). LS research examines the grammatical properties evidenced in language development and the use of language in situated and culturally appropriate contexts. This approach to the study of language and context, or rather of language *in* context, was made explicit with the constitution of two closely related fields of study, sociolinguistics and the ethnography of speaking. Sociolinguistics, or the study of language behavior, includes the study of dialects, language variants (such as gendered forms of language), as well as individual and societal attitudes towards them (Hymes, 1972; Trudgill, 1995; Wolfram, 1991). The ethnography of speaking is concerned with the ethnographic documentation and analysis of language use in social life (Bauman and Sherzer, 1975; Gumperz, 1968; Hymes, 1962, 1972). The growing interest in language use in social context expanded the boundaries of child development and enculturation theories to include a focus on language as central to learning. It was in this context that LS research emerged as a distinct orientation to study language and cultural development.

The LS research approach shares with the Linguistic Anthropology of Education an interest in language and interactions in educational settings (see Wortham and Reyes, Chapter 9, above). Linguistic anthropologists of education are interested in understanding the way language use (and its symbolic and referential properties) shapes and influences social relations. LS researchers seek to understand how social identities and competencies are socialized, while recognizing that socialization activities are embedded in processes of reproduction and change. Their increasingly multi-sited ethnographic studies (Marcus, 1995) analyze quotidian activities in which socialization takes place, as well as the ways participation in those activities is influenced by the gender, ethnicities, and class statuses of the participants. The focus of LS research on paths of socialization across everyday activities and multiple sites provides a unique perspective to

research on language, culture, and education. LS research examines how trajectories of learning fit into and reproduce larger systems of cultural meaning and practices, and it also documents how participants in socializing interactions, as social actors, recreate, resist, and transform the social order.

The first LS studies were conducted in the late 1970s and early 1980s and sought to connect the analysis of the properties of language development to the study of child learning. The increasing acceptability of the notion that language and learning were local and situated processes motivated a number of ethnographic studies aimed at documenting child language acquisition and development across social and cultural groups. Two anthropologists who studied children's development of language in context, Bambi Schieffelin and Elinor Ochs, returned from fieldwork (Schieffelin in Papua New Guinea and Ochs in Western Samoa) with evidence that "baby talk" (the use of simplified grammar, elongation of sounds, and high pitch, among other features) was in fact a cultural disposition (Ochs and Schieffelin, 1984). These researchers found that the adult practices of talking to babies in a simplified register to communicate with them and encourage the production of talk were not the norm in child socialization in other societies. The taken-for-granted way of speaking to young children in white middle-class America was class-based and culturally determined. Through observation and analysis of the social organization of the communicative environment of young children, these researchers concluded that the communicative environment varied across a continuum of two distinct orientations. In some societies adults organize the communicative environment so that children are the center of attention and are considered conversational partners. In these societies the simplified register known as baby talk is present. In other societies caregivers expect children to adapt to the communicative environment and fewer linguistic accommodations are made. Regardless of adult accommodations, whether child-centered or situation-centered, children develop language competencies at about the same rate. In this regard, adult or caregiving communicative preferences for children's development are not by themselves indicative of better or worse routes to socialization; rather, they represent cultural and ideological orientations to babies and their language development (Ochs, 1988; Ochs and Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin, 1990). The greatest contribution of these findings to the studies of child development, and to learning theories in general, is the notion that adults' expectations regarding child development are culturally organized and realized. Accordingly, social groups (including families and school communities) organize and determine how communicative roles are taught and learned, and which knowledge is worth acquiring and which is not. Language is in this way the medium to acquire social roles and cultural knowledge, and it is also the medium to realize them.

The ideas concerning routes to socialization proposed by Schieffelin and Ochs built on earlier sociological studies that sought to understand the enduring dimensions of the socialization process, in particular the relationship between language use, class background, and schooling. Bernstein's (1974) work identified schools as sites for the reproduction of socioeconomic and academic inequalities that hinged on the relationship between the ways students talked at home and the language used in school. Drawing on his studies of school-age children's storytelling recounting tasks, Bernstein concluded that the distinction between elaborated and restricted codes (how speakers

assume and express shared background knowledge) was fundamental for understanding how schools privilege only one form of language use and practice – the elaborated code. In the storytelling tasks that Bernstein studied, the elaborated code, which assumed less shared background knowledge, contained more explanation of details, such as the use of explicit noun references (e.g., the children). The restricted code, in contrast, assumed shared points of reference and relied on pronoun use (e.g., they). Bernstein argued that learning the elaborated code was a function of socialization situations that required its use. The differences in speech form and storytelling design that Bernstein had observed pointed to the variability in socialization processes outside school.

The speech differences documented by Bernstein (1974) showed that not all children, especially those from working-class backgrounds, were familiar with or employed the elaborated code, the speech patterns that educators preferred for school tasks. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argued that schools reproduced their existence as social institutions through the legitimization of practices, including the sanctioning of language use. In doing so, these legitimizing practices also reproduce class relations. This is Bernstein's argument as well: there is variability in the use of language at home and in school, and the value placed on the elaborated code in school leads to class reproduction mediated through school. LS researchers seek to understand how social identities and competencies are socialized, while recognizing that socialization activities are embedded in processes of reproduction and change. Their ethnographic studies analyze the relationship between quotidian activities and the social and historical context in which they occur – what Bourdieu (1977) captured in the notion of *habitus* as the structured, inherited, and lasting dispositions that are acquired in infancy.

Home and school contexts of socialization: Mapping continuities and discontinuities

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a great deal of scholarly attention was given to classroom talk (Cazden, 1988; Erickson, 1982; Green and Wallat, 1981; Mehan, 1979), but it was not until Heath's (1983) comparative study of the language and literacy practices of families and their children in two working class communities in the Piedmont Carolinas, the white community of Roadville and the black community of Trackton, that the relationship between home and school became a significant node in educational research. Featured as a reprint in Schieffelin and Ochs's (1986) edited collection on language socialization research, Heath's article (1986) "What no Bedtime Story Means: Narrative Skills at Home and at School" illustrated the blending of anthropological concerns, language and literacy socialization research, and research on the multiple contexts of schooling. Heath's study illustrated how home practice does not always match schooling practice, with class being a determining factor. While the children from the white working-class community made earlier gains in literacy development (they shared some practices with mainstream middle-class students), they fell behind academically alongside the black working-class students. Heath presented a great deal of evidence of the mismatches that can exist in the literacy and language practices between the home and the school and, most importantly, how these mismatches can impede learning. To return to Bernstein's analysis

discussed above, one could also say that neither group of students in Heath's study had access to "the code" to successfully navigate the academic practices of the school as the students progressed through the elementary school grades.

The concern with understanding home and school practices as contexts for learning has led to efforts investigating the continuities and discontinuities in the educational experiences of minority populations often constructed as "at risk," in particular Latino Spanish-English bilingual students in US public schools (Portes, 2005; Valdés, 1996; Valencia, 1991). Pease-Alvarez and Vásquez (1994) and Vásquez, Pease-Alvarez, and Shannon (1994) carried out some of the first studies on the linguistic practices that characterized the home and school language socialization contexts of Latino students and their families. Through ethnographic observations in the home, these researchers observed that adults used "contingent queries," or questions that solicited more explicit information (e.g., he wants to be your friend?), in response to children's comments and statements. This form of scaffolding created linguistic contexts for children to then clarify and elaborate on adults' queries. The researchers' findings demonstrated that Latino children and their families used the same linguistic practices that were valued in schooling activities. The authors argued for more explicit efforts to link the linguistic practices expected at school to those already present in the home.

The longitudinal studies of González (2001) and Zentella (1997) called for more integration of the language practices used at home and at school. González's (2001) three-year study employed a language socialization perspective along with critical feminist theory to examine the linguistic practices of Mexican-origin mothers and their children. Through interviews, sustained ethnographic observations, and audio recordings of naturally occurring speech in these families' homes in Arizona, González observed complex and conflictive processes of identity development among bilingual and bicultural children in a public environment that reinforced a "one nation-one language" approach. Zentella's (1997) ethnographic work with New York Puerto Rican children and their families demonstrated how rich bilingual and multi-dialectal competencies, including strategic code-switching, were utilized within the community to socialize bilingualism and manage interactional exchanges with different members of their community. Unfortunately, as González and Zentella reported, the cultural and linguistic skills of children and their families, including their bilingualism, often remained untapped in schools as resources in student learning. Similar to the work of Pease-Alvarez and Vásquez (1994) and Vásquez, Pease-Alvarez, and Shannon (1994), the work of these ethnographers supports the notion that institutionalized expectations of, and reaction to, Latino students specifically, and linguistic minority students more broadly, can hinder their linguistic and academic progress. Ideologies of language also function here as "the mediating link between social structures and forms of talk" (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994: 55), shaping attitudes and beliefs about students and the languages that they speak. In the studies we just discussed, school practices and policies favored the use of English as the language of instruction and ignored the academic benefits that the home language could afford.

In a four-year LS study on the home and school learning experiences of Josh, a white, working class boy in northern California, Nielsen (2002) argued that academic socialization did not occur independently of teacher expectations and beliefs about

home background. In her observations of Josh's interactions at home and in school, and during interviews with Josh and his family members, Nielsen found conflicting ideologies about Josh's academic abilities. Josh's parents and relatives believed he was a good student who was increasingly being alienated in school. Teachers' assessments of Josh's writing and reading abilities matched their evaluations of his welfare-supported parents' abilities as limited and insufficient. Despite strong family support, Josh did not receive the best academic assistance during classroom activities, and in effect, it was at school that he was being socialized by what the school personnel considered working-class standards and expectations. Nielsen's work reminds us that in order to create successful partnerships between home and school, it is important to be aware of the dangers of assessing students' performance based on a prejudiced evaluation of the students' family backgrounds.

Our discussion of the types of continuities and discontinuities between home and school are evident in other educational systems outside the United States and provide a comparative view into how other multilingual societies structure the educational experiences of their students. Howard's (2009) year-long ethnographic study in northern Thailand demonstrated how Muang kindergarten students were socialized to Thai models of citizenship through Standard Thai discursive mechanisms, such as politeness particles, that centered on highly valued norms of respect. Although Standard Thai was privileged as the more polite and respectful linguistic form, Howard's study examined the ways students were permitted to use the local Kam Muang vernacular as long as the politeness particles of Standard Thai were employed. Acknowledging that the process of schooling subordinated students' local Muang identity to a national Thai identity, Howard contended that the home experience and local identities of these students were fostered during the less supervised and more fluid spaces present in the classroom. In this case, negotiated use of languages facilitated the continuity of the vernacular in the classroom.

Migration and diaspora: Socialization across time and space

Many LS researchers have turned their attention to contexts of migration and diaspora to examine processes of second language socialization (Rymes, 1997). These researchers have focused primarily on foreign language education, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and heritage language education (see also Zuengler and Cole, 2005 and Duff and Hornberger, 2008). In an insightful study of four ESL students (three girls and one boy) in a first grade US classroom, Willett (1995) observed the ways that children negotiated academic instruction in English at University Village, a school that served the children of university students. The boy, however, did not belong to an academic family and his father was a worker at the university stables. Willett observed that the strategies of the three girls, which included peer support and a great deal of language experimentation, were encouraged and rewarded by the teacher. The strategies of the boy, who sought to first establish a competent gendered identity in the classroom, were considered inappropriate. These students' display of academic competencies was just as important as the perceptions that the teacher had about the students. In this case, those perceptions were compounded by the intersection of class and gender, which positioned the boy as a problematic learner. Willett's findings resonate

with those in Rymes and Pash's (2001) study of an ESL second grade classroom and of a young boy in particular. Their study described how their focal student appeared to enact the appropriate academic behavior during classroom routines, that is, the student had learned to "pass" as a competent speaker without having mastered the language. Yet it was his use of strategies for gaining social acceptance that worked against him. While the student had (or appeared to have) oral proficiency in English and participated in most classroom activities, his reading and writing skills were not developing. This gave his teachers the impression that he needed to receive special education services. These examples of ethnographic attention to talk and activity in classrooms demonstrate how deeply ingrained ideologies about language ability, class status, and gender structure schooling practices.

Large-scale societal events and the ideologies they generate also shape everyday classroom language practices. Duff's (1995) research in post-Soviet Hungary examined how secondary schools offering dual language immersion instruction, with English as the second language, transitioned into more western, non-Hungarian classroom practices. The strict Hungarian recitation routines known as *felelés* that were favored during the previous educational and political system were replaced by practices that were seen as more democratic, such as short student lectures, question-answer exchanges, and pair or small group work. The ritualized practice of the *felelés* had centered around formal public summaries of lessons that were given at the start of class, and which were also used to enforce school discipline and monitor student progress. With the changes in the country's political system, daily classroom interactions changed as new language competencies were required of the students and teachers, illustrating how micro-level language practices are susceptible to macro-level structural changes.

In a study of linguistic ideologies and socialization among temporary migrants from Israel to the United States, Kattan (2009) focused on the language competencies of young children of Zionist *Schlichim* (emissaries) families. The families were sent by the Jewish Agency for Israel to the United States for short periods of time (two to three years) to recruit Diaspora Jews (those living outside Israel) to move to Israel. The children in Kattan's study, all residing in New York City, were learning English, which is considered a desirable language in Israel, even as they were also learning to identify strongly with Hebrew and with Israel. During interactions at home and school, the children asked questions of linguistic and ethnic authenticity as they explored with their teachers and parents their pronunciations and uses of Hebrew in contrast to American, non-Israeli Jews, who were considered unable to speak Hebrew appropriately. These families' status as temporary migrants and their perceptions about linguistic and cultural belonging and authenticity remind us of the variety of the socialization trajectories of young immigrant populations to our schools.

The settings of socialization also vary in complex and novel ways, often responding to new technologies and literacies. For example, Lam (2004) examined second-language socialization through online practices in a chat room. The focal students in Lam's study were two Cantonese-speaking Chinese high school students who were recent immigrants (three years) in the United States. During interviews, the students reported that the chat room offered them opportunities they could not have in other spaces at school, where they felt insecure about their abilities to participate socially and to speak English. Lam noted the students' increased participation in the creation

of a mixed-code variety of English and Cantonese during online chats (using Romanized characters on the computer screen) and the construction of collective identities as competent bilingual speakers in this setting. Lam's study invites investigation of practices of global media and on the ways such practices provide contexts for socialization of new identities and language competencies, and how they might challenge normative understandings of the "language learner."

Indeed, institutional labels denoting students as language learners might inadvertently contribute to deficit framings. Talmy's (2008) two-and-a-half-year study of a Hawaiian school that included students from various countries of origin and with varying lengths of residency (from six months to ten years) examined the complexity of competing "cultural productions of ESL students." While educational programs and policies played a role in the socialization of a school-sanctioned group of "ESL students," many students produced an oppositional "generation 1.5" identity by coming unprepared for class and not completing homework. These non-conformist tactics used by the students illustrated the nonlinearity of the socialization process. Ultimately, the students reported that the ESL program did little to help them achieve academically.

Solís' study (2009) of a cohort of recent immigrant Latino ESL students in northern California who were transitioning from two middle schools to one high school foregrounded the need to examine the linguistic and academic ideologies and practices embedded in institutional labels. Solís explained that the transition from middle to high school did not necessarily include a change or improvement of the learners' linguistic and academic proficiencies. Like Talmy, Solís argued that the linguistic and power asymmetries experienced by students through ESL labeling persisted. The students in Solís' study found it difficult to acquire a positive identity as language learners in the new complex educational context of high school education.

In a LS study of heritage language education, He (2000, 2003) analyzed interactions across Chinese heritage language classrooms, in particular the role of teachers' directives in the socialization of cultural values. He considered the use of these directives as a speech event, arguing that the heritage language learners in her study appeared to actively transform not just the context of learning but the language as well, by anticipating, collaborating on, or subverting the teachers' directives. Lo's (2009) multi-sited study of interactions across a weekend Korean heritage language classroom, a taekwondo studio, an art school, and an after-school program in northern California exemplifies the dynamics of local values and practices and the ways in which students acquire moral dispositions encoded in the Korean language. In the heritage classroom, teachers interpreted students' moral dispositions through the students' movements and expressions, the stance they took towards others, and their use of language. The teachers' expectations of desirable behavior positioned and exhorted children to be morally worthy Koreans. Lo's and He's studies remind us of the importance of recognizing variability within educational language programs, as well as the encoded messages in classroom language that have a direct impact on the construction of identities for and by diverse groups of students. These studies also illustrate the bidirectionality of the socialization process, and the possibility that expert and novice roles can change, as the teachers adapted their language ideologies in response to students' practices and negotiations around understandings of cultural identity.

Many of the challenges immigrant students face in US educational settings are also experienced by immigrant students in other countries. While an extensive review of LS studies in immigrant contexts outside the United States is not possible here (see Baquedano-López and Mangual, *in press*), we want to highlight a recent 20-month LS study by García Sánchez (2009) in southwestern Spain that described the complex linguistic and cultural practices of Moroccan Muslim immigrant students as they dealt with the politics of exclusion. Despite new governmental efforts to integrate linguistic and cultural minorities into the mainstream through special schools and programs, schools were not always prepared to work with immigrant students and their families. For example, many schools and other social institutions did not have translation services. In many cases young students translated and interpreted for family members and staff in schools, hospitals, and government offices (for similar studies involving young translators and interpreters in the United States see García Sánchez and Orellana, 2006; Orellana, 2009; and Orellana and Reynolds, 2008). The responsibility that these school children had, in a time of increased surveillance of Muslim immigrants in Europe, was quite demanding as they tried to be buffers between cultures and languages, upholding the religious and moral standards of their home communities. This research underscores the importance of sensitizing school communities to the work that some children do as they navigate the adult worlds of their families. There is also the continued need to construct a different appraisal of these students' cognitive and linguistic abilities and, as Valdés (2003) has suggested, perhaps these students need to be recognized as gifted given the complex work that they do translating for adults using specialized language.

Learning in religious contexts: Examples of literacy and language practices beyond school

A number of LS studies have been examining religious settings for insights into how children and youth acquire literacy and language competencies while also learning the moral and spiritual practices that are valued in their communities. The studies provide perspectives that are useful for understanding the varied linguistic and cultural contexts that many students experience outside of school, sometimes as they contend with outsiders or negative public discourses about their own religious identity and practice. Aminy's (2004) LS study of a Muslim religious community in northern California that included many recent immigrants from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Palestine, and Morocco examined the revivalist nature of religious instruction in this community. Her multi-sited ethnographic study of two Islamic schools for young children and a study group for women described the diversity of linguistic and cultural practices within the Islamic community, even as the American public responses to the events surrounding 9/11 constructed a homogeneous, and largely negative, public image of the same community. Aminy described the ways students learned to utilize honorifics in Arabic and other expressions of respect towards teachers and instructional materials at the schools, illustrating how Islamic values and experiences were laminated onto academic language arts activities. Fader's (2008, 2009) LS study of a Hasidic community in New York City integrates the dimensions of gender, literacy, and language use. In the community she observed, language and gender were

compartmentalized in ways that encouraged boys to adhere to speaking Hasidic Yiddish and *loshn koydesh* (Hebrew and Aramaic), the language of scriptures and religious literacy, while girls were expected to also learn *loshn koydesh*, Hasidic Yiddish, and English. The women and girls also spoke a variant of English–Hasidic English. English was important for women and girls to master since they were the ones doing brokering work as mediators between the secular world and the world of the Hasidic community. In this multilingual environment, Fader noted that the women and girls were also embracing secular ideas and experiences facilitated in part by the use of English. The analysis of the linguistic changes and cultural practices of the Hasidic community in Fader’s study complicates the separation between the religious and the secular and illustrates the dynamics of language contact, syncretism, and language change.

Moore (2004, 2008) investigated the literacy practices in the educational settings of Cameroonian Fulfulde children who were receiving French and Koranic instruction at two different school sites. She examined the practice of “guided repetition” (a skill that supports rote memorization) at both sites, especially in the context of Koranic reading instruction where the children do not always read or understand Arabic. Apprenticeship in this form of repetition was also increasingly taking place at home during first language (Fulfulde) narrative socialization. Moore’s work sheds light on the continuity of literacy practices across domains, and specifically the intertextual (Bakhtin, 1986; Hanks, 2000) features of the texts, practices, and languages in each of these contexts, despite the discreteness of their cultural and historical origins.

Baquedano-López (2000, 2008) examined Spanish-based catechism classes, *doctrina*, for the mostly Mexican immigrant young children at two Catholic parishes in southern and northern California. Doctrina instruction included the study of prayers and the telling of religious stories that encoded moralizing messages made relevant to students’ experiences as Mexicans and as immigrants to the United States. This religious context was also a site of conflicting practice. In these classes, children of diverse ethnicities (Salvadoran, Guatemalan) often aligned with Mexican identity politics, in part due to the sheer majority of Mexican descent children and teachers at the parish classes. Political tensions also surfaced in response to public discourses of immigrant exclusion, and these influenced religious instruction inside the largely English-speaking parishes (Baquedano-López and Ochs, 2002). In a study of religious socialization at a Pentecostal church in Southern California, Ek (2005) studied how sermons and prayers socialized Latino immigrant youth to stay on a Christian path, or *El Camino*, and to not choose the sinful ways of the world, or *El Mundo*. These moral exhortations did not necessarily promote the development of an ethnic community, as was the case in the doctrina studies; rather the affiliation promoted belonging to a broader Latino Christian community. These two studies suggest that immigrant youth often have to make choices, such as learning to remain visible or hidden, and to affiliate with the larger ethnic group (a dominant Mexican identity in California, for example) or an ethnic minority identity (e.g., Salvadoran or Guatemalan). Such changing ethnic allegiances, as Lavadenz (2005) argued, could have important consequences in situations where a demand for affiliation requires careful identity work at school and in other social contexts.

CONCLUSION

Language Socialization research offers a theoretical and methodological approach to understanding the ways educational contexts structure the acquisition of linguistic and cultural competence. Many of the studies we discussed in this essay address continuities and discontinuities in linguistic and cultural practice experienced by students across the social and educational spaces in which they participate. Others address trajectories in the socialization process, such as the case of student responses to the practices of student ability labeling that constitute the norm in our educational institutions. A subset of studies is concerned with the linguistic and ideological conflicts experienced by immigrant students, as well as the skills that these students use to bridge linguistic and cultural divides. All these studies exemplify the ways socialization is never neutral. That is to say, it is a process that reflects ideological dispositions among participants in socializing interactions and reveals a story of practices within educational contexts and institutions. One important way that we see LS research contributing new insights to education concerns is through sustained and explicit attention to the relationship between language, race, and learning. While there are studies that examine this relationship through related theoretical perspectives (see Alim, Chapter 14, below), we think this is an area of study that LS researchers can engage more fully, for it is precisely through language that we construct and enact ideologies and practices that racialize, and which affect the educational experiences of students and teachers in negative ways. The study of how students learn and become competent participants in educational institutions requires a comprehensive and integrative research approach. LS research has much to offer to the Anthropology of Education through its focus on the micro-details of language and interaction, its emphasis on studying trajectories of development, as well as its attention to the larger social and historical context in which socialization takes place.

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CHAPTER 13

Ethnographic Studies of Children and Youth and the Media

Joseph Tobin and Allison Henward

DEFINITIONAL PROBLEMS

Given that ethnographies are studies of cultures, what are the cultures studied in ethnographies of children and the media? This is a tricky question, and one that makes this subgenre of anthropological research rich but also challenging to define as well as to conduct. Ethnographic studies of children (and youth) and the media are a site for the intersection of several levels and meanings of culture, including national cultures, sub-cultures, popular culture, online cultures, the cultures of children and of childhood, and school/classroom cultures. The way researchers of children and the media address culture in their studies has implications for their choice of settings, methods, and conceptual framework, and therefore for the kinds of findings their studies produce.

We are suggesting that research in this field needs to begin with a clear conceptualization of culture, but that does not mean that this research must focus on only one arena of culture per study. In the tradition of multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995), ethnographic studies of children and the media can include empirical investigation of sites of media production and distribution, as well as sites where media are received, consumed, and given meaning by children. Indeed, many of the best studies of children and popular culture attend to the interplay between mass market media texts' production and reception: that is, to the interplay between popular media texts as culturally constructed products, on one hand, and as a set of cultur-

ally patterned practices of consumption and use, on the other. A growing area of media research is on how young people not only consume commercially produced media, but also creatively use the content and genres of mass media texts to re-mix and in other ways produce their own media products. Such creative forms of media production by youth destabilize the binaries of consumption–production and of mass culture–popular culture. For example, Pokémon characters created by children that circulate on the web, and mash-ups of scenes from Harry Potter cut to pop songs, combine media consumption with production and mass culture with youth culture.

A noted complexity in this field is the problem of defining a media product; it is a problem that grows increasingly daunting with the proliferation of cross-platform, multiple-domain children’s media products. Pokémon, for example, is not one kind of media product but many: a handheld video game, a comic book (*manga*), a TV show, two movies, a card game, cards to collect and trade, stickers, toys, t-shirts, bed linens, lunch-boxes, and other branded paraphernalia. And alongside such examples of mass-produced, commercial children’s media culture, there is non-commercial children’s media culture that takes the form of children’s drawing, storytelling, and dramatic play, in real time as well as online, involving characters “poached” (de Certeau, 1984; Jenkins, 1998) from commercial sources and re-imagined and re-purposed by children.

Another definitional problem of this field is that many, indeed most, ethnographic studies of children and media are done not by anthropologists (as defined by their degrees and their departmental and disciplinary homes), but instead by scholars in departments of sociology, communications, cultural studies, child development, childhood studies, and psychology, who use ethnographic methods with varying degrees of explicitness and fidelity. To cultural anthropologists, some of this work is ethnographic in name only, as it lacks the hallmarks of ethnographic work: being situated/contextual, privileging insiders’ meanings (emic categories), and including an explicit focus on culture and on cultural practices.

A further problem is the relationship of studies of children and the media to education. An educational anthropology approach to this field should avoid an overly narrow focus on only those forms of children’s media that are self-consciously educational, or a focus on the learning (as opposed to the playing and pleasure) that occurs in children’s engagement with media and popular culture. A binary distinction between educational and non-educational media products and activities is impossible to sustain when we consider that children can and do learn things from their engagement with commercial products that make no claim to being educational, such as Barbie (Chin, 2001; Lord, 1994; Rand, 1995), Pokémon (Sefton-Green, 1994), and Warhammer (Tobin, 1999). Most engagement of children with popular culture and cutting edge forms of digital technology occurs outside of school, or if within the school day, during lunch and recess and in moments stolen from the official curriculum and outside the notice of teachers (Dyson, 1997; Hodge and Tripp, 1986; Seiter, 1995). Children’s engagement with popular culture has its own characteristic forms of pedagogy and curricula; these are not the official pedagogies and curricula of the school, but they are nevertheless educational, broadly defined, and therefore within the purview of anthropology and education.

A final definitional problem is the definition of childhood and youth. The stages of the life course are culturally constructed and changing from era to era, and technology and popular culture both reflect and impact cultural understandings of what it means to be a child or a young person. Rather than our attempting to define these culturally specific and shifting categories, we instead see our task as reviewing studies that identify themselves as being about how young people engage with popular culture and new media, acknowledging that the authors of these studies do not share any single definition of childhood or youth.

This chapter will explore each of these complexities of defining and conducting ethnographic studies of children and the media, using examples drawn from work on children's engagement with movies, television, multi-platform toys, videogames, computers, and cell phones in and out of school. The chapter is organized around a series of core tensions in the field of children, media, and popular culture: structure versus agency; consumption versus production; learning versus play; and optimism versus pessimism.

CHILDREN'S POPULAR CULTURE BEFORE THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Before there were television programs, movies, and mass-market products specifically targeting children, there were popular forms of children's culture, and these non-commercially produced, low-tech forms of children's popular culture are still thriving today. Children's popular culture was not an invention of Disney, Mattel, or Nickelodeon (Cook, 2004; Cross, 2004). In their pioneering work on childhood and the cultures created and passed on by children, Iona and Peter Opie (1959) made a useful distinction between songs, rhymes, and stories taught to children by adults, versus those that children teach to each other, with the latter constituting an independent culture of childhood. Examples of work on these forms of children's popular culture include studies of jump-rope songs, anti-school song parodies (e.g., "I have seen the glory of the burning of the school, we have tortured every teacher, we have broken every rule"), and children's scatological and grotesque humor (e.g., jokes featuring piss, butts, and buggers; see Grace and Tobin, 1996). The fact that adults do not teach children these forms, find them interesting or amusing, or in many cases are not even aware of them, speaks to the existence of a separate and autonomous culture of childhood that is not just a product of multi-media (Fine, 1980: 178).

An example of the study of the contemporary popular or folk culture of childhood would be Barrie Thorne's ethnographies of school playgrounds and lunchrooms, studies in which she treats the talk about cooties, kissing games, and Cheetos of American childhood with the care and attention Geertz gave to the Balinese cockfight (Thorne, 1993, 2005). Another example would be Cindy Dell Clark's studies of children's beliefs about Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, and the Tooth Fairy (1998). While not creations of children, these iconic figures of childhood are subjects of a cultural belief system held by children and not shared by adults, which features an eschatology that Clark suggests parallels the religious beliefs of adults. Clark's work is ethnographic in viewing the children who hold beliefs about the Tooth Fairy and Easter Bunny as members of a culture that she

approaches with the humility and respect anthropologists bring to their fieldwork in other cultures.

While studies of children's popular culture by the Opies, Clark, Thorne, and other ethnographers of childhood generally do not focus explicitly on learning and teaching and therefore are not educational ethnographies in the narrow sense, they do address how children acquire and pass on popular culture and in this sense are part of our purview. Work in this tradition is increasingly being conducted by scholars who identify themselves as working in childhood studies, and many of these childhood studies scholars also identify themselves as educational anthropologists. (For reviews and examples of work in this field, see Lancy, 2008; Lancy, Bock, and Gaskins, 2010.)

STRUCTURE AND AGENCY

A central question in studies of children's engagement with media and popular culture is the question of agency. Are children naive, helpless dupes, vulnerable to being seduced, brain-washed, and interpellated (Althusser, 1971) by canny producers of media who roll out an unending series of clever, cynical industry-launched fads (Giroux, 1999; Schor, 2004)? Or are they discerning, if not canny then at least finicky and fickle, consumers who ignore and reject many more media products than they consume, and who use the media products they do consume in often unintended, imaginative ways (Chin, 2001; Rand, 1995)? This, of course, is not just a question that applies to children and the media, but to adults as well, and it is not just a question in the study of media use and consumption, but more generally in sociology and anthropology. How much freedom do people have, beginning in childhood, to resist, remake, re-combine, and even recreate their larger culture and society, as opposed to being assimilated, acculturated, and interpellated into social and cultural categories and structures that exist outside of them, and which hail and construct them in various ways, including through media and popular culture?

We can dramatize this debate by telling the story of the rise of Pokémon in two versions (Tobin, 2004). In the first version, Nintendo, a powerful corporation, cleverly develops, packages, advertises, and globally distributes a set of artfully interconnected products designed and positioned to appeal to a targeted audience of child consumers, too young for the darkness of *Magic the Gathering* and *Lord of the Rings*, yet young enough to be susceptible to the appeal of products featuring cute creatures and heroic children. Pokémon's ingenious combination of female, male, and animal characters; cuteness and aggression; and competition and camaraderie allows Nintendo to "catch them all," cornering unprecedented market share, putting children worldwide under a spell, and sending them into a frenzy of desire and consumption.

This narrative, while at least partly true, is incomplete, as it ignores the fact that Pokémon had not just a steep rise but a precipitous fall as well. Pokémon is still a major media product, but not nearly the juggernaut it was in its heyday. If the titans of Nintendo and allied industries can manipulate children so easily, why didn't Pikachu succeed in becoming Japan's answer to that other mouse, Mickey, as Nintendo and Japan hoped? Why no third, fourth, or fifth Pokémon movie? An alternative telling of the story would suggest that Nintendo's success with Pokémon was the result less of

corporate power and the orderly following of a scripted marketing plan than of the ability of children to locate and collaboratively construct a product that suited them – for a while. Nintendo launched a Pokémon video game hoping for modest success, and children’s unexpected passion for the characters, storylines, and themes then fueled the development of Pokémon as a cross-platform, global sensation. In this second scenario it is the children who, so to speak, held the cards. In the first scenario, Pokémon succeeded not because it has any inherent value as a product, but because of the marketing muscle put behind it and the company’s power to manipulate children’s desires and forms of play. In the second scenario, Pokémon could not have become successful if Nintendo were not sensitive and responsive to children’s desires and if the products they developed lacked quality and use (and re-use) value, as defined by their consumers.

The first scenario is consistent with the theories of the Frankfurt School and of neo-Marxist paradigms that view consumers in general, and children in particular, as dupes, easily manipulated by capitalist corporations into false desires and mindless purchasing (du Gay, 1998; Kline, 1993; Steinberg and Kincheloe, 1997). The second scenario is reflective of the more upbeat school of cultural studies that emphasizes the pleasure, agency, and resistance of consumers (even when they are children). Our argument in this chapter is that the anthropological take on which of the above scenarios comes closest to the truth is an empirical question, calling for ethnographic research. The structure and agency question needs to be answered not with arm-chair theorizing but by studies in particular communities by anthropologists and scholars in allied fields employing ethnographic field methods.

Much of the empirical work done on children and the media is conducted by scholars in communication, psychology, and education working in the “media effects” tradition. They tend to use a quasi-experimental research method in which children are shown scenes from television shows, or given a chance to play with a video game, and then their reactions are observed and the children are interviewed (Buckingham, 1993; Hodge and Tripp, 1986). These approaches can produce valuable insights into the meanings children make of media, but they lack the attention to culture and context that ethnographers bring to their studies. Most media effects studies attempt to answer questions such as: “does watching violent (or sexist or racist) movies make children more violent (or sexist or racist)?” Ethnographers would pose the research question differently: “what meanings do particular groups of children living in particular communities make out of the media content they consume?” An ethnographer’s answer to the question of media effects on children would be, “it depends.” Media effects on children depend on the interpellative power of the particular media product; on the age and gullibility versus the media savviness of the children being studied; on the prior media experiences children bring to their engagement with the new media product; and on the cultural worlds in which the children live. In contrast to the perspective of most developmental psychologists, anthropologists view meaning-making as culturally constructed and situated, and as a social rather than as an individual activity.

This was the conceptual framework of *Pikachu’s Global Adventure: The Rise and Fall of Pokémon* (Tobin, 2004), a book of essays by an interdisciplinary, international team of researchers, including anthropologists, who conducted empirical research on

various aspects of the Pokémon phenomena in a variety of national and cultural settings. A key finding of this study is that the meanings children found in the Pokémon TV series in, for example, Israel, were not the same the ones children found in Japan or the United States. Lemish and Bloch's (2004) paper in this collection documents how Israeli children read episodes of the Pokémon TV show against a backdrop of their experiences, direct and indirect, of war, and as informed by Israeli notions of masculinity and femininity. Anne Allison (2004) explores how the Japanese cultural construction of *kawaisa*/cuteness gives meanings to Pokémon in Japan that change when Pikachu and his friends are consumed by children abroad (Yano, 2004). Jeffrey Maret and Hidetoshi Hoshino (2004) describe how scenes involving sex and violence in the Pokémon TV series were re-edited for the North American market, based on the importers' analysis that American and Japanese children have different culturally patterned tastes and sensibilities. The essays in this collection collectively show how the Pokémon TV show, computer game, and trading cards are not the same set of products in Tokyo as they are in Jerusalem, Paris, Los Angeles, or a small town in Iowa. In other words, when it comes to children and the media, culture and context matter. Globally circulating media products are given meaning at the point of reception in particular local communities, as mediated by local cultures (Appadurai, 2001; Hall, 1980 [1973]; Tobin, 1992).

This is also the key finding of *Good Guys Don't Wear Hats: Children's Talk about the Media* (Tobin, 2000). This study combines the "uses and gratifications" media studies research tradition, in which children are shown clips from movies and then interviewed, with an ethnographic study of the meanings children make of a media text in a particular community – a single elementary school in a middle-class community on the outskirts of Honolulu. As an interviewing cue, children from kindergarten through sixth grade were shown a scene from the movie *Swiss Family Robinson*, in which a gang of pirates (who are all Polynesian and Asian) attacks and is then repulsed by the (White) Robinson family. Analyses of discussions with the children reveal how the racist, colonialist, sexist, and classist content of *Swiss Family Robinson* played out in a particular community in Hawaii: an elementary school in which the majority of the children are middle-class Asian and Polynesian Americans, as are most of the teachers, and most of the local television personalities, politicians, and athletes. Based on interviews with children and fieldwork in the school, the study concludes that in this particular middle-class Asian–Polynesian American context, the children were relatively immune to internalizing the anti-Asian and Polynesian racism in the film, but more susceptible to the film's sexism, heteronormativity, and classism (the good guys have wives, daughters, and girl friends, a nice house, and clean clothes, while the bad guys are scruffy, dirty, and unaccompanied by women).

CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Debates about the agency of children and youth in their interactions with media are further complicated by the fact that even young children produce as well as consume popular culture and media texts. Himself poaching from de Certeau's notion of the arts of everyday life, in *Textual Poachers* (1992) Henry Jenkins argues that

mass media consumption, far from being passive, is itself a form of production. Readers/viewers of mass media texts are active and agentic in many ways: they choose which parts of a text to attend to and which to skip through or ignore; they exchange ideas in such fan-based communities as book clubs, Harry Potter web forums, Twilight fanfiction and Facebook, MySpace, and other social media sites; and they produce and distribute their own texts based on mass-produced characters, imaginative worlds, and plot-lines. Such engagements of young people with commercially produced media products defies categorization as *either* consumption *or* production.

Traditional distinctions between consumption and production are further destabilized by the emergence of new media forms which not only allow for, but encourage and even require activity on the part of the consumer/user. As David Buckingham and Julian Sefton-Green write:

The texts of Pokémon ... positively *require* "activity." Activity of various kinds is not just essential for the production of meaning and pleasure; it is also the primary mechanism through which the phenomenon is sustained, *and* through which commercial profit is generated. It is in this sense that the notion of "audience" seems quite inadequate. (2004: 23)

Mizuko Ito (2008) cites Buckingham and Sefton-Green as well as Jenkins (1992), Lave and Wenger (1991), Jeremijenko (2002), and Karaganis (2007) to make a convincing case for replacing the term "consumer" in discussions of new media with the term "participant," and the concept of "media consumption" with "structures of participation":

A notion of participation, as an alternative to "consumption," has the advantage in not assuming that the child is passive or a mere "audience" to media content. It is agnostic as to the mode of engagement, and does not invoke one end of a binary between structure and agency, text and audience. (p. 4)

Along these lines, James Paul Gee suggests that the terms "fans" and "users," which suggest passivity, be replaced with the terms "affinity groups" (2008: 206) and "affinity spaces" (2008: 76), which are characterized by the sharing of knowledge and expertise based on voluntary affiliations.

EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS WITH MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL

Popular culture has a fraught relationship with schools. Many educators go to great lengths to keep popular culture out of the classroom, through bans on trading cards, action figures, handheld video games, and cell phones. Yet popular culture has its way of sneaking into classrooms (Henward, forthcoming; Hodge and Tripp, 1986; Kenway and Bullen, 2003; Nesper, 1997). And some teachers embrace new media and popular culture as tools and topics of learning. Studying the educational dimensions of children's interaction with media and popular culture takes many forms, which in

turn require a variety of kinds of studies by educational ethnographers, carried out in a variety of settings – inside schools, outside, and in between. The research questions in this field that can be addressed by educational anthropologists can be categorized into the following five areas.

1. Self-consciously educational media

This is a field that has been largely neglected by educational anthropologists, but which can be a fruitful topic of investigation. Educational media used by schools include everything from bulletin boards, crayons, and textbooks to DVDs, computer programs, and field trips. This is an area much more often studied by scholars in educational technology than in educational anthropology. One area of educational technology that has been well studied by anthropologists and other scholars employing ethnographic methods is children's museums, which include analyses of how children interact with the museum as a whole and with the various media contained in the museum (the displays and signage, interactive computer stations, and activity centers, where children can engage in such hands-on scientific, artistic, and social scientific practices as using microscopes and telescopes; sorting and attempting to classify Native American artifacts or animal bones; sculpting or painting; and exploring a Japanese house or pretending to be a train conductor). Children's uses of children's museums have been studied ethnographically, usually not in the form of full-blown ethnographies, but in studies that view the museum as a cultural institution, in which children are engaged in situated learning. These studies employ ethnographic methods of participant observation, interviews, and attention to the interaction of the users with the materials (Piscatelli, 2001; Puchner, Rapoport, and Gaskins, 2001). Much of this work is in the activity theory tradition, which combines ethnography with cultural psychology and Vygotskian theory (Lancy, 2008; Rogoff, 2003).

It is no accident that the educational media in school most studied by educational anthropologists tend to be those that are constructivist and interactive, rather than behaviorist and didactic. We suggest the reason for this confluence is that there is a parallel between ethnography as a holistic, hands-on, constructivist research method and such holistic, hands-on, constructivist educational media as children's museum exhibits, the MIT Learning Lab's Turtle Logo (Papert, 1993), and software such as Sim City. Media for children that take an explicitly didactic approach, such as computer programs that teach children spelling or math facts, seem for most educational ethnographers a less attractive topic of study. As a result, there is a need for ethnographic studies of the kinds of scripted (teacher-proof) curricula, often featuring an interconnected set of books, videos, displays, and computer mediated activities, that are growing in importance in the era of standards and accountability and mandated curricula.

2. Edutainment

Bridging the divide between the official curricula and popular culture is the ill-defined domain of "edutainment," which includes TV shows such as Sesame Street and Dora the Explorer, toys with educational storylines, such as the American Girl Dolls, and computer games. Some software sold for children, such as the various versions of Sim

City, are sophisticated and present children with opportunities to engage imaginatively and actively in a range of cognitively demanding skills while having fun. Others are closed systems, like the skill-and-drill software that compel children to make forced choices in search of right answers, which are rewarded with electronic applause or a trumpet fanfare. In Seymour Papert's memorable phrase, these are cases of computers programming children rather than children programming computers (1993: 5). David Buckingham and Margaret Scanlon describe this growing home market as "the curricularization of family life" (2003: 6). In her book, *Engineering Play* (2009a), Mizuko Ito gives an analysis of the contemporary computer game and educational software landscape that avoids the dangers of either idealizing the potential of edutainment products to enrich the lives of children, or condemning them for impoverishing children's lives.

As is true in studies of popular culture in general, studies of edutainment products tend to fall clearly into either the structure or agency paradigms, with scholars in the former category focusing on analyses of the content and pedagogy of the product, and those in the latter camp focusing on the product's reception and use. Content-oriented studies either praise these programs based on their prosocial content (e.g., the use of Spanish and English in *Dora*; Moran, 2007; Ryan, 2010), or criticize them for their problematic values (e.g., early critiques of *Sesame Street*'s lack of strong female Muppet characters; Hendershot, 1999).

In contrast, reader-response studies focus on what children do with these shows and the meanings they make from them. As we have suggested above, an ethnographic approach would break out of this binary, and focus on how children living in particular communities give meaning to complex, ambiguous texts that have the potential to be read in multiple ways (which is to say, to all texts). An example of such an approach to the study of an edutainment product is Carolina Acosta-Alzuru and Peggy Kreshel's (2002) analysis of how a group of middle-class White mothers and children in a community in northeast Georgia talked about their attraction to the American Girl Dolls, a set of dolls that have accompanying books that claim to have educational value and, in fact, are sometimes used as elementary school social studies textbooks. Acosta-Alzuru and Kreshel analyze the girls' and mothers' talk about the dolls by contextualizing their responses, locating them in the intersectionality of their geographic location, social class, race, and time (and specifically in the racial dynamics of the American South at the time they conducted their interviews).

3. Popular culture sneaks into school

Popular culture most often comes to school by sneaking its way in, as embodied in a Pokémon figure hidden in a pocket (despite a rule against bringing toys to school), or in the form of surreptitious Spiderman play during recess, or whispered Barbie talk during a small-group activity. In high schools, such sneakiness often involves use of cell phones (which are banned in most schools) for browsing, tweeting, and texting, not to mention sexting (Obringer and Coffey, 2007; St. Gerard, 2006; Zirkel, 2009).

More studies are needed of such resistant, surreptitious uses of banned media and popular culture in school. An example of a study of popular culture sneaking its way into school at the preschool level is Allison Henward's comparative ethnography of

how preschools serving families of three different social classes deal with children's interest in Power Rangers, Barbie, Spongebob Squarepants, and other commercial media characters. Henward shows how within a larger culture such as the United States, differences of social class as well as ideology lead to very different takes on popular culture and its place at school. For example, teachers at a Montessori school serving upper middle-class families were highly critical of mainstream commercial products and fastidiously attempted to keep them out of the school, requiring that backpacks and lunchboxes be void of such characters. Middle-class and blue-collar teachers at a Christian preschool were not concerned about commercialism, but worried about what they saw as non-Christian messages embedded in some media products. This included reference to media that they perceived as carrying prohomosexual or magical messages (witchcraft and sorcery, as in Disney's *Fantasia* and Harry Potter). The public preschool serving low income and immigrant children, meanwhile, welcomed children's interest in popular culture as an opportunity to draw out their language development and support children's ideas and home environments (Henward, forthcoming).

An example of a study of surreptitious use of technology at the secondary level is Scott Bulfin and Sue North's (2007) ethnographic study of how high school students in Melbourne negotiate school rules and spaces to engage in literate and social practices using their mobile phones, MP3 players, and the school's computers. These young people resist the binary rules of separation that govern technology use in and out of school, and seek to use technology to build a sense of continuity in their lives and identities across home, school, and the other spaces they inhabit.

4. Teaching popular culture

Some progressive teachers invite children to bring their interest in popular culture into the curriculum, and when they do, educational ethnographers are sometimes around to document and analyze what happens. The media literacy curriculum in England has long called for a fusing of critical media literacy with media production expertise (Buckingham, 2003, 2005). In the 1980s, typical assignments in English media literacy classes included producing covers of newspapers, popular magazines, and commercials (both print and TV advertisements). By the 1990s the focus had shifted to providing youth with opportunities to create web sites and radio stations. In the new millennium the focus has shifted again, to the production of YouTube videos, video-games, social networking sites, and computer games. Henry Jenkins, James Paul Gee, Mizuko Ito, Sasha Barab, and other scholars (many funded by the MacArthur Foundation's Digital Media and Learning Initiative) have been working to bring new media literacy and videogame pedagogy into the school curriculum and to study what works, what doesn't work, and why.

Ann Haas Dyson's *Writing Superheroes* (1997) and *The Brothers and Sisters Learn to Write* (2003) are excellent examples of ethnographic studies of classrooms where teachers, if not actively support, at least allow for popular culture to come into their language arts curricula. For both of these books, Dyson spent a year listening to a group of elementary children as they talked about their interests in popular culture and brought this interest into their beginning writing. These books show how elementary

children, when given the opportunity, find creative ways to fuse their favorite TV characters and narratives with the expectations of the school curriculum. Dyson shows that rather than mindlessly parroting and reproducing features of these narratives, which adults tend to find problematic, the children creatively use these characters and storylines to work through feelings about power, race, and gender. Features of these studies that make them ethnographic include Dyson's year-long fieldwork in the classroom, her participant/observer stance (more observer than participant), her use of emic terms and constructs, and her emphasis on context, as she locates the culture of these particular classrooms in their wider neighborhood, national, and temporal contexts.

Another first rate ethnographic study of popular culture in the primary curriculum is "*We Don't Want No Haole Buttholes in Our Stories*": *Local Girls Reading the Baby-Sitters Club Books in Hawai'i*, by Donna Grace and Anna Lee Puanani Lum (2001). As the title of the paper suggests, the authors present an emic analysis, from the point of view of a group of "local" Native Hawaiian girls, as they engage with a popular text in the context of a school reading circle. Grace and Lum show how the girls identify with the books' clever, agentic pre-adolescent heroines, without endorsing or being made to feel marginalized by the books' middle-class, White ethos and values.

Recent years have seen an explosion of studies of attempts to bring popular culture into the secondary language arts curriculum. Good examples include Jeffrey Duncan-Andrade and Ernest Morrell's (2005) paper on using hip-hop as a bridge to canonical poetry, Marc Lamont Hill's *Beats, Rhymes, and Classroom Life* (2009), Douglas Kirkland's (2008) ethnographic case study of creative uses of MySpace by a high school student who is labeled as lacking basic literacy skills by his teachers, and Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear's studies on bringing the production and consumption of zines (web magazines) into the secondary curriculum (2002).

Some of the most interesting examples of supporting young people's media production skills are occurring not in schools, but in community organizations and after school programs that take on the task most schools will not or cannot address, of introducing young people to media literacy and media production skills. As Chavez and Soep write:

Education researchers are coming to see youth media organizations as key sites for teaching and learning. While school remains the most obvious and heavily investigated educational institution, more and more teachers, scholars, and policymakers want to understand and support the opportunities for learning that young people locate and sometimes create beyond school walls. (2005: 417)

Ethnographic studies of young people's engagement with a media studies curriculum out of school include Elizabeth Soep's study of a video production curriculum in a community based program (Soep, 2005, 2006) and Vivian Chavez and Soep's 2005 study of a community-based youth radio project. These studies are admirably contextualized and nuanced, and combine ethnographic fieldwork in sites of youth media production with sophisticated textual analysis, using Bakhtinian notions of intertextuality, citationality, and dialogism to show how adolescents negotiate issues of

meaning and power, not always successfully and never without tensions, in their collaborative work with each other and with the adults who work with them.

5. Studying children's informal engagement with popular culture and media

Children learn not only from the official curricula, educational media, and edutainment products, but also from commercial products that neither aim nor claim to be educational. What might children learn from playing at home with their Nintendo DS, or their Barbies, or from watching Iron Man cartoons? And how can this learning be studied ethnographically?

Some of the best work on these questions could be defined as "person-centered ethnographies," in which a researcher studies one or a small group of children over time as they interact with commercial media products. For example, Valerie Walkerdine's *Daddy's Girl: Young Girls and Popular Culture* (1997) analyzes the way several English working-class girls find pleasures and meanings in watching the video of the musical Annie. Walkerdine's analysis is person-centered in two ways, as she combines her fieldwork sitting in the living room in an English working-class home with a pre-teen girl and her mother watching Annie, with reflections on her own media consumption experiences during her working-class English childhood. While not explicitly about learning, Walkerdine's study reveals that a lot of learning goes on in children's engagement with their TV programs, as they use these popular cultural products to work out issues of gender, race, and class identity.

A person-centered ethnography with a more explicit attention to learning is Julian Sefton-Green's 1994 study of a year in the life of his own seven-year-old son's engagement with Pokémon. Sefton-Green watches over his son Sam's shoulder as Sam attempts to make it to the end of his first video game, Pokémon Gold. In the almost 100 hours of game time it took him to reach the end of the game, Sam improved dramatically as a reader as well as a map reader. Sefton-Green also discusses Sam's learning about the logic of the program behind the game, learning that emerged as Sam encountered frustration with what he first experienced as the game's inability to respond in ways he thought it should, but which he eventually came to accept. While impressed with his son's learning, Sefton-Green is less enthusiastic than game scholars like James Gee (2007a, 2007b), who see in video games the future of children's learning; Sefton-Green concludes that it is difficult to know how much of Sam's Pokémon learning will transfer to other domains, and especially to what he needs to know to succeed in school.

Joseph Tobin (1999) studied a year in his teenage son Isaac's life online. Isaac spent much of his fourteenth year online, mostly in a Warhammer 40K blog and on creating his own Warhammer web site. Tobin focuses on the pedagogy of his son's online Warhammer community, noting ways in which Isaac's e-mail co-respondents and blogging community teach and learn from each other in ways Isaac found much more satisfying than the pedagogies he encountered in his high school classroom. In their papers, both Sefton-Green and Tobin reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of conducting person-centered ethnographies of their own children's engagement in the home with popular media.

Mizuko Ito (2009b) and her colleagues' studies of Japanese young peoples' cell phone use show how texting, chatting, and sending photos via cell phones allow *kogyaru* (high school girls) to carve out arenas for affiliation, privacy, and intimacy as they navigate between their physical worlds of home and school. These studies, in the best tradition of ethnography, privilege insider, emic terms and concepts and provide outside readers of these cultures with both an appreciation of the complexity of and an empathy for the lives of her informants. Ito's analyses explore a combination of social and cultural factors, as she draws on characteristics of Japanese urban family life, of the social structuring of school, and of the sociogeography of negotiating the hyper-urban spaces of Tokyo. Her analyses are located in time as well as space, since in her ethnographies she presents not an unchanging notion of Japanese culture, but instead a continually changing one, in which young people both reflect and shape the cultural imaginaries in which they live. Ito and her team employ a variety of ethnographic methods, including participant observation, interviewing, and analysis of diaries and of the cultural discourses surrounding a defined cultural group (e.g., *kogyaru*: urban high school girls), in particular communities (e.g., urban Japan), to study the emergence of what she calls, following Appadurai (2001), "mediascapes" and "cultural imaginaries." These conceptualizations are related to what Maira and Soep call "youthscapes": "We envision a youthscape not as a unit of analysis but a way of thinking about youth culture studies, one that revitalizes discussions about youth cultures and social movements while simultaneously theorizing the political and social uses of youth and offers a lens for re-reading youth cultures in relation to national processes" (2004: 246).

Recent work by scholars in the New Literacy Studies movement (Gee, 2008; Knobel and Lankshear, 2002; Kress, 2003; Street, 1995), who view literacy as a culturally mediated social activity, includes ethnographic studies on how young people use computers, cell phones, and other emerging technologies to engage in new forms of literacy. For example, Cynthia Lewis and Bettina Fabos (2005) conducted an ethnographic case study of how a group of teenagers in a Midwestern town use Instant Messaging (IM) on their computers. Their study shows the sophistication of the young people's language use in this new media, and how they collectively developed conventions and informal rules for expressing their thoughts and feelings through not only conventionally typed words, but also acronyms, capitalization, punctuation, citationality, emoticons, and overlapping speech. Their IM-ing functioned not only for communication but also for establishing individual and collective identities. For adults unaccustomed to IM-ing, Lewis and Fabos' account of these young people spending hours a day online, with multiple IM windows open, engaged in simultaneous typed conversations with several friends at a time while also web surfing, reads like an ethnography of a culture that we, on the far side of the digital divide, find exotic and know little about.

Another emerging subgenre of ethnography is the study of how contemporary young people living in particular communities around the world that are experiencing the impacts of globalization attempt to forge identities through their engagement with newly available technologies and forms of popular culture. An example of work in this genre is Minou Fuglesang's 1994 *Veils and Videos: Female Youth Culture on the Kenyan Coast*, a book about how young women in Kenya create a youth culture based

on a fusion of music, romantic movies, and dance, and how this hybrid youth culture helps them sort out issues of self-esteem, gender, and sexuality. Sunaina Maira's 2000 book *Desis In The House: Indian American Youth Culture In Nyc* is an ethnography of second generation South Asian American youths, and how their connection to re-mixed dance music that fuses Indian folk music, *bhangra*, and Bollywood soundtracks with hip-hop and rap helps them define themselves simultaneously as both Indian and American. In 2006, Pam Nilan and Carlos Feixa published an insightful collection of studies of diverse youth cultures, including essays on skinheads in France, punks in Mexico and Spain, devout film-going adolescents in Indonesia, and English-language music listening Francophone teens in Canada.

MEDIA BOOSTERS AND DEBUNKERS

A central tension in the field is whether the explosion of interest in new media and technology is good or bad for children, and whether it is wise or foolish for schools to turn over some of their instruction time and traditional pedagogies to new topics and modes of learning. On one side are Gee and Jenkins and other proponents of the new media learning. On the other side are the conservatives, the people of the book, for example, the English teachers who complain that children these days already read too little and spend too much time online, and that therefore precious moments in their English classes should not be turned over to tweeting and blogging or discussions of rap lyrics, or to narrative arcs and symbolism in *Lost*, or intertextual references in the Simpsons. Such debates between proponents of old and new media are an old story in education. We suggest that the more interesting debate, and a question to which educational anthropologists can meaningfully contribute, is what teachers and students are doing with new media, and what is actually being learned as new pedagogies and curricula are introduced. So far, there are many claims on both sides of the debate, but little empirical data. In his review of the field, Sefton-Green (2006: 300) writes:

We need more methodologically imaginative and complex studies of diverse young people learning across all kinds of social domains so that we can gain an enhanced understanding of the meaning of media culture for young people. This is still an imbalance of speculation and "evidence." The past 10 to 15 years have been very exciting in theoretical terms as we have attempted to imagine the implications of media convergence and the penetration of popular culture, but we now need more holistic investigations of young people's cultural lives if we are to uncover the significance of learning across schools and media cultures.

In her overview of the field, Ito writes:

It is crucial to avoid the pitfalls of both hype and mistrust or as Valentine and Holloway (2001) have described it, between the "boosters" and the "debunkers." New technologies tend to be accompanied by a set of heightened expectations, followed by a precipitous fall from grace after failing to deliver on an unrealistic billing ... While the boosters and debunkers ... may seem to be operating under completely different frames of reference, what they share is the tendency to fetishize

technology as a force with its own internal logic standing outside of history, society and culture. The problem with all of these stances is that they fail to recognize that technologies are in fact embodiments, stabilizations, and concretizations of existing social structure and cultural meanings, growing out of an unfolding history as part of a necessarily altered and contested future. The promises and the pitfalls of certain technological forms are realized only through active and ongoing struggle over their creation, uptake, and revision. (2008: 6)

We would suggest that anthropologists of education have a particular contribution to make here, because anthropology has a tradition of viewing other cultures not as better or worse than our own, but instead as alternative strategies human beings employ to live in and make sense of their world. We are recommending that educational anthropologists adopt a stance of cultural relativism/agnosticism toward popular media and online cultures; such a stance steers clear of the Frankfurt School's skepticism and Jenkins' and Gee's unbridled enthusiasm. Anthropologists know that human beings have been living and learning and using technologies for a long time in distinctive ways (which we call cultures). New forms of media and technology come and go. What makes cultures unique, including youth and online cultures, are the products they make with the technologies at their disposal, and the meanings and identities they make with and through them. Young people in their daily lives both in and out of schools in cultures around the world are using much the same new technology, but doing so in culturally distinctive ways that make them unlike each other and unlike adults.

NEW MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE AS CULTURAL EPHEMERA

Finally, the fact that children are continually not only inventing but outgrowing forms of children's popular culture, combined with the transience (relatively short shelf life) of most commercially produced children's toys and media programs, makes this a subfield of educational anthropology that needs to pay particular attention to time. All cultures are always in the process of changing; children's popular and media cultures do so very quickly. By the time this chapter has been published, the examples of new media and popular culture discussed here will already be not so new, and newer forms will have emerged to take their place. This creates the need for ethnographers working in this field to continually seek out for study new sites and modes of children and youth's engagement with media and popular culture.

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CHAPTER 14

Hip Hop and the Politics of Ill-literacy

H. Sammy Alim

This chapter focuses on youths' ability to negotiate the politics of language, literacy, and identity in Hip Hop practice – an emerging focus in the anthropology of education. Recent works have examined cultural, linguistic, and literacy practices in the lives of Hip Hop practitioners in local and global contexts (Alim, 2006; Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook, 2009; Androutsopoulos, 2003; Ibrahim, 2010; Pennycook, 2007; Richardson, 2006), as well as the pedagogical possibilities of engaging these forms within traditional school settings (Desai, 2010; Fisher, 2007; Hill, 2009; Low, 2010; Morrell and Duncan-Andrade, 2004). By reviewing a focused set of studies at the intersection of the anthropology of education, literacy studies, Hip Hop studies, and sociolinguistics, I focus my attention on how youth engagement with Hip Hop cultural practices mediates a variety of social, cultural, linguistic, and educational processes.

Throughout this chapter, I demonstrate that Hip Hop cultural practices are themselves in fact a form of pedagogy for youth involved in the production and consumption of Hip Hop texts outside of the classroom. I will also consider studies that examine Hip Hop pedagogies inside the classroom in efforts to improve schooling for linguistically and culturally marginalized students. Consistent with this two-pronged perspective of the anthropology of education, the chapter considers education, teaching, and learning as processes that occur across various contexts. This approach foregrounds the educational processes of the daily cultural practices and pedagogies in our social worlds and links these practices to the specific contexts of classrooms and schools.

While there is an abundance of recent research on the politics and poetics of language and literacy in local and global Hip Hops (Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook, 2009; Pennycook, 2007), for the purposes of this chapter I will not review the

linguistic innovation, and invention, of youth around the world as they engage Hip Hop poetics. Rather, I will begin by examining the politics of Hip Hop linguistic and literacy practice to show how youth literacies have been studied in relation to local configurations of race, class, gender, and language in the United States and globally, as well as the challenges these studies pose for schools and language and educational policymakers. Second, I review work in the anthropology of education which focuses on mostly classroom-based approaches that attempt to harness the potential of Hip Hop, while critiquing the possible tensions within critical Hip Hop pedagogies. In the last section I describe how, ultimately, the field is moving towards not only a reconceptualization of literacy within and beyond the classroom, but also – through a direct focus on student *lives* – a re-envisioning of the purposes and possibilities that ill-literacies hold for public education more generally.

Before I begin, two terms need to be defined up front: Hip Hop culture and ill-literacy. Hip Hop culture has often been defined in popular discourses as having four elements: emceeing (rappin); deejaying (spinnin); breakdancing (various forms of street dance); and graffiti art (writing). To these, Hip Hop pioneer KRS-One adds “knowledge” and Afrika Bambaataa, a founder of the Hip Hop cultural movement, adds “overstanding,” that is, a deep, critical awareness of the world. Afrika Bambaataa also provides a broader, perhaps more anthropological, definition of Hip Hop and makes a useful distinction between Hip Hop and rap:

People have to understand what you mean when you talk about Hip Hop. Hip Hop means the whole culture of the movement. When you talk about rap, you have to understand that rap is part of the Hip Hop culture. The Deejaying is part of the Hip Hop culture. The dressing, the languages are all part of Hip Hop culture. So is the breakdancing, the b-boys and the b-girls. How you act, walk, look, and talk is all part of Hip Hop culture. (Afrika Bambaataa, interviewed by D. Davey (1996))

Bambaataa’s observations here are congruent with many practitioners’ belief that Hip Hop is more than music. Youth often proclaim, “Hip Hop is a way of life.” Rappin, one element of Hip Hop culture, is the aesthetic placement of verbal rhymes over musical beats. Following the work of Spady (1991), I include Spoken Word poetry within Hip Hop culture, as he argues that early Spoken Word poets, such as Amiri Baraka, Sonia Sanchez, and the Last Poets, greatly influenced early Hip Hop culture. Further, as Desai (2010) points out, the interaction between the two forms of ill-literacies continues today.

I choose the term “ill-literacy” or “ill-literacies” to draw attention to a profound and persistent irony that either implicitly or explicitly frames the majority of the studies in this area: While the vast majority of public discourses, including some academic ones (McWhorter, 2003), are quick to point to Hip Hop culture’s “illiteracy,” Hip Hop youth are even quicker to point to Hip Hop’s *illiteracy* (“Damn, that cat is *ill*,” meaning in this case, “That poet is incredibly skilled”). Through the processes of *semantic inversion*, these terms call into question the very concept of “illiteracy,” pointing to it as a sociopolitically constructed notion defined with respect to only certain, dominant forms of literacy. So, working against dominant discourses of (il) literacy, the term not only includes oral, written, and other semiotic forms of literacy

practice, but it also provides a counterhegemonic reading of American educational institutions themselves as illiterate, given their inability to read and meet the needs of marginalized youth. Here, illiteracy refers to schools' perennial "misreading" of the cultural gap as an achievement gap (Ladson-Billings, 2009), and their inability to "decode" students' lived experiences and identities in an era of "culturally and linguistically complex classrooms" (Ball, 2009). Lastly, in true Hip Hop fashion, I present *ILL*, not just as meaning "skilled" or "talented," but as referring to the three major components of literacy put forth within ill-literacy studies: Literacy must be Intimate, Lived, and Liberatory.

THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL POLITICS OF LANGUAGE AND RACE

In this section, I begin with studies that focus on the politics of identity, particularly the intersection of language and race, and then move towards studies that present how global ill-literacies present challenges for local language policies and educational institutions. The dominance of blackness within Hip Hop culture in the United States (Alim, 2006; Perry, 2004) leads Cutler (1999, 2009) to develop a notion of Hip Hop culture in the United States as a cultural sphere where blackness is seen as normative. In the most recent case, she examines a white Hip Hop emcee who uses multiple linguistic strategies to defeat his predominantly Black opponents. Linguistically, Eyedea maintains "racial boundaries" through strategies of "avoidance" (e.g., never using the term "nigga"), as well as his use of "hyper-rhotic /r/" (exaggerated and sometimes extended pronunciation of /r/) as a means to mark himself racially as White, and as middle class. Importantly, in this case, both Eyedea and his black competitors work together to co-construct whiteness through the above strategies, as well as through *marking* (Mitchell-Kernan, 1974), *styling the Other* (Rampton, 1999), and other similar linguistic strategies of performing and sometimes mocking opponents.

Building upon Cutler's analysis of "whiteness" in Hip Hop, Alim, Lee, and Carris (2010) show how Asian, Black, and Latino youth in freestyle rap battles in Los Angeles draw from and perform a broader range of racial and ethnic identities. The study also demonstrates that the dominance of "Blackness" in this particular scene does not always go unchallenged, nor does it unproblematically produce alternative racial hierarchies. First, Black youths' practices of *styling the Other* (Rampton, 1999) and *performing the Other* (Pennycook, 2003) are "loaded with the cultural and linguistic erasure that dominance engenders" (p. 125). As such, while artists may be producing new meanings of blackness and whiteness by reversing their status in this local scene (as seen in Cutler, 2009), this "reversal" comes along with the reinscription of dominant, hegemonic discourses of race and ethnicity at the expense of Asians and Latinos (e.g., viewing Asians as perpetually "foreign," or Latinos as "illegal" or "landscapers"). Further, Alim, Lee, and Carris show that non-Black emcees simultaneously uphold and challenge their own marginalization (e.g., by avoiding making explicitly racial insults, while at the same time protesting their racialization through embodied signs of disaffiliation, such as grimaces). Moreover, a nuanced examination reveals that not only do emcees sometimes draw on hegemonic ideologies of race and language to defeat their opponents, but through a *particular* construction of blackness – one

that is masculine, working-class, heterosexual, and street-affiliated – they reinscribe dominant notions of gender, sexuality, and class.

Blackness's normative status in United States Hip Hop has crossed geopolitical borders to Brazil (Pardue, 2004; Roth-Gordon, 2009) and Australia (Pennycook and Mitchell, 2009) as well, where local histories and ideologies of indigeneity and colonialism meet up with Hip Hop's race-consciousness. Globally, several studies have focused on the racialized, gendered process of "becoming Black," or the social and linguistic processes by which youth produce and interact with Hip Hop texts as a primary means of racial identification. Much of the work has been done in Canada, where Ibrahim's (2003, 2010) critical ethnographic research shows how Francophone, African immigrant youths' use of Hip Hop-stylized "Black English" not only represents their identification with a global Hip Hop nation but also impacts how and what they learn. The research delineates these youths' desire for and identification with particular forms of "blackness" through their informal learning of "Black English as a Second Language (BESL)," which they access through their participation in US Hip Hop culture. Teachers highlight these students' difficulty with learning English as a second language (ESL) through formal education. Further, in their "becoming Black" and informally learning BESL, these youths' facility with the multiple language varieties of their social worlds is, predictably, largely ignored by teachers.

In Roth-Gordon's (2009) explorations of Brazilian youth's ill-literacies, she explores how youth "become Black" through their engagement with American ideologies of race imported into Brazil via US Hip Hop texts. Roth-Gordon outlines the concept of "conversational sampling," where youth recycle and recontextualize Hip Hop texts in their daily discourse, drawing on global youth culture to align themselves with Blackness and "the power and prestige" associated with "US First World modernity" (2009: 67). Roth-Gordon's (2004) and Pardue's (2004) studies demonstrate that along with the transcultural flow of language varieties and styles comes the flow of ideologies. Through what Roth-Gordon refers to as "race trafficking" – "the controversial and underground importation of US racial and political ideology" – Brazilian youth identify as Black despite the embodied stigma of blackness in Brazil and the efforts of the Brazilian nation-state to endorse "race mixture ... under the racist assumption that whiteness would bleach both African and Indigenous racial impurities" (p. 70). The public performance of *negritude* ("Black consciousness") by these youth, along with the linguistic revival of terms like *mano* (Black brother) and *playboy* (White, wealthy male youth), points to the complex interaction of US racial ideologies with local ideologies and regimes of racism. These multivalent racial identities can be witnessed in the practices of African youth in Nigeria (Omoniyi, 2006, 2009) and Tanzania (Higgins, 2009) as well.

Another perspective on blackness's normative status can be seen in studies of Australian youth ill-literacies, studies which further complicate the intersection of the politics of race and language by considering complex and painful colonial histories. This tension plays out in Pennycook and Mitchell (2009), where some White Australians' attempts to encourage Black youth to "sound more Aussie" by adopting White varieties of Australian English are read as efforts to "co-opt" Hip Hop culture and are met with exasperation by some Black youth ("I don't talk ocker [stereotypical white Australian male]. I talk how I'm talkin' ... Are you trying to colonize me

again dude?!”, p. 37). In their attempts to highlight “racial inclusivity,” White youth are clearly identifying more as “Australians” – a national identity – while some Black youth construct Australian as including the possibility of being both locally Australian and transnationally Black. These youth are simultaneously negotiating localized and transnational identity categories, both of which are racialized in complex ways. Rather than solely an importation of US ideologies of blackness, this “doubling of racial identity” (Pennycook and Mitchell, 2009) is equally concerned with the broader global politics of “being Black” as well as the local, specific politics of black Indigenous history. Along with the previous studies, the following research demonstrates that Hip Hop youth from diverse locales participate in global ill-literacies to empower themselves as transnational subjects, as well as to rearticulate their race, gender, and class positions. Given the diverse histories of colonialism, slavery, and immigration involved in these transnational sites of global *ill*-literacy practice, I highlight studies that explore how youth challenge the sociopolitical arrangement of the relations between languages, identities, and power through their engagement with Hip Hop.

Sarkar and Allen’s (2007) and Sarkar’s (2009) work on “the transformative power of Hip Hop language mixing” provides one example of these sociopolitical struggles in Montreal, Quebec, which has experienced sweeping demographic changes in the last two to three decades. The increasing racial, religious, and linguistic diversity since the 1970s has often been accompanied by the introduction of Hip Hop cultural practices, which youth have employed to help describe and transform their realities. Afrodiasporic youth, dealing with immigration and their subsequent subjugation due to skin color, draw on their knowledge of US Black ideologies of race and nationalism to introduce local narratives of racism in order to critique a global system of racialized oppression. As they work to make sense of this new, shifting terrain of race, the global ill-literacies of these youth are marked by mixing and shifting between nine different language varieties and styles, including several varieties of French, English, Black language from the United States, Haitian and Jamaican Creole, and Spanish. Through interviews and analyses of their linguistic practice, Sarkar (2009) demonstrates how these youth actively attempt to model for other youth how “to use more and different languages and to blend them together in new ways ... [to] articulate a discourse rooted in an alternative vision of community that transcends Quebec’s historically intransigent language-against-language divide” (p. 149). Importantly, these practices operate as a “positive and cohesive social force” in the lives of youth, even as they defy a “rigidly normative, prescriptive” French-language dominance and threaten to disrupt the plans of “myopic” language and educational policymakers.

We see related social, political, and linguistic processes occurring throughout Africa, most notably in the work of Omoniyi (2006, 2009) and Higgins (2009). Higgins situates her study within the context of Tanzania’s complex history of colonialism, the struggle for independence from Britain in 1961, and the subsequent shift from socialism to capitalism. Linguistically, Tanzania moved from an explicit “anti-English” language policy to a difficult to implement “Swahili–English bilingualism.” These language policy shifts were never seen as on-the-ground realities, and today, Tanzanian youth are redefining themselves and their local environments through *ill*literacy practices that rely on a combination of “African American

English,” specifically Hip Hop nation language in the United States, a glocal street code known as *Kibuni*, and kiSwahili.

Similarly, Omoniyi (2009) posits Hip Hop literacy practice in Nigeria as a new site for the articulation and contestation of multiple identities during an age of globalization, where neocolonial subjects are “exploring strategies of reinvention in order to break completely either from the colonial yoke or neocolonial elite domination” (p. 121). These identities are articulated through the use of multiple language varieties, including a complicated mix of “indigenous languages, including those that are not necessarily their mother tongues ... with Nigerian Pidgin as a common denominator,” often codeswitching Yoruba, Igbo, and (African) American English (p. 124). These *ill*iteracy practices not only help these youth formulate a particularly local identification within the global, but they also create “a pan-Nigerian identity” that acts as “an ideological departure from the kind of establishment identity [one] associates with Nigeria’s ‘English-as-official language’ policy.” This raises serious educational, political, and policy concerns since these youth are constructing multilingual texts based on a widely accessible Nigerian Pidgin, thereby undermining the earlier scholarly work on English as the *lingua franca* of Nigeria, which is often cited to justify official language and education policies (p. 125).

In all of these studies, global ill-literacies are seen as progressive acts of identification and social transformation: Youths’ texts challenge restrictive and anti-democratic notions of culture, citizenship, language, literacy, and education. With few exceptions, the field has tended to ignore the ways in which youth might reify existing hegemonic discourses regarding these same social processes. In other words, studies of global ill-literacies are largely celebratory and have not investigated the contradictory forces found within all popular cultural forms (Giroux, 1996).

HIP HOP PEDAGOGIES AND ILL-LITERACIES

Thus far, I have described the politics of youth ill-literacies and the challenges they might pose for language and education policies. Not only do traditional views ignore the wealth of cultural and linguistic resources that diverse youth bring to the classroom but they also stand in opposition to youth ideologies of language and literacy. As such, they are based on *closing down* rather than *opening up* multiple possibilities for robust learning to occur. In the remainder of this chapter, I focus on the pedagogical possibilities that scholars open up as they engage youth ill-literacies. I also offer some *caveats* and point to a number of directions for future research.

Much of the research covers the specific ill-literacy practices of Hip Hop and Spoken Word. These studies build upon a tradition of research in education, literacy studies, sociolinguistics, and pedagogies of popular culture that views literacies as social practices that are multiple, varied, and exist within diverse sociocultural contexts and discourses (Gee, 1996; Heath, 1983). Many anthropologists of education utilize the framework of the ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1972) to drive home the message that diverse students often possess “different, not deficient” language and literacy practices in the communities within which they were socialized (Ochs and Schieffelin, 1984; Philips, 1970; see also Bartlett *et al.*,

Chapter 10; González, Wyman, and O'Connor, Chapter 28; and Baquedano-López and Hernandez, Chapter 12).

Two notable examples are Heath's (1983) classic, decade-long study, which demonstrated how families from Black and White working-class communities socialize their children into varying language and literacy practices, and Zentella's (1997) pioneering, 14-year ethnography of the rich and complex linguistic repertoires of Puerto Rican children in New York, who displayed skills in five different language varieties of Spanish and English. Heath and Zentella, among others, noted that certain literacy practices were actually closer to those practices valued by schools, and that in the case of Black and Puerto Rican working-class children (ironically, the very children who were busy creating a linguistically-driven global Hip Hop nation), their practices were not sufficiently "understood" or "rewarded" (Zentella, 1997: 1). Zentella, in particular, offered a more politicized approach and called for an exploration of the "stigmatization of difference" (p. 276) as a source of schools' failure to read cultural and linguistic diversity.

The "New Literacy Studies" (Hull and Schultz, 2002; Street, 1993) built upon this work and continued to pull away from non-critical research traditions in order to frame literacies as ideological, political, and situated within the social and cultural practices that are constitutive of everyday life (Hull and Schultz, 2002; see also Bartlett *et al.*, Chapter 10). An increased focus on individual and institutional identities, ideologies, and sociopolitical processes re-directed literacy studies into a more critical arena. Alim (2004, 2005), Morrell and Duncan-Andrade (2004), Hill (2009), and Desai (2010) draw inspiration from the work of critical theorists (Apple, 1993; Freire, 1970; Freire and Macedo, 1987) in order to define "being literate" as being "present and active in the struggle for reclaiming one's voice, history, and future" (Morrell and Duncan-Andrade, 2004: 249). The goal of critical literacies, then, is to enable students to "critique the hegemonic practices that have shaped their experiences and perceptions in order to free themselves from dominant ideologies, structures, and practices" (p. 250). This line of research has developed into "Critical Hip Hop Language Pedagogies (CHHLPs)" (Alim, 2007), which work to "make the invisible visible" and examine the ways in which well-meaning educators attempt to silence "languages of color" in White public space by inculcating speakers of heterogeneous language varieties into what are, at their core, White ways of speaking and seeing the word/world – that is, the norms of White, middle-class, heterosexual males. As noted in Morrell and Duncan-Andrade (2004), to be literate is about more than reading the word, it's about engaging in the process of "consciousness-raising," that is, "the process of actively becoming aware of one's own position in the world and, importantly, what to do about it" (Alim, 2004: xxiv).

These works and those that follow draw significant inspiration from Lee's (1993, 2007) evolving theory of cultural modeling, which provides a framework for the design of curriculum that utilizes students' cultural "funds of knowledge" (Moll *et al.*, 1992) as a source for classroom learning. Ladson-Billings' (1995, 1998) work on culturally relevant pedagogy and critical race theory in education, as well as Giroux's (1996) and Dimitriadis' (2001) work on popular cultural texts in (in) formal learning environments, are also central to this body of work. As Dimitriadis (2001) pointed out a decade ago, school culture has been eclipsed in kids' lives by

media culture, precisely because media culture provides “models for self-fashioning that are ... now more compelling than the ones offered in traditional schools and through traditional curricula” (p. xi). When taken as a whole, Hip Hop pedagogies have moved beyond “gimmicky” approaches of using Hip Hop culture in the classroom and even more serious culturally relevant approaches by critiquing studies that exploit students’ local cultures, knowledges, and languages only in order to “take them somewhere else.” They view as problematic approaches that teach students some curricular “standard” or “canon,” without teaching the intrinsic value of students’ ill-literacies (Alim, 2007; Kirkland, 2008; Morrell and Duncan-Andrade, 2004). The field, in general, has moved beyond utilizing specific ill-literacy forms in the classroom (such as Hip Hop, Spoken Word, or other creative literacies) and has begun to centralize students’ *lives* in an effort to rethink the possibilities of public education. Recall that *ILL* refers to the notion that literacy instruction must be Intimate, Lived, and Liberatory if schools are to be effective in teaching marginalized populations.

Several recent book-length studies (Desai, 2010; Fisher, 2007; Hill, 2009; Low, 2010) provide models of how we might begin to rethink the purpose of public education and develop *ill*iteracy pedagogies with a more critical, liberatory lens. The students and teacher in Fisher’s (2007) ethnography of an elective, high school Spoken Word poetry class in the Bronx, New York collectively “(re)defined literacy and what it meant to be literate using the medium of Spoken Word poetry” (p. 4). Through utilizing an “open mic” tradition, which is characterized by acts of reciprocity, Fisher described the processes by which teacher and students together built a *literocracy* by “emphasizing that language processes exist in partnership with action in order to guide young people to develop a passion for words and language” (Fisher, 2005: 92).

Desai’s (2010) ethnographic, teacher-researcher case study of Spoken Word poetry in a weekly after-school elective class in Los Angeles, California built upon Fisher (2005, 2007), Morrell and Duncan-Andrade (2004), and Jocson (2006) and framed Spoken Word as “a site/sight of resistance, reflection and rediscovery” (p. 1). Desai investigated Spoken Word as “a student-centered practice” that provides youth with a safe educational space to examine the world more critically by interrogating issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Desai frames Spoken Word as an “anti-colonial/ decolonizing” literacy practice that privileges “alternative forms of knowledge” by engaging students in “self-reflexive processes” (p. viii).

Hill (2009) and Low (2010) both celebrate the potential of using Hip Hop texts in the classroom, with Hill teaching “Hip Hop Lit,” a Hip Hop-centered English literature class in the evening education program of an alternative high school in South Philadelphia, and with Low co-teaching with and observing a White high school teacher, Tim, who offers a Hip Hop and Spoken Word course in a mid-sized city in the northeastern United States. In Hill’s (2009) terms, these pedagogies “inevitably create spaces of both voice and silence, centering and marginalization, empowerment and domination” (p. 10). Importantly, both Hill and Low push the envelope of “Hip Hop pedagogies,” along with Newman’s (2005) work, by not glossing over the tensions inherent between Hip Hop and schools (Low, 2010: 10). In fact, Low (2010) posits that it is these very real and difficult tensions around the

politics of race, gender, generation, class, and violence, for example, that simultaneously inhibit and demand Hip Hop's use in schools.

In all of these studies, authors advocate an "intimate" engagement with Hip Hop culture. These pedagogies require particular levels of self-sharing, a process that was carefully negotiated by researchers in all of these studies. Fisher (2007) writes in several places about how her focus teacher (Joe) describes his Spoken Word poetry students as a "family" and the class as a "home," where students "feed" each other through the reciprocal sharing of their fears, desires, dreams, and nightmares. Joe was often described as a "healer," whose philosophy of learning connected literacy to "developing one's full humanity" (p. 91). Similarly, Hill (2009) described the process of "wounded healing," and Desai's (2010) students describe the safe space created as a "catharsis" and a space for "healing." The latter two studies discuss the ways that their classrooms were transformed upon their reciprocating personal narratives of anxiety about becoming fathers, wrestling with poverty, the possibility of abortion, etc. Low (2010) highlights one particular moment in Tim's class – his genuine, reflexive narration of his internal battle with racism – as the reason that the dynamics of Tim's classroom improved.

Given the impersonal nature of many of America's large urban high schools (Noguera, 2003), the focus on intimacy is revolutionary in that it demands that learning occur in safe spaces of reciprocity, mutual respect, and meaningful relationships with youth. All of these studies emphasize that students' out-of-school lives are filled with struggle, but it is the building of reciprocal, caring relationships that allows students to be vulnerable, sometimes writing about the anxieties of being pregnant, undocumented, stereotyped, devastated by deception, losing loved ones, experiencing violence or abuse from family members or lovers, and other tragedies. Desai (2010) argues that we should not fear intimacy; rather, we should run towards it, as it allows us to view youth not just as students but as human beings with whom we share the world. In addition to intimacy, all of these studies highlight the need to utilize the "lived curriculum" of Hip Hop (Dimitriadis, 2001) in order to access the "lived experiences" of our students. In this way, I argue that recent work builds upon previous literacy studies by viewing students not merely as members of marginalized social groups but as individuals with hopes, fears, anxieties, and complicated lives outside of the classroom.

Finally, these studies view literacy as *liberatory*, not merely *celebratory*. For Joe, in Fisher (2007), mastering one's life story is about re-writing the master narrative about urban youth of color and escaping the "higher mathematics of America" (p. 99) (i.e., the statistics on youth educational failure, imprisonment, etc.). She was not always sure, however, if students understood Joe's "decolonizing" methodology, and some of their interview responses regarding "Bronxonics" (Joe's term for the mixed language variety he and his students spoke) betrayed a limited critical language awareness, although certainly far greater than traditional approaches (p. 44). Literacy here is liberatory in the sense that it moves far beyond the mechanics of literacy and incorporates the deeper meanings and relations of literacies to students' lives. This understanding of literacy also demands that we focus on ways to help students resist and challenge the forces and discourses that can potentially circumscribe their future possibilities (Gutiérrez, 2008).

HIP HOP AND THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

In this final section, I want to briefly point to some caveats and then to directions for future studies. There are three main caveats that I would like to address, all of which might prevent *ill-literacy studies* from falling victim to their own critiques of previous literacy studies. First, there is a widespread tendency for Hip Hop pedagogies to sanitize Hip Hop for inclusion in schools. Many scholars, as pointed out in Low (2010), only use texts that are morally in line with progressive, middle-class, or even bourgeois politics and sensibilities. This is wildly different than an approach that begins with texts that youth, their peers, family, and community members are listening to and creating themselves. Self-selecting “appropriate” texts runs the risk of being outright rejected as “boring,” “ancient,” or “confusing,” which occurred in some of these studies. Perhaps Hip Hop pedagogies could develop a broader, more nuanced understanding of Hip Hop that moves away from sociological and political interpretations which privilege socially and politically “conscious music,” and consider instead Perry’s (2004) theorizing of Hip Hop as a rare, democratic space where the sacred sits right alongside the profane, allowing for “open discourse” and prioritizing “expression” over “the monitoring of the acceptable” (pp. 5–6). Thus, rather than selecting Hip Hop texts that align with particular politics and sensibilities, and thereby run the risk of marginalizing students’ interpretations and uses of Hip Hop texts (which Dimitriadis, 2001, and Hill, 2009 have both shown to be impossible to predict), we might begin with explorations of the actual Hip Hop texts that our students make use of in their “lived experiences.” This is critical for anthropology of education’s engagement with Hip Hop.

Second, while all the studies reviewed here are highly receptive to and even laudatory of Hip Hop texts, there is an apparent unease in some of the studies vis-à-vis the relations between Hip Hop texts and Spoken Word texts that are produced and consumed by youth. Building upon the first caveat, there is some acknowledgment that Spoken Word poetry is an “easier sell” than Hip Hop for schools, but we have to acknowledge the ways that our participation in this trend can make us complicit with the uncritical popular discourses that elevate “Spoken Word *poetry*” over “Hip Hop *music*,” thereby upholding the false binary of Spoken Word as “intellectual” and “conscious” and Hip Hop as “bling-bling” and “about nothing.” This bifurcating ideology emerges when teachers positively evaluate youth as “poets” when their rhymes align with institutionally-sanctioned behavior, and negatively evaluate them as “rappers” when they don’t. The danger in viewing these forms in this dichotomous fashion is that we undermine the “critical” mission of ill-literacies by demonstrating our own inability to discern popular culture’s contradictory currents, the political economy of the Hip Hop culture industry, and the reductive representations of Black popular culture that have historically accompanied its commodification.

Future ill-literacy studies, my own included, must bear these possible contradictions in mind as we engage this very difficult, tense terrain of popular culture in the classroom. Second, there is a need for future studies to show more than the *product* of their success (such as student writing, poetry, and affirmation of researchers’

curricula through interviews) but also *process* (analyses of the difficult negotiation of teaching and learning the emerging curriculum). Several of these studies have done that well, but there is a need for more analysis of classroom interaction through discourse analytic techniques that examine, for example, not just *that* safe, critical spaces were achieved, but *how* and *when* we either were or were *not* successful in creating them. Illuminating cultural and educational processes is a central concern for the anthropology of education and needs further development in relation to Hip Hop practices.

In conclusion, the possibilities of global ill-literacies lie both in the politics and pedagogies of youth texts created largely outside of schools, and in our ability to create pedagogies inside schools that center the texts that our youth use, create, and manipulate in their daily lives. As this chapter has shown, the everyday pedagogies of Hip Hop range from the deliberate teaching of language mixing (Sarkar, 2007) and the focused learning of BESL in Canadian Hip Hop (Ibrahim, 2003), to the importing and transforming of various ideologies of race and inequality in new contexts (Pennycook and Mitchell, 2009; Roth-Gordon, 2009), to the articulation and contestation of multiple new identities in anticolonial resistive practices (Higgins, 2009; Omoniyi, 2009), to the pervasive process of localizing globally available cultural and linguistic forms (Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook, 2009). These examples not only create new possibilities for the theorizing of youth culture and language, they also demonstrate how teaching and learning happen in everyday life, even as we explore new ways to harness these processes in formal educational settings. The examples shared in this chapter open up new ways for us to think about education as both a process of the everyday and the everywhere, that is, learning through popular and everyday cultural practice across contexts, and as the specific processes of teaching and learning that occur in schools and classrooms.

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CHAPTER 15

Argumentation and the Negotiation of Scientific Authority in Classrooms

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to demonstrate how ethnographic studies of classroom processes can illuminate the role of argumentation for understanding the social nature of “learning.” We seek here to provide insight into one genre of classroom language that is commonly treated as evidence of students’ logic, that of scientific argumentation. We take an ethnographic approach to analyzing this privileged genre of discourse (National Research Council, 2007), and show how argumentation episodes must be understood with regard to the cultural histories of the classrooms in which they are situated. We propose that an ethnographic approach has much to offer current understandings of scientific argumentation, which frequently treat this form of discourse outside its social and linguistic setting. We challenge the notion that argumentation is direct evidence of students’ thought processes by showing that students’ utterances in classrooms are produced through a series of consequential social interactions. In using the tools of anthropology, we show that any understanding of students’ argumentation patterns must be situated within broader analyses of student interactional patterns, verbal and non-verbal practices, and habits of thinking. Furthermore, we argue that the seemingly irrelevant parts of student argumentation – those parts that educators might fail to see as on-topic – are, in fact, critical to how students inscribe claims with scientific authority.

BACKGROUND

Within anthropology, two traditions bear on how we approach the analysis of argumentation in science classrooms. The first tradition, the ethnography of communication, has led anthropologists to develop analyses of communication related to classrooms and school settings. The second tradition has been devoted to the comparative analysis of human rationality. These two anthropological traditions provide distinctive ways of thinking about classrooms and, when merged, offer powerful tools to analyze and understand the relationships between students and the production of knowledge.

Dell Hymes' interest in the ethnography of communication led him to investigate schools as a central institution in which children are socialized to communicative norms. With the publication of the *Functions of Language in the Classroom* (Cazden, John, and Hymes, 1972) and Hymes' appointment as Dean of the School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, linguistic and ethnographic approaches to research on schooling came together with particular intensity. Work by Hymes' students, such as Heath (1983) and Philips (1983), demonstrated that students who came from different cultural backgrounds did not share mainstream communicative patterns, and, therefore, were often misunderstood by teachers and other authority figures at school. The home-school mismatch theory, as it is now called, has been thought to explain one of the many reasons that minority students have struggled academically in schools.

Classic studies comparing human rationality, such as those by Evans-Pritchard (1937) and Peter Winch (Wilson, 1970; Winch, 1988 [1958]), sought to examine different patterns of explanation in terms of cultural actors' "modes of thought" (Geertz, 1983; Olson and Torrance, 1996). Since then there has been interest in investigating how culture guides patterns of inference, deduction, and reasoning that are part of everyday experience in all societies. For example, the work of Sylvia Scribner (1979) has led anthropologists of education, language, and "modes of thought" to explore how people's communicative interactions are and are not linked to their habits of thinking.

Our work, as outlined in this chapter, merges these two areas of research by (1) investigating acts of cognition as forms of communicative participation in social interaction (Rogoff, 2003), and (2) by analyzing carefully the "native point of view" as revealed in what the participants are attending to in situated acts of behavior (Hutchins, 1980). By combining an ethnographic approach to classroom behavior with a comparative framework that assumes the cultural construction of patterns of reasoning, we seek to explore and illuminate the nature of students' argumentation in science classrooms. In this, we stand in a line of research that attempts to merge these two traditions.

We also seek to demonstrate how ethnographic research can contribute to key debates in the field of education. While these overlapping traditions in anthropology were developing over the last 30 years, within US education there have been increasingly urgent calls to address achievement gaps in science education – what has been constructed as a problem of "science literacy." According to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1989), the ultimate goal of science literacy is to

create informed citizens who are able to evaluate evidence and use logical arguments so that they do not “fall prey to dogmatists and flim flam artists” (p. 13). Thus, the ability to develop scientific arguments, both a communicative and reasoning skill, is viewed as an ability that has life-long consequences for individuals and society. Ethnographic research can illuminate the social processes underlying the development and display of such abilities.

Within the classroom, argumentation is seen as a way for students to understand how and why canonical knowledge has come to be. According to Duschl and Osborne (2002), argumentation is the process by which “dialog addresses the coordination of evidence and theory to advance an explanation, a model, a prediction, or an evaluation” (p. 55). That is to say, argumentation is a tool that students can use to help scientific ideas cohere. In order to investigate how students engage in argumentation in classrooms, science education researchers and curriculum developers often draw upon a philosophically inspired model proposed by Toulmin (2003 [1958]), typically focusing on *claims*, *grounds*, *warrants*, *backings*, and *rebuttals*. By examining how such constituents are strung together sequentially, researchers have focused on the patterns that they think make up good arguments. Thus, building an argument is akin to building a grammatical sentence. Andriessen (2002) characterizes these as “structural” approaches to argumentation.

While these constructs are useful for building abstract models of argumentation, focusing on structural aspects tends to lead researchers to label students’ arguments as incomplete or weak because, in naturally occurring discourse, these structures are rarely strung together in this ideal way. In addition, researchers neglect broader contextual cues for analyzing and evaluating children’s facility with the genre. Finally, researchers’ ideas about how scientific work prompts students to argue are often based on philosophical notions of what scientific argumentation *should* sound like – not on empirical research into how students actually learn to argue about science, nor on the research that shows how scientists argue among themselves, nor, finally, on the research that shows how scientists themselves decide whether a claim has been successful (e.g., scientists themselves admit that through social processes some claims in the field come to dominate others).

The tools of anthropology, however, can provide a way to analyze argumentation as it sits within classroom/student discourse, and in the broader discourse of science (Driver, Newton, and Osborn, 2000; Kelly, Druker, and Chen, 1998). In the muddled discourse of classrooms, it becomes difficult to identify components of argumentation without considering the contexts and conversational dynamics of those very arguments (Kelly, Druker, and Chen, 1998). It is even harder (and, we would argue, analytically problematic) to make justifiable inferences about individuals’ abilities or skills to engage in argumentation based on structural analysis alone. For one, in the real-time debates that occur in classrooms, students might do extra work to justify certain claims based on the interactive history and shared knowledge among the students involved. Moreover, the goal of argumentation, after all, is not simply a mastery of the structure of argumentation, but the production of compelling arguments intended to resolve discrepancies (Driver, Newton, and Osborn, 2000). Because science itself is a social endeavor, a better understanding of how students engage in argumentation in classrooms is needed, including how claims are made and

taken to be authoritative. Thus, in this chapter, we analyze students' argumentation *in situ*, attending to features of the social context and interactive history not typically analyzed by science education researchers. We do this to demonstrate what an ethnographic analysis can offer education research more generally. We also believe that analysis of classrooms can show how cultures imagine the discourse of reason. Thus, educational settings offer new insights to age-old issues about the anthropology of reason.

DATA

In order to investigate argumentation in its social and linguistic context, we draw upon data that is part of a large research project at The George Washington University (GWU) called SCALE-uP, which took place in suburban Washington, DC from 2003 to 2008 (Lynch *et al.*, 2005). This project was funded by a US\$5.6 million award from the National Science Foundation's Interagency Education Research Initiative. The purpose of the study was to investigate "the 'scale-up' (or the transition from idiosyncratic adoption of curriculum units to broad, effective implementation across a large and diverse school system) of three highly-rated middle school science curriculum units" (<http://www.gwu.edu/~scale-up>). The project sought to identify the conditions in which three research-based curriculum units could improve learning across a diverse school district and, ultimately, reduce achievement gaps among traditionally underserved populations of students in middle school science classes.

Over the course of the five-year study, a group of interdisciplinary researchers interested in science education worked with the school district to evaluate the implementation and scale-up of the three research-based science curriculum units. When studying these units and their implementations, the GWU research team organized their research along disciplinary interests, focusing on complementary questions. Researchers from the School of Education centered their analyses on the evaluation of curriculum materials according to Project 2061 curriculum guidelines, fidelity of implementation, student assessment, and motivation and engagement. At the same time, linguistic anthropologists focused on examining the functioning of the curriculum through detailed video analysis of classroom interaction; each year a different classroom that was using one of the research-based curriculum units was video taped for the entirety of its implementation, typically 6 to 12 weeks of the school year. The video ethnography captured the multimodal aspects of the science classroom central to learning (Erickson, 2004; Kuipers, 2004), as well as the ways in which students experienced the curriculum (Erickson and Shultz, 1982). The video data showed aspects of the environment the students responded to and was an essential tool for detailing the broad range of modalities that were used for making meaning in the science classroom.

The implementation of the curriculum unit studied in this chapter resulted in more than 68 hours of video data. One concern about such a large amount of video data, however, is that it is cumbersome to analyze in order to find salient moments of interaction. To deal with this problem, the data was first digitized using computer software that allows analog video tape to be made into digital .mpg 1 files. After it was digitized,

researchers could manipulate and analyze the video by using a computational tool called Atlas.ti. This software program was used to create a searchable corpus that provided the means to develop a larger perspective on classroom interaction; it allowed for analysis of both moment-to-moment interaction, and patterns of interaction linked over time. Then, using Atlas.ti, whole-class conversations led by the teacher, as well as student conversations at individual tables, were transcribed by a team of trained transcribers. Small details of discursive interaction, such as instances of overlap, false starts, truncations, etc., were included so that researchers could analyze students' talk for specific linguistic and discursive features. After transcripts were produced, the videos were hyperlinked to them so that for any turn of talk, the corresponding video could be played while simultaneously looking at the transcript. This allowed for detailed discourse and visual analysis of student interaction.

In addition to the video data, a variety of ethnographic documents were also collected and produced throughout the implementation of the curriculum. Student worksheets and tests were collected, a seating chart was produced, and interviews with the teachers and students were conducted and analyzed. Additionally, the researchers in the School of Education collected achievement data as well as demographic information regarding gender, ethnicity/racial background, etc. All of these resources provided the opportunity for a fine level of detail in analyses.

ANALYSIS

The examples that follow come from an eighth grade classroom enacting a curriculum unit called "Chemistry that Applies" (State of Michigan, 1993). The purpose of this unit was to help students learn about the conservation of matter, the scientific idea that matter cannot be gained or lost. The examples presented here focus on three students in this classroom who worked at a lab table together nearly every day: Philip, Gloria, and Natalie. Our analysis illustrates a sequence of interactions leading up to an argumentation episode. However, when discussing the argumentation episode with science educators interested in this discourse genre, some thought that this episode reflected unsophisticated thinking on the part of the children. Our analysis details verbal and non-verbal aspects of the interactional history of the group leading up to the episode, as well as the episode itself, to unpack why it may have fallen short of an ideal example of student argumentation, but nonetheless tries to reveal the subtle and surprisingly elaborate logic tying it together. Anthropological tools thus provide insight into the factors and conditions of the lab group that may have influenced its larger communicative ecology, and hence, the specific argumentation episode.

The first examples we analyze detail the dynamics of control at play in this lab group that are important to account for because they shed light on the larger communicative ecology of the lab table that form the basis for students' argumentation. The first example comes from a lab called the "Decomposition of Water" that took place near the beginning of the implementation of the unit. Before the students began the lab activity, the teacher directed them to read a list of supplies they needed in their curriculum text. The basic steps of this activity involved adding salt to a container holding water (to help conduct electricity), and then inserting two pencils connected

**DECOMPOSITION
OF WATER**



YOU WILL NEED

- 9-volt battery
- 2–12" pieces of telephone wire or wire with alligator clips on each end
- 1 petric dish
- 2–pencils sharpened at each end with 1/4" to 1/2" of pencil lead exposed at each end
- water
- 2 or 3 pinches of table salt

Figure 15.1 CTA diagram of the decomposition of water activity.
Copyright © State of Michigan 1993.

to a 9-volt battery with alligator clips into the cup of water. This caused bubbles to form at the tips of the pencils. Figure 15.1 shows the illustration of this lab activity from the students' manual.

After the teacher provided directions for the activity, the students briefly looked at the list of materials and then Philip announced that he would retrieve them from the front of the room. When he returned, he asked one of his lab mates to sharpen the pencils while he put water in the cup. Thus, from the beginning, Philip assumed the role of leader for this lab activity. He finished reading the directions first, nominated himself to get the materials, and asked one of the girls to do a specific activity. It is not surprising that when Gloria began to get involved and suggested how they should do some of the procedures, conflicts arose between her and Philip. The following example shows the beginning of their conflict.

Transcript

Philip: So salt.

Gloria: You have to stir it with your fingers.

Philip: No we're supposed to swirl it around.

Gloria: [Pour some of it.]

Philip: [I think we] should put a little more in than that.

Gloria: XXXXX.

Classroom Activity

Philip returns to the table with the cup of water. Gloria has already picked up the cup of salt. He holds the water out so Gloria can add the salt.

Gloria dumps the salt into the water cup.

Philip begins to swirl the cup of water

Philip reaches for the cup of salt and adds more to the water

- Philip: Oh, I'm going to go ask her XX. *Philip takes both the salt and water cup away from the table.*
- Natalie: What did we do? *Natalie asks this while Philip is out of earshot.*
- Why do we deserve this?
- That's what I want to know.

As the students began this activity, Gloria picked up the salt, communicating with her actions that she was going to be involved in conducting the lab procedures. Philip responded to Gloria's action verbally (*so salt*), thereby seeming to indicate that he was in a position to ratify (or make valid) her participation in the lab. However, he appeared as though he was still trying to maintain control over the activity by calling out what was to be done next; he said *salt* while simultaneously holding the cup out for Gloria to add the salt. Then, Gloria suggested the next step of the procedure (*you're supposed to stir it with your finger*), a direction given in their lab manual (step E says, "add about 3 pinches of salt to water and stir with your finger." State of Michigan, 1993: 10). However, this action went against safety instructions not to touch any chemical substance with their hands. Philip refused to touch the water and re-voiced the teacher's earlier verbal direction (*no we're supposed to swirl it around*). Both students claimed authority over the actions of the lab by appropriating directions from different authoritative sources. Gloria drew upon directions from the textbook, whereas Philip drew upon directions from the teacher.

As Philip swirled the salt, he stated that they should add some more. When Gloria disagreed, Philip stated that he would ask the teacher (*oh I'm going to ask her*) and walked away with both the salt and water cups in hand. By taking both cups with him, he suspended the lab activity so the girls could not proceed in his absence. Not only did he disregard Gloria's advice about the procedures by going to ask the teacher, he laid claim to the lab materials as he had done from the very beginning. Gloria and Natalie appeared annoyed and, as soon as he was out of earshot, complained about working with him (*What did we do? Why do we deserve this?*). Thus, it is clear through the interactional patterns of the lab group that the students are beginning to take oppositional stances toward one another.

The next stretch of interaction shows what happened when Philip returned to the lab table. After conferring with the teacher, he returned and set the cup down, and the teacher came over briefly to tell the students that they should make sure that their salt was well dissolved. Philip's physical actions, swirling the cup and peering down at it, suggested that he was overseeing or managing this procedure. Gloria, however, continued to verbally challenge Philip's control of the laboratory materials and the activity itself.

Transcript

- Philip: Dissolve already.
Okay, it's done.
- Gloria: What are you doing?
- Philip: So you put one end in.

Classroom Activity

Philip looks in the cup as he says this. He sets the cup of water near the center of the table; Gloria picks it up and positions it more squarely in the center. Philip picks up one of the pencils and alligator clips.

- Gloria: Hurry up. *Gloria picks up the other pencil and alligator clip.*
 [Hurry up.]
- Philip: [What?] *Gloria has her pencil nearly in the cup, but Philip's is not as close. As she repeats herself, she takes her pencil away from the cup.*
 What [XXX]?
- Gloria: [You have to put]
 them in at the same
 time.
- Philip: Who said? *Both students have their pencils poised to put in the water.*
- Gloria: Just put them in at the
 same time.
- Philip: Okay. *Gloria sounding irate.*
Sounding increasingly irate.
Gloria puts her pencil in the water.
Philip follows. Philip lets go of his pencil, then Gloria does.

Once the salt was dissolved, Philip made a pronouncement (*it's done*) and set the cup near the middle of the table, albeit somewhat closer to his side of the table. Philip's action and utterance continued to suggest that he was trying to maintain control of the activity. In response, Gloria reached for the cup and placed it more squarely in the center of the table, only moving it a few inches. Her action did not serve an instrumental role in completing the lab procedures, but communicated that she was continuing to lay claim to the materials – and, importantly, implied a challenge to Philip's control and asserted her right to have access to them.

The contestation of control is seen further through Philip and Gloria's verbal exchanges as they engaged in the lab activity. Both Gloria and Philip reached for the pencils that were supposed to be put in the salt water. While Gloria held her pencil close to the water, ready to put it in, Philip held his a bit further away. Gloria urged him twice to *hurry up* and explained that they had to *put them in at the same time*. Both Philip and Gloria's methods of inserting the pencils would accomplish the same task, but communicated something different. On the one hand, Philip's method suggested that he was in control. *His* action would cause the chemical reaction, the most important act of the lab. Gloria's method, on the other hand, indicated that she and Philip were equal. By putting the pencils in at the same time, they both would create the chemical reaction. At Gloria's insistence, Philip conceded and both students dropped their pencils into the water.

The above social context formed the interactional history for interpreting these students' ensuing argumentation episode. The students began the activity by struggling over control of the materials and the steps they had to complete, and ultimately for authority over the lab itself. The argumentation episodes that we present below must be understood within the scope of this interactional history – the struggle for control and authority. The following examples document the students' immediate reactions to the experiment.

Transcript	Classroom Activity
Natalie: A = h see there look.	<i>Natalie points to the pencils. The tips of the pencils are pointed toward her, so it may be easier for her to see. All three students are gazing intently at the cup. Philip is standing up.</i>
Gloria: What?	
Philip: Bubbling.	<i>Philip backs away, Natalie begins to write, Gloria picks up the cup and turns it around.</i>
Gloria: Oh that's cool.	
Natalie: Bubbles	<i>Philip writes. Gloria puts the cup down and clicks her pencil (to get lead). Natalie looks at Gloria as she asks this question.</i>
Gloria: Huh, that's cool.	
Natalie: Should we put fizzles?	
Gloria: No just [bubbles].	
Philip: [Fizzes]. Bubbles, whatever.	<i>Both Gloria and Philip continue looking at their worksheets. Natalie begins to write again. Philip bends down to the table – perhaps to see the cup better. Gloria stands up and looks in the cup.</i>
Gloria: That is so cool. ...	

As soon as Gloria and Philip dropped the pencils into the water, Natalie verbally pointed to what she saw, *Ah see there look*. Her utterance called attention to the visual phenomenon and made what could merely be an individual experience, public. Moreover, it elicited a response from her lab mates. Unlike Philip and Natalie who described visual aspects of the materials, Gloria evaluated the phenomenon, repeating the word *cool* three times. Gloria's positive evaluation was also captured through her repeated bodily movements and actions; she gazed intently at the cup, turned it around to fully examine the visual phenomenon, and then stood up to look in the cup again after beginning to write. Overall, her repeated actions and utterances suggest that this phenomenon captured her imagination and, in doing so, implied that she took a positive stance toward the activity.

The first traces of the students' arguments are found as they attempted to describe the phenomenon. Philip began by calling attention to the phenomenon's visual aspect (*bubbling*), which was repeated by Natalie. But, when Natalie suggested they use *fizzles* as the answer for their worksheet, Gloria rebutted her and said *no, just bubbles*, without offering further justification for the importance of this terminology. Philip, on the other hand, rebutted the importance of the terminology altogether, telling the girls they should put *fizzes, bubbles, whatever*.

Unlike a structural approach, in which claims, justifications, and rebuttals are evaluated as verbal representations whose sequential appropriateness are akin to grammatical correctness, our approach shows that argumentation is richly contextualized in a visual, interactional environment, in which apparently incomplete utterances (e.g., "bubbles") make sense as part of visual context. While Philip and Gloria did not get along, and did not like each other, the framework of their dispute was not simply emotional; the contested terrain of their disagreement concerned the "inscription devices" for their observation – explicit verbal and written observations for Gloria and Natalie, and visual observations and experimental devices for Philip. What is sophisticated and subtle is the way in which Philip distanced himself from particular verbal

inscriptions of the phenomenon (*fizzes, bubbles, whatever*), choosing instead to rely on the physical control of the objects and the teacher's authority, while Gloria was inclined to rely on textbooks and soon-to-be written descriptions. What this shows is not only do they construct their ideas in a social context, but they formulate their arguments in a way that is relevant to the task at hand, albeit in different ways.

The next excerpt shows the students' continuing discussion and argumentation episode. The curriculum did not require an explanation of the scientific meaning of the activity, but rather just visual observations. The phenomenon, though, seemed to have captured their attention and, because of its continuous bubbling action, it seemed to afford the students the opportunity to engage in a sequence of discussion and sense making. As the students made their observations, they struggled over their words, and, even though they agreed upon the basic visual interpretation (*bubbling*), there were instances where the students' verbal descriptions were contradictory. These contradictions could have prompted them to develop arguments – offering justifications for their claims – but the rebuttals and justifications are structurally incomplete.

Transcript

- Natalie: So what do we put?
 Gloria: I am going to put white stuff covering the end X. 'Cause there's some white things.
 Natalie: Bubbles covering the lead. The bubbles that are covering it.
 Gloria: <WH XXX. WH>
 Philip: Hm. Oh that's neat. What? It's fine.
 Natalie: I don't [understand anything].
 Gloria: [No duh we're looking at it].
 Philip: Ok. Our water will probably go away. Eventually.
 Gloria: Once the battery dies.
 Natalie: It's It's leav—. The bubbles are leaving at the end of, at the tip of the [XXX]
 Philip: [No, that's where] the bubbles are coming coming from.

Classroom Activity

Gloria is standing up and writing on her chart. Natalie looks over at her and asks Q. Gloria continues writing and talks quietly. She does not look up at Natalie.
Gloria moves to look into the cup. Natalie poised to write.
Natalie uses her pencil to point to the cup. Gloria moves back and forth between the cup and her chart, writing intermittently.
Natalie picks up the pencil and holds it over the cup. Both Philip and Gloria are standing and looking in the cup. Natalie moves the pencil up and down.
Natalie continues to hold the pencil, moving it in and out of the cup. Philip peers in the side of the cup.
Natalie points to the bottom of the cup with her pencil, where she sees bubbles. Gloria and Philip gaze intently at the cup.

- Natalie: Yeah, that's what I am saying.
- Philip: Yeah, so it's probably the electricity. *Gloria sits back in her chair. Natalie smirks.*
- Gloria: *your breath stinks* (whispered)
- Philip: Because if you cut the current then it stops. *Philip pulls the pencil out of the water.*
- Gloria: No duh.
- Philip: No. *Philip puts pencil back in the water and stands up. Gloria opens her lab manual.*
 Hmm,
 oh,
 well it looks like,
 it looks like it sort of stuck like,
 there is like a
 a weird X *Philip leans over the cup and looks at it. Philip points in the cup as he tries to make a description. Natalie points at the cup*
- Natalie: It isn't stuck right here.
- Philip: A yeah the bo— *Philip points in general*
 at the bot—
 near the—
 at the top of the pencil.
 At the top of the water is,
 uh, it just looks,
 looks like it sort of made a
 I don't know how to describe it
 but it is like a little hole
 around the pencil is. *Philip moves hand to specifically point to a part of the pencil. Natalie is writing on her chart. Philip points in the cup again.*

The focus of this interaction was primarily on formulating a description of what was happening, largely because of the writing task demanded by the curriculum unit. The students lacked commitment to particular claims; indeed, there was a good deal of indeterminacy indicated by both the lack of concrete referring terms as well as hedges. Gloria was the first to assert a claim, but did so by using indefinite references to the visual aspects of the phenomenon (*white stuff covering the end; cause there's some white things*). The vague referring terms *stuff* and *things* suggest that she was not sure what to call the phenomenon, even though they had just used the words *bubble* and *fizz*. Even though she had asserted a claim about the materials, her use of vague references suggests that she was not certain about a linguistic representation of the activity.

Natalie reformulated Gloria's description (*bubbles are covering the lead*), but in spite of using a concrete referring term (*bubbles*), she openly said she did not *understand anything*. She, too, took a stance of uncertainty about the phenomenon.

Unlike his lab mates at this point, Philip was focusing on the overall structure of the activity, not on the writing part of the experiment – his role in the development of the argument did not have much to do with the verbal representations of what was going on. He added to the conversation by making a prediction, implying that authority lay in the capacity to predict (not in the capacity to correctly describe). He, too, took a less authoritative stance by hedging to make his prediction. Words such as *probably* (*our water will probably go away, yeah, so it's probably electricity*) and *sort of* (*it looks like it sort of stuck, looks*

like it sort of made) suggest that he was unsure of the scientific account of what was happening (*I don't know how to describe it but it is like a little hole around the pencil is*).

As Natalie continued to focus on the writing task and formulating a complete description of the visual phenomenon, she stated that *the bubbles are leaving at the end of the tip of the pencil*. Philip offered a rebuttal, asserting *no, that's where the bubbles are coming from*. By negating the utterance, he indicated that Natalie's comment was incorrect. Furthermore, he used an antonym to describe what is happening (*the bubbles are coming from the lead*). Deictically speaking, *come* and *leave* typically refer to different directional orientations. Natalie, however, did not appear to understand the difference in utterances and stated, *yeah, that's what I'm saying*. Even though Philip justified his rebuttal with an antonym, the significance of his rebuttal was lost because it was not elaborated in such a way that the other students understood it.

Rather than engaging in argumentation about the lab activity, Gloria's next move attempted to undercut Philip's ability to participate in the argument by implicitly arguing that he lacked the legitimacy of proper social skills (i.e., *he has bad breath*). Philip continued the argumentation episode alone, providing an explanation of why the bubbles were coming from the lead. Through this he tried to shore up his authority as having made a correct prediction.

Having had one of her claims rebutted, Natalie rebutted Philip's claim that the bubbles *look stuck*. She directly negated Philip's comment, stating, *it isn't stuck right here*. Philip, however, did not respond to the rebuttal but instead continued his description, ultimately providing a monologue of his interpretation of the activity and, once again, taking control of the lab activity. Whereas he had taken control of the physical actions at the beginning of the lab activity, he was now taking control of the conversational space. At this point the two girls fell silent and the argumentation episode was still-born. Even though the materials produced a continuous phenomenon affording the students an opportunity to engage in extended talk and argumentation, they did not reach an agreement about the materials and what was happening in the lab activity.

Examining this episode structurally, or in isolation, might lead one to make interpretations of these students' lack of ability to reason and engage in argumentation. But, by using anthropological tools to trace the students' interactional histories, it is clear that this episode is more complicated than it looks because of the social ecology of the lab group. Based on actions and interactions that followed this argumentation episode from our ethnographic study, we can state with certainty that the social dynamics of this table hindered their interactions and that Gloria repeatedly withdrew her participation due to issues of control over the lab activities with Philip (Wright, Viechnicki, and Kuipers, 2006). By using the tools of anthropology, our wider perspective on student argumentation shows that a structural account cannot fully account for the factors and conditions that give rise to and sustain argumentation in science classrooms.

ARGUMENTATION AND SCIENTIFIC AUTHORITY

These interactions demonstrate that student argumentation is not a process of refinement in which students produce ever more refined argument patterns, but at least sometimes is a jockeying for control over the actions, materials, and the argumentation

process itself. The students in these examples struggled for control in a variety of ways – with intonation, gesture, object control, action, and language – drawing on different sources of authority to make their assertions compelling and indeed *binding* on the “next turn” (i.e., the next responder). Natalie attempted to seize control over the discussion by framing it in terms of the worksheet’s questions and demands – “what are we supposed to put?” Philip, on the other hand, was more attracted to experimental context as a source of control over the process of argumentation: he was focused on controlling the materials, how the experiment was physically set up, and how one could make inferences based on manipulating its constituent parts. If his inferences were correct, and he could get others to admit it, he would be in a better position to control the next moves at the lab table. Gloria undermined Philip’s status as a legitimate lab participant by challenging his ability to implement the experiment (e.g., *hurry up!* and *you have to put them in at the same time!*), and then finally suggested that he was socially inappropriate – he had bad breath.

In the social ecology of a middle school classroom, argumentation is not merely a matter of discussing scientific materials and their significance, but also managing the social dynamics at hand. It seems clear that because Philip positions himself as a leader, and because the girls resisted this implicit claim and Philip did not change his stance, the girls ultimately withdrew from many aspects of participation in the interaction. This may be why the argumentation episode appears unsophisticated in structural terms; however, rebuttals to Philip’s claims may not have been based on scientific merits, but on the merits of his acceptance in the lab group.

Analyzing the interactions leading up to the argumentation episode provides insight into how these students worked together and how larger interactional patterns including action and object use became consequential for students’ argumentation episode. It shows how their apparently mundane quarrel (e.g., *you have bad breath*) was in fact in many ways about scientific authority, and the means of inscribing scientific knowledge. Philip’s strategy was to focus on the control of the objects of the lab experiment and teacher approval; Gloria’s strategy was to control the written words of the textbook, the worksheet, and the perception of social competence that successful banter at the table with Natalie implies. Natalie was focused on maintaining her relationship with Gloria and the completion of the written instructions. While they were all curious and eager to explain the visual experience of the experiment, neither of the girls trusted the teacher or Philip; they relied instead on the authority of their textbook, the written word, and each others’ experience.

CONCLUSION

These examples demonstrate the ways in which scientific argumentation – often represented as a cognitive process – is richly interwoven with social processes (Goodwin, 1990; Goodwin and Goodwin, 1990). Students not only struggle in connecting first-hand sensory experience to representations that can be shared and evaluated; they realize that the consequences of those representations have implications for the control over what happens in their laboratory activities. For middle school students, lab experiences are not simply an opportunity for intellectual

discovery and growth; they are a context for connecting their intellectual abilities with complex issues of social control. Examining these interactions from an ethnographic perspective provides insight into why some argumentation episodes may be structurally richer than others – and provides insight into factors and conditions that must be accounted for when attempting to foster and sustain greater argumentation in science classrooms.

Moreover, the different patterns of reasoning that emerge in this analysis are the direct result of the merged application of the two approaches to the anthropological analysis of school science described in our introduction: the ethnography of communication, and comparative analysis of human rationality. By examining argumentation ethnographically in its actual context of verbal performance, we can demonstrate that it is deeply *situated*. In addition, this situated perspective reveals *diversity*, that is, key differences comparatively between the students in terms of their inferential patterns, arising in important ways from their respective positions in their complex interactional histories, physical vantage points, and situational interests. The thick description of these *diverse* and *situated* classroom actions, and their translation into a broader analytical framework of science education, demonstrate the key contributions of the anthropological analysis of science classrooms.

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PART III

**States, Identities,
and Education**

CHAPTER 16

The Predicament of Embodied Nationalisms and Educational Subjects

*Véronique Benet*¹

This chapter draws upon a paper based on my recent work (2008/2009) and originally presented at the American Anthropological Association's 107th Annual Meeting in San Francisco, in November, 2008. The paper was written in response to an invitation to a session for the Council on Anthropology and Education, called "Education, Nationalism, and Citizen Formation in a 'Post-national' Era." One phrase had caught my eye in the panel's call for papers: that of "empty nationalism." What could "empty nationalism" be, I wondered? Where do you find it? Or not find it? My gut reaction was to immediately object that, quite to the contrary, what we are increasingly faced with in the world order of nation-states are expressions of full, embodied nationalisms.

As I will argue, nationalisms in their contemporary form have increasingly become sensory, embodied, and visceral. Yet this viscosity has been in tension with the ever looming possibility of national disintegration, in light of which educational projects have been ever so crucial to the survival and maintenance of nations. But before I explain what I mean by this, I want to dwell on the productiveness of the eye- and ear-catching phrase of "empty nationalism." This, as I will show, offers a heuristic means for approaching the articulation of education with nationalism.

There is undeniable value in the recognition that the national, although far from passé, has been increasingly challenged by transnational, global, and regional movements of capital, population, ideas, and much else. And yet, even theorizing beyond the nation-state has often assumed the form of a reflection on the *post*-national, where the nation-state form still largely determines the ways of envisaging alternative political configurations. Thus Jürgen Habermas, in his celebrated book *Postnational*

Constellation (2001), hardly does more than offer a model for a construction of Europe premised on a national model. The European constellation comes across as a mere “supra-nation” with a similar *modus operandi*.

It seems, then, that tolling the bell of the nation was not only premature, it was rather short-sighted. But, then, how could such a lack of political imagination have been predicted – as if beyond the nation and its bourgeois capitalist beginnings, there really were no other horizon? I find this lack of political imagination rather puzzling, not to say distressing. Gone are all the grand ideologies of postnational solidarity that carried with them dreams of a better future, a better life, “progress for humanity,” a progress *in* humanity – socialist ideals of the Charles Fourier type, for instance. Fourier, as Mike Taussig reminds us in *[His] Cocaine Museum* (2004: 31), had in mind to “reorganize human society along anti-capitalist, socialist principles that encompassed sex, smell, and color, no less than money, work, and property, and he did so in order to save what he saw as our dying planet.” Today, it is as if the end of all these humanist visions amid general consternation in the face of blatant – and still aching – failures, had carried with it a “recoiling” back to the familiar and reassuring safety of the nation. And this is no longer even the expansive nation in times of colonial capitalism, but rather the shrunken, secure, more intimate (Herzfeld, 1997), almost smug nation.

To follow on with the case of Europe, for instance, it is fascinating that the idea and empirical reality of Europe effectively predates the so-called “postnational constellation” by a century. Historians are aware of this, and only anthropologists and political theorists seem to be blissfully – or painfully, depending on one’s degree of optimism – ignorant of it. Even popular motion pictures knew and reflected this, down to the “Hôtel du Nord” that came to replace the “Hôtel de l’Europe” in the final version of the 1938 film by Marcel Carné, starring the oh-so-French Arletty.

And so I went looking for traces of this “empty nationalism” that supposedly stalks contemporary theory. I encountered them in the reflections of Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, who envisage nationalism “as a certain articulation of the empty signifier of the nation, which itself becomes a nodal point in the political discourse of modern democracy and generally functions as a way of symbolizing an absent communitarian fullness” (cited in Torfing, 1999: 192). Jacob Torfing, who has devoted an entire book to their and Slavoj Žižek’s work, explains this to mean that, *contra* Habermas, Laclau and Mouffe assert that “the social is structured around an unrepresentable kernel of negativity and thus fails to provide an ultimate grounding for the forms of reason, ethics and democracy associated with modernity” (1999: 11). This raises two issues that need brief mention at this stage. One is, of course, the problem of defining what modernity is. I shall later return to the implications of defining modernity for my project. For the moment, suffice it to say that, in many societies and cultures (and at other points in time than those European ones arbitrarily universalized), there have been major moments of epistemological rupture that ushered in new modes – whether social, artistic, literary, or political – of producing, understanding, categorizing, and using knowledge, with each of these determining idiosyncratic forms of modernity (see Eisenstadt, 2000 for a suggestive illustration). The second, and more pressing, issue here is that the idea of a “kernel of negativity” as foundational to the social (and the political) has become rather fashionable in many circles, including anthropological. Congruent with this idea has been the critical emphasis

placed today in much anthropological production on the atomization of the individual as well as of collective action, whence follows the fragmentary and incomplete character of any project of socialization, especially political socialization. I now want to dwell on this supposed fragmentary and incomplete character.

FRAGMENTED SELVES, IMPOSSIBLE IDENTITIES, AND NATIONALISM

Much anthropological production of the past decades has occurred, willy-nilly, under the sun of “deconstruction.” Thus, the major concepts used in the discipline – culture, community, etc. – have been subject rightfully to critical decomposition, dissection, critique, and so forth. In the wake of the deconstructionist turn, the critique of an Enlightened, rational subject supposedly characterizing all projects of Euro-American – and, by implication, any other – political modernity has occupied centre stage. A resulting emphasis has been placed upon both the importance of the self at the heart of any collective project *and* the irrefragable atomization of individuals. Who would deny, nay, who would dare question today the fragmentary character of all projects of socialization, be they national or else? Likewise, who would dispute the fragmentary nature of the very self? The postcolonial, postmodern subject of contemporary scholarship has become a kaleidoscope, ever refracting in the myriad of fleeting identity positionings s/he alternatively occupies in the world. To be sure, such a psychedelic vision served a welcome purpose over the past few decades. It also remains an important safeguard for any study of socialization within the context of state processes: a safeguard, that is, against attempts to see in “the State” the monolithic beginning and end of all projects.

Yet such constant warning against the theoretical perils of asserting homogeneity and fully-fledged identities has also impeded further understanding of particular types of socialization projects, not least of all those of schooling and nationalism. In particular, it has prevented us from reckoning with nationalism’s empirical materializations, which do indeed urge its subjects toward unity. Pierre Clastres’ *Society Against the State* (1987 [1974]) may have contributed much to this critical skepticism by drawing attention to the pitfalls of state attempts at producing oneness and unity. Today, it is as if the lessons learnt from Clastres’ work among the Tupi-Guaranis of Brazil and Paraguay have translated into a kind of theoretical abhorrence toward empirical oneness. Of course, I am not arguing for a return to antiquated notions of the person or of culture as bounded, immutable wholes. I also agree that identities are always “impossible” (Hansen, 1999) and in constant flux; working with the notion of “identifications,” I would suggest, is far more heuristic (Benei, 2008). Indeed, whereas in many analyses the usages of the term “identity” suggest an understanding of “identities” as tangible, essentialized, and almost congealed in fixed space and time, the term “identification,” by contrast, lays stress on the processual agency of social actors. It thus leaves room for indeterminacy and the necessarily fragmentary character of all projects of self-formation, whether individual or collective (Benei, 2008). That said, I also contend we should duly acknowledge that there are indeed collective projects around which identifications may revolve and at times crystallize rather powerfully. Granted, people do not necessarily unite under the same banner with the same understandings of what they are uniting for – or, as the case may be, against. Yet there has to be some measure of common

ground for the possibility of coming together even to be conceived at all. This is particularly obvious in the case of national(ist) projects of self-formation.

Social actors may ascribe different meanings to their senses of belonging to a nation, and they may understand their parts as citizens differently, and have diverging aspirations, as I demonstrate in the case of western India at the turn of the twenty-first century (2009; see also Sam Kaplan's work (2006) on post-1990s Turkey). Yet theoretical emphasis on the fluidity of social actors' categories and their multiplex positioning can exhaust neither the conceptual exploration of processes of self- and institutional formation, nor their experiential sense on the ground, least of all in relation to the nation-state and its citizens (see Benei, 2005). For, whether openly acknowledged by anthropologists or not, what often emerges from their ethnographic narratives is a sense of a common ground uniting social actors, be it in the form of a veneration for the nation's "glorious cultural and historical heritage," or in that of its total rejection. That such unification may be commonly achieved, even through a partial crystallization of identities, requires both acknowledgement and exploration in its own right. It also invites further comparative work between the formal institutions of nation-states – whether in South Asia, "the West," or elsewhere, especially in relation to schooling.

Indeed, one of the most potent state institutions still penetrating everyday life and operating as both a prerequisite for its stability and a powerful means of national integration has been that of formal education. Arguably, despite – or perhaps because of – being under constant threat, nationalisms replenish themselves in these particular institutional sites, thus providing forms of "full, embodied nationalism." Of course, schools are not state machineries crushing poor passive subjects at will to reassemble and manufacture them into dutiful citizens (Benei, 2005, 2009). How, then, can we provide alternative frameworks for envisaging the production of citizenship not only as a state project particularly located in key institutions and organizations for promoting the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (Marshall, 1950), but also as a site of citizens' *agency*, here understood as the point where the dualisms between action and passion, agent and patient, are erased, and where a new definition of the subject/agent emerges? Part of the answer lies in exploring and registering the sensory modalities associated with modernity and the production of citizenship and nationality/nationalism (on the definitional issue of nationality and nationalism, see Benei, 2009).

Working with the notion of "sensorium" helps bring into light the illusionary character of the "public/private" dichotomy and the untenability of a distinction between the construction of social persons and that of interiorized selves. The notion of sensorium also allows us to think through the all-pervasive nature of all socialization processes, especially political ones, as I will demonstrate further. For the moment, however, let me situate the importance of the senses in a political anthropology of national education.

TAKING "THE SENSES" SERIOUSLY

Whereas the notion of a "sense of belonging" has become commonplace in discussions of national sentiments, the emotional and sensory dimension invoked by such a phrase has received scant attention, save in the work of Mabel Berezin (1997, 1999),

documenting political emotions under the Fascist regime. By taking the “senses” seriously in my own work on schooling in Maharashtra (Benei, 2009), I sought to illuminate the ways in which emotions and passions, as socially and culturally produced artifacts, form an integral part of the production of senses of national belonging. How does one document the emotional sensory and embodied production entering into the daily manufacturing of nationhood and citizenship? One does this by querying how the senses come into play, and how they are harnessed in the everyday project of nation-building at the most banal and quotidian level of experience. In my attempt to articulate bodies, emotions, and senses, I expanded further on the notion of “sensorium” introduced by Walter Benjamin in his *Arcades Project* (1999). Benjamin was fascinated by the characteristic technologization and commodification of things in nineteenth-century European modernity. The former, he claimed, generated a new apperception of the urban, industrialized world, and brought a new way of being into this world. Thus, new subjectivities developed out of the “complex kind of training” to which “technology ha[d] subjected the human senses” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In my study of schooling, I deployed the notions of sensorium and embodiment in an examination of two powerful resources for the production of incorporated senses of belonging to locality, region, and nation: namely, the sensitive school subjects of language and history. The sensorium I document in western India must be envisaged as multi-layered and encompassing various registers, such as devotional, emotional, linguistic, and cognitive; it is deployed according to a “complex kind of training,” time-structured and highly dependent on modern forms of technology, from aural to visual, as well as industrial and urban. Such a notion of sensorium thus deployed begs a reflection on the articulation of senses, modernity, and nationalism. I referred earlier to the existence of major moments of epistemological rupture across cultures and societies. Such moments have often been linked to transformations occurring in sensory apparatuses, dispositions, and environments. And although such sensory apparatuses are often more implicitly assumed than explicitly discussed, they have nevertheless had considerable purchase on current epistemologies.

Let me explain this, with particular reference to one sense – sight – and one place – India. The ways senses are felt and registered through verbal and other forms of communication largely vary according to time, space, and culture. What sense(s) become(s) predominant and privileged over other(s) is a matter of cultural, social, historical as well as political circumstances. With respect to the Euro-American and South Asian contexts, the notion of sight seems of particular relevance, as discussed in my analysis of schooling in western India (Benei, 2009).

Sight acquired predominance in many appraisals of modernity, to the point of overshadowing all other senses in discussions thereof, at least in Europe (Latour, 1986). Even Benjamin, while at times insisting on the variegated dimensions of the new sensory disposition he was documenting, mainly seemed to place more emphasis on the gaze and the visual aspect of modern apperception. With reference to the non Euro-American context, scholarly engagement with the sensory modalities entailed by the notion of modernity has largely remained peripheral, save a few exceptions. Walter Ong (1991) referred to the variegated ways in which sensory perceptions are privileged from one culture to another. Earlier, Paul Stoller (1989, 1997) had developed

a critique of Western epistemology, attacking its major premise of visual and spatial cognition over any other – the auditory one in particular. Similarly, Ian Ritchie, in his work on African sensorium (2000 [1993]), suggestively argued that European cultures had gradually come to privilege sight over any other sense in the nineteenth century, both “at home” and “overseas.”

The question is obviously made more complex in the case of India, given the importance of the notion of sight prevalent in Indian society today. Derived from the Sanskrit root *drśb*, “to see,” the term *darshan* is often translated as either “sight” (in the sense of an instance of seeing something or somebody) or the act of “seeing.” The term may also refer to a “vision,” “apparition,” or even a “glimpse.” One may ask whether the emphasis placed upon the notion of sight in Indian/Hindu culture today – both by popular common sense and by academics – might be a negotiated outcome of the colonial encounter, and thereby stand as the closest equivalent to the sensory aspect central to a European conception of modernity (see Pinney, 2003). Vindicating such a hypothesis is the relative lack of understanding and tolerance demonstrated by the British in their fight against what they considered an assault on their other senses, especially the auditory one (as suggested by Michael Roberts (1990) in his work on noise as a cultural struggle in Sri Lanka, from the 1880s to the 1930s). Even the fact that one of the most common usages of *darshan* today is a religious one may fit with such a hypothesis. The term often refers to “visions of the divine” – of a god, a holy person, or even a sacred artifact (Eck, 1998). One can have *darshan* of a deity in a temple, or experience an inward vision. Whether in popular post-independence India or Indianist anthropological common sense, the term’s religious connotation is most salient. Yet given the Orientalist misunderstandings and deceptive re-appropriations that other concepts (such as caste, see Dirks, 2001) have known in India, one may rightly wonder whether this contemporary religious emphasis on sight is a relatively recent phenomenon, stimulated by the colonial encounter itself.

Such an emphasis on sight had repercussions on colonial as well as anthropological epistemes. Binary sets of categories, though the object of much scholarly discussion and disputation, still largely informed modes of understanding “otherness” – thereby forming a continuum from that which resembled most closely Euro-American societies to that which stood at its furthest. The point has repeatedly been made: what was being constructed by means of such dichotomous typologies was a ranking of “other” societies according to their degree of commonality with European societies (see Rockwell, Chapter 5, above, for a similar point about time). Of particular interest here is the association of the notion of “societies without writing” with a Weberian notion of stateless, particularistic, irrational, and emotional modes of political governance. Its logical extension is that societies tending towards a more “oral/aural” and “auditory” mode have been implicitly deemed more irrational and emotional, and hence politically more unstable. Even today, the analysis of “ethnic conflict” and political violence (especially in African societies) is often tainted with such an assumption (see Taylor, 2002 for a counter position) – as if the sense of hearing, too, were the archaic remnant of an out-of-place yet ever resurgent primordialism, which modernity should keep in check, if not eradicate. Yet this obfuscates the fact that the sense of hearing is also integral to the constitution and lived experience of a “modern”

sensorium as well. Following Stoller's invitations (1989, 1997), an anthropological perspective must therefore acknowledge the importance and meaningfulness of other senses in a given "modern" social, cultural, and political context, even as it acknowledges the predominance of some.

Here it should be emphasized that the production of sensorium *is not* specific to particular cognitive structures. Furthermore, as I demonstrate elsewhere (Benei, 2009), the role of the state, especially through schooling, is crucial in the production and reshaping of sensorium. National projects of self-formation largely rely upon the constitution of a "national primary sensorium," as well as, in the case of regional states such as Maharashtra, that of a regional one. Characterizing the educational state of Maharashtra today is its pre-emptive take on the population's sensory world, which puts at its service the sensorium developed from a recomposed musical tradition fusing devotional *abhangas*, prayers, yoga, and physical education drills, as well as martial songs and rhythms. Such a recomposed tradition, predicated upon existing sensory "structures of feeling" (Williams, 1958, 1961), both emblemizes and undergirds the regional state. It also articulates with the sensory transformations brought about by new technologies and industrialization in a variety of forms – from the sounds (and fumes) of cars, trucks, and tractors to the music belching out from loudspeakers outside temples, houses, theaters, and polling stations; and the visual redeployments of local patriotism and nationalism, such as the reproduction of figures of regional as well as national heroism, and of the national tricolors on clothes, scooters, newspapers, shop windows, and so on. It is the recomposition of this collective sensorium that the educational state attempts to capture, and which makes it so "modern" (see Benjamin's discussion in Thompson, 2000).

Two points for clarification are in order here. First, it goes without saying that such notions and lived experiences make for a highly contested field among members of different groups co-existing within the same territorial and political community, as I have demonstrated elsewhere (Benei, 2009, Chapters 4 and 5 in particular). Second, it should also be made clear that state attempts are only one side of the coin in the production of citizenship and nationality/nationalism. Citizens – including teachers in the very space of school – make seen, heard, and felt their negotiated responses to such attempts at the production of senses of regional and national belonging. They are social actors in the full sense of the term, engaging with these projects through (or *contra*, as the case may be) songs glorifying the Marathas, the independence struggle from the British, as well as other nationalist and postcolonial chants. Thus the notion and lived experience of love for the mother-nation and its people is (re-)produced and re-elaborated in the space of school, not just on the occasion of annual gatherings and school competitions, but also in the daily conflation of different layers of sensory stimulations in the production of (pan) regional, national, and familial allegiance in ordinary school life.

The notion of sensorium thus elaborated has further heuristic potential for understanding the political and ethical entailments of the emotional and linguistic structures of feeling daily (re-)produced in everyday life, not least through the "naturalization" of senses of belonging. Working with the notion also helps bring into light the illusionary character of the "public-private" dichotomy and the untenability of a distinction between the construction of social persons and that of interiorized selves, as has also been argued by Jonas Frykman (1994) in his suggestive account of

gymnastics as everyday lived production and sensory experience of modernity in Sweden in the 1930s. Indeed, political modernity is often characterized by a sharp contrast between a public, democratic space, and another, private one: the true realm of the “authentic” self. By contrast, the notion of sensorium helps us think through precisely the all-pervasive nature of all socialization processes, especially political ones. This, in turn, has implications for the formation of identities in a sensory-ridden democracy today. (This is not to say, of course, that the senses have come to acquire such importance in late modernity only, as demonstrated by Sophie Wahnich (2008) for the case of post-Revolutionary France.)

Classical analysis in political philosophy (Balibar, 1998: 114–120) has it that identification takes place at three distinct levels: namely, the family; the professional, confessional, and other institutions, among which we might include schools; and the “hegemonic” community, or nation. In the case of fascism, the first and third levels are usually flattened out. Arguably, however, this flattening out does not only occur in the case of fascism. Rather, the three levels tend to coalesce in most projects of political modernity, whether frankly fascist or not. Thus, the risk of fascism threatening most citizenries today, against which Etienne Balibar cautioned in his writings about the vicissitudes of identity as a gaze (“*identité comme regard*”) – a gaze through which the other becomes the demonized, impossible co-resident (Balibar, 1998: 114–120) – is “only” a matter of amplitude, rather than kind. In Maharashtra today, school has become a very special *locus* both mediating and conflating the spaces of family and nation. Rather than demonstrating that the state of Maharashtra is verging on fascism, this brings home the ideological perils inherent to any institutional (particularly educational) modern nation-state project, especially when the powerful sensory resources it plays upon remain unacknowledged. Indeed, this may be the ultimate characteristic mark of “our late modernity” – that it has spawned aggressive, bellicose projects of sensory-ridden and somatic national and self-formation. This may be because, despite its staying power, the nation-state form has not successfully transcended its intrinsically unstable nature. In this sense, Clastres (1987) was right: state attempts at producing oneness are dangerous. But they are dangerous not because of the “emptiness” of nationalism, but rather because of this irresolvable tension between sensory, embodied, and visceral enactments of nationalism, and – inscribed at their very core – the vague and uncanny sense of their own incompleteness and fragility.

German-born historian of fascism George Lachmann Mosse (1975) understood this, and from the 1960s onwards he devoted all his intellectual energies to his scholarly endeavor, warning that “if nationalism with a human face is not realized, we might once more abandon the world to oppression and war” (1980). To be sure, Mosse did not develop an anthropology of the senses in its fullest sense. Yet, contrary to his predecessors, who envisaged the intellectual history of Nazism through potential precursors such as Hegel, Gobineau, and Nietzsche, Mosse brought to light how fascism had less to do with high theories and philosophies, and more with inhabited, embodied forms of popular culture, whether material (racist graffiti and grand architectural projects) or spiritual (pietist legacy). Here I would like to take the reader on a brief excursion into the tribulations of nation-building and war in twentieth-century Europe, whose purpose will become apparent shortly.

WAR CULTURE AND NATIONALIST IDEOLOGIES: CAUTIONARY TALES FOR THE FUTURE

In many unsuspected ways, inherent in fascism was a cultural project with roots in Christian religious movements and their attendant quest for proper, normalized sexual behavior predicated on a rigorous division of gender roles. Yet rather than leading to a civilizational process as Norbert Elias describes it, where senses of bodily comportment and civility are seen as the product of courtly and bourgeois ideas of dignity and distinction, and cruelty and violence are a historical accident in the civilizing process, Mosse argued that fascism had given rise to a “brutalization of the masses,” whereby the experience and brutality of war became legitimized and banalized in order to be rendered livable. Mosse’s insights have opened up wide intellectual horizons, calling for more work on the cultural anchorage of nationalist movements in Europe and elsewhere. In particular, reflection has been stimulated on systems of popular representations – on the battlefields and at the rear – in the two so-called “World Wars.” Although specifically concerned with Europe, works inspired by the notion of “war culture” as the “field of all the representations of the war entertained by its contemporaries” (Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker, 2000: 252) have emphasized how such a “war culture” was crucial in the banalization and inscription of the tropes of war and violence *at the heart of daily life*.

It is obviously not my intention to trivialize the specificities of either the European or the Indian experiences of violence and war in the past century. The two “World Wars,” the 1947 violence of the Partition, and the subsequent Indian wars of 1962 (with China), 1965 (with Pakistan), and 1971 (in support of the creation of Bangladesh) obviously possess very different histories and bearing upon those who have had a direct experience of them, as well as on the social and collective memories they have fed and shaped. The point of this excursion into the European tribulations of nation-building, then, is to highlight potentially fruitful similarities across both contexts. In a curious round of history, the end of the twentieth century is somehow resonant with its beginning, as nations are once again perceived as ethnic, even biological entities (Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker, 2000: 251). And so, even if the war culture described throughout my book may be of a less brutal kind than that extant in the European interwar period of 1919–1939, the Indian one that became exacerbated in the late 1990s in the immediate aftermath of the 1999 Kargil war, which took place in northern Kashmir when troops of the Pakistani army trespassed the Line of Control between the two nation-states, is of the same kind, if only “latent.” This war culture entails gendered, religious notions of the “nation under attack” and in need of protection, as well as glorification of heroes drawing upon both recent histories and earlier regional structures of feeling.

The parallel realities referred to by notions of “war culture” in Europe and India are important for at least three reasons. First, in addition to confirming Mosse’s thesis of mass brutalization, they support the argument propounded by Zygmunt Bauman of rational violence, bureaucracy, and scientificity at the heart of the political projects characteristic of late modernity, that is, of the late twentieth (and early twenty-first) centuries. Bauman (2000) argued that far from being a historical

accident and a throwback to a “premodern” state of “savagery” and “barbarism,” genocidal projects such as the Holocaust were very much products of modernity. Through the rise of the nation-state characteristic of Western modernity, power and means of force became centralized under state control. In this socially engineered quest for equality and attempted production of homogeneous citizens, race, and ethnicity regained prominence as ways of differentiating human beings. The new hierarchy of human and “not fully human” was further implemented by means of impersonal bureaucracies, thus substituting technical proficiency for moral responsibility. Bauman uses the metaphor of the gardener weeding out undesirable plants to illustrate the social engineering goal of genocide, that is, the creation of a “better and different world” by rationalized means, in which order and homogeneity reign supreme. Thus, the Eliasian thesis of an overall non-violent modern civilization (1969, 1982) ultimately appears unfounded, an “illusion”; indeed, this thesis is integrally part of modern civilization’s “self-apology and self-apotheosis, in short, its legitimizing myth” (Bauman, 2000). Such legitimizing myth is also pervasive in Maharashtrian schooling today.

This is of course not to say that primary schooling in the state of Maharashtra has deliberately been reformed towards a genocidal end. Maharashtra is *not* Gujarat, and one should not confuse one with the other: the state-orchestrated anti-Muslim pogroms and rioting that took place in the state laboratory of *Hindutva* violence since 2002, Gujarat, have not yet occurred on a comparable scale in Maharashtra. Nor is the state’s ideology openly Hindu-dominated any longer. Yet the many subtle and nuanced Hindu-inflected transformations that characterize the “new” curriculum – so far left unchanged under the current non-*Hindutva* government – suggest wider and deeper changes occurring within society at large, whereby the space left for those citizens not conforming to the dominant ethnic, religious (and in the regional state of Maharashtra, linguistic) idiom of citizenship are increasingly considered as “not belonging.”

Second, these parallel experiences and notions of “war culture” point to the fact that the legitimacy of the nation as the product of a popular will is most forcefully achieved through war. As Mosse (1990) so suggestively demonstrated in the case of Europe, the “myth of war” constructed in between the two World Wars played a powerful role in promoting the notion of war’s sacredness and sanctity in a Christian context, where “fallen soldiers” were no longer mercenaries but “sons of the national soil” (see also Peter Geschiere’s work (2009) on the notion of “autochtony” or “belonging to the soil” as a source of entitlement to citizenship rights in the world today). A similar argument holds with regard to many modern nation-states – whether dominated by a Christian ideology or not – where armies consist of national sons of the soil whose deaths in battle are conceived as sacrifices for the nation’s preservation and regeneration. This sacredness makes war a potent trope, even in times of peace. Arguably, it is a sacredness of this sort, although here a Hindu one (however defined), that operated in the post-Kargil events with renewed vigor, daily cultivated in schools and re-enacted through performative displays of male virility and iterations of allegiance to the divine motherland (Benei, 2009).

Third, these parallel histories also shed fresh light on scholarly discussions of violence and cultural specificity. Anthropologists (Daniel, 1996; Hinton, 2002; Scheper-

Hughes, 2002; Taylor, 2002 as recent instances) have long disproved the often encountered assumption of a correlation between violence and culture, and the cases they have documented also forcefully bring home that if the modalities of violence are culturally variable, the production of violence itself is not the prerogative of any given culture. This is important in two regards: to consider schooling's effects, and to consider the conditions of possibility for the eruption of violence in modern nation-states. To reiterate once more: schooling alone does not produce jingoism, and so the supposedly "logical inference" from what I presented in my work, that unschooled people would be less jingoistic or less pre-disposed to violence, is an unfounded one (as Pandey's 1990's work amply suggests), and for two reasons. One is that what takes place in the space of school may be conducive to both integration, tolerance, and other much needed virtues in times of world jingoism, and an unprecedented crystallization and polarization of the same "impossible identities" to which I have already referred. These latter processes are not necessarily part of any overt or even conscious agenda, but rather, more often than not pertain to the "unintended consequences" of institutionalized schooling (Willis, 1977) as both a cultural *and* social and economic process. This leads me to the other reason, which is linked to the friend/enemy distinction theorized by Carl Schmitt (1996 [1932]): who decides who the enemy is and who the friend is, even within the nation, as well as what are the conditions that might give rise to a generalization of friend-enemy distinctions. To be sure, economic and political conditions play a crucial part, but they do not exhaust the total field of possibilities. As emphasized by Balakrishnan (2000), what matters is the *possibility* of conflict; this potentiality of violent action is always enough for the distinction to be actuated with real consequences. Such consequences need to be reckoned with by practitioners of schooling at the time of designing curricula and educational programs, and perhaps even more so, when implementing them, lest jingoistic violence be facilitated.

To conclude, then, exploring and registering the sensory modalities associated with modernity and the production of citizenship and nationality/nationalism offers an alternative perspective to the current fashionable trend of claiming that nationalism is "empty" or founded on a "kernel of negativity." By contrast, working with the notion of "sensorium" proves valuable on two counts. First, it helps bring to light the illusionary character of the "public-private" dichotomy and the untenability of a distinction between the construction of social persons and that of interiorized selves. Second, the notion of sensorium also allows us to think through the all-pervasive nature of all socialization processes, especially political ones. By making this conceptual borrowing of "sensorium" I hope to have contributed to the theoretical cross-fertilization so characteristic of anthropological reflection. Ultimately, rather than "empty nationalism," what educational anthropologists should be aware of is the importance of studying the link between nationalism, schooling, and the "fullness" of identity brought about by sensory interpellations.

NOTE

- 1 Heartfelt thanks are due to the editors of this volume for forcing me to revise and make clear my (at times) too many strands of argumentation.

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CHAPTER 17

Toward an Anthropology of (Democratic) Citizenship Education

Bradley A.U. Levinson

In recent years, discourses about citizenship have come to occupy center stage, in both contemporary political practice and academic scholarship. The salience of citizenship has certainly made itself felt in anthropology as well, but less so in our educational subfield. In this chapter, my aim is to explore the relationships between educational processes and citizenship education from an anthropological perspective. In doing so, I review (not exhaustively) a good deal of work in anthropology that probes these relationships, but I also argue that our patchwork conceptual frameworks in the anthropology of education have yet to catch up with the richness and complexity of citizenship education across both formal and informal educational domains. I hope to point the way toward a more coherent and unified approach.

This chapter begins with an attempt to define citizenship and democracy, and to offer anthropological distinctions between formal and informal citizenship education, and between democratic and non-democratic citizenship education. From there, I discuss the history of our subfield's engagement with citizenship education and political practice, and raise questions about our existing conceptual limitations. Next, I review a broad range of anthropological scholarship on what I would call citizenship education (even when the anthropologists themselves do not frame it as education), attempting to bring into critical dialogue the various ways that anthropologists have documented how citizens are formed. What follows is a brief personal narrative about

how I “discovered” the issue of citizenship in my own work on Mexican youth and secondary education. The chapter is then capped by a final programmatic reflection about how anthropology could contribute to understanding not only informal and non-formal citizenship education, but also one of the most important and active movements in global education reform today: formal school-based democratic citizenship education.

OPENING GAMBITS: DEFINITIONS AND DOMAINS

Gloria Ladson-Billings (2004: 120), quoting George Spindler (Spindler, 1987), has suggested that “from an anthropological perspective, all education is citizenship education.” My first inclination is to agree with this, but only to a point. It is true insofar as virtually all education, in and out of school, constructs identities and orients moral conduct for group life. The conception is admirably broader than understandings of “political socialization” and citizenship in sociology and political science, yet it may be excessively broad. I would like to venture a rather more explicitly political conception of citizenship: *Citizenship is constituted by the meanings, rights, and obligations of membership in publics, as well as the forms of agency and modalities of participation implicated by such membership.* This conception honors the etymology and evolution of sets of related English terms like civics, cities, and civilization, while opening to other culturally conceived notions of citizenship. It highlights the relationship between identity and the *state*, without foreclosing other possibilities or making this relationship its exclusive feature (as Carol Greenhouse (2002) puts it, “There is an ethnographic question to be asked about citizenship, regarding whether and how people incorporate the state into their own self-understandings and agency.”). The emphasis in my proposed definition is on forms of action and subjectivity that are oriented to a public – the diverse social space beyond close kin and consociates, but not fully encompassed by the state – in a relatively complex polity. I know that this begs more questions, and I don’t wish to draw too sharp a distinction between public and private (a notoriously slippery set of Western categories), or complex (large scale) and simple (small scale). But if you’ll bear with me, I think the distinctions still have good heuristic value. They allow us to gain some purchase on the political dimension of citizenship education, without losing sight of the fact that, as Sally Anderson (Chapter 19, below, citing Benveniste, 1974) reminds us, citizenship is not merely a juridical *status* granted by a state but a reciprocally engaged *relationship* between persons in the public sphere.

Given this definition of citizenship, I think it’s fair to say that *much*, if not all, education is still citizenship education. It should be helpful, moreover, to further distinguish between formal and informal citizenship education, and between democratic and non-democratic citizenship education. Here I believe the concept of identity is crucial. An anthropological concept of identity captures the varying senses of social belonging and commitment, identification (Hall, 1996) or attachment, in relation to diverse publics. Some identities are situational and ephemeral, others more enduring across time and context. Twisting Spindler a bit, and concurring with Lave (in press), I venture that “all education is identity formation.” Thus, the question for us here is what forms of education constitute *citizen identities*. If we can get clear about what

and how citizen identities are formed through education in the home, the street, the recreation center, and the media (i.e., non-formal or informal domains), then we can better understand how these identities articulate with, or chafe against, the identities proposed and shaped in schools. We can also better understand what makes identities more or less ephemeral, more or less “sutured” and articulated between hegemonic and non-hegemonic discourses, more or less embodied and emotive (see Beni, Chapter 16, above). Finally, we can comprehend how identity figures into the formation of effective “counterpublics” – those “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinate groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (Fraser, 1992).

Now what about democracy? I think it’s fair to say that in recent years, when academics write about citizenship, they take democracy as their (often implicit) horizon. In other words, citizenship is about the (attempted) production and maintenance of democratic publics. Such an emphasis acknowledges the discourse of citizenship that has accompanied the rise of liberal democratic theory and practice from the time of the French Revolution. Indeed, citizenship under democracy often connotes a kind of active participation that is contrasted with the more passive “subjecthood” of authoritarian or monarchical regimes; indeed, the terms “political socialization” or “national identity formation” have often been applied to such authoritarian regimes, whereas “citizenship education” implicitly invokes democracy. It helps to remember, though, that contemporary non-democratic regimes still construct a kind of citizenship, and at times that construction can be quite active as well. From fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, which fostered highly participatory, patriotic, racist forms of exclusivism (Berezin, 1999), to some contemporary Asian regimes, which foster an active, committed moral obedience to the nation-state rooted in tropes of kinship (Lall and Vickers, 2009), elite-legitimizing, authoritarian citizenship is alive and well. Anthropologists of education ought to pay close attention, then, to the educational forms and practices that comprise a spectrum from authoritarian to democratic citizenship.

Of course, conceptions of democratic citizenship are themselves highly varied. One can imagine a kind of continuum, from minimalist and restrictive liberal democracies such as the early United States (with its sexist, racist, and classist exclusions) to rather more participatory multicultural democracies, such as the contemporary Netherlands or Brazil. In a democratic society, what constitutes legitimate expressions of citizenship itself becomes a matter of debate and disputation; for instance, much contemporary educational discourse on citizenship highlights the virtues of deliberative debate and community service, but civil disobedience is much less often represented as a legitimate form of democratic participation. Anthropology cannot afford to play the neutral bystander in such debates. Indeed, at the risk of offending anthropological relativisms, and even as I suggest we remain open to alternative emic conceptions, I would propose a normative definition of democracy to guide our inquiries: democracy is *the continual striving toward a social order that sponsors reasoned deliberation, promotes civic participation in decision-making, justly and equitably distributes political-economic power, and facilitates cultural inclusiveness*. As an empirical matter, then, any public that manifests such a “striving” in practice ought to be considered democratic. A critical anthropological approach to the study of democracy (Paley, 2002) would therefore place emphasis on how “continual” the striving is (versus the ossifying

effects of restrictive provisions), whether and how different cultural *forms* of reason and argumentation are admitted into deliberation (as an act of cultural inclusiveness), what kinds of meaningful participation are promoted, and to what extent power is justly and equitably distributed. The study of citizenship education for democracy is therefore the study of efforts by such democratic (counter) publics to educate their members to imagine their social belonging and exercise their participation as democratic citizens.

AN ALLERGY TO POLITICS?: THE US-BASED ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

As I've noted, over the last 25 years or so there has been an explosion of interest in democratic citizenship and civic education around the world. This appears to be one of the many paradoxes of globalization: under neoliberalism, states generally shrink their regulatory functions and encourage the outsourcing of labor, even as they still bolster their own role in schooling democratic citizens (Castles, 2004). In most of the so-called "new" or "transitional" democracies, like Mexico, as well as in the older European democracies undergoing striking demographic transition and Euro-integration (Reed-Danahay, 2007), scholars and educators have often looked to the United States for ideas about democratic and multicultural education. They have found here abundant models in the philosophical and pedagogical literature, and they have discovered non-profit organizations, like the Center for Civic Education and Civitas International, which specialize in exporting programs and curricula for democratic civic education. Yet educators and policymakers in other countries seem less aware that the trend in US public education has been to eschew a central commitment to educating democratic citizens in favor of drilling and testing in academic "basics." They may take for granted that the teaching of democracy is alive and well in US schools. Thus, as countries around the world engage in fresh debates about the meanings of democracy and the role of schools in building it, they appropriate and enliven US ideas that have increasingly fallen into disuse stateside.

Where have we US-based anthropologists of education been located in this ironic scenario? Generalization is risky, of course, but I would venture that much of our work over this same period has pursued questions of cultural difference, identity, and learning orientation in relation to school performance or "achievement," as opposed to questions of political agency and democratic participation. To be sure, our field first "got political" in the 1960s and 1970s, casting its lot with the civil rights movement and school desegregation efforts. Yet perhaps with the exception of Jules Henry (1963), who critically examined forms of what now might be called "citizenship education" in mainstream US schools, we largely followed the dominant liberal script, conceiving of difference largely in terms of racial or ethnic style and identity (Jacob and Jordan, 1993). Our research concerns and categories have thus largely grown out of the popular categories used to mark difference in the United States (Rockwell, 2002). Depending on our implicit theories of action and social change, at times we may focus our work on critiquing and transforming those arrangements that privilege some social groups over others, while at times we may propose more just and effective

educational arrangements that recognize and meaningfully incorporate local cultural diversity. Yet rarely have we addressed head-on the broader political implications of schooled identities: What kinds of citizens, for what kind of democracy, with what kinds of intercultural sensibilities, deliberative competencies, and political agency are being shaped in schools (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004), and how do students, perhaps, draw on alternative political imaginaries to resist such shaping?

No doubt most of us have imagined our work to contribute to strengthening democratic life and reclaiming our democratic ideals (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Yet our professional discourse seems largely insulated from the question of citizenship, and so the specifically political horizon of this work has remained largely implicit. A 26-year review of the flagship journal for our US field, *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, is very instructive in this regard. In reviewing article titles, abstracts, and keywords from 1984 through early 2010, I discovered the following: there is not a single mention of “citizenship” until 2005, after which there are only six; there is no mention of “democracy” or “democratic” concerns until 1992, after which there are a total of eight mentions, but few are actually central to the article’s main argument; there is no mention of “identity” until 1991, after which there are some 46 mentions, with the majority coming after 2005. Now, admittedly, titles and abstracts are only imperfect approximations to the intellectual substance of an article, but they are telling indicators of the discourse we wield. Clearly, identity has been a growing concern and topic in the US-based anthropology of education, but how often does this use of identity move beyond social or ethnic group membership and reference specifically political commitments and competencies? Does our talk about social justice, oppression, resistance, marginalization, de-colonization, empowerment, and so forth contribute to a critical conception of democratic citizenship, ranging from local to supra-local domains of political action? Our work is “political,” to be sure, and it has political goals and outcomes, but rarely do we cite political theory or philosophy, not to mention political anthropology. And rarely do we look outside the United States for scholarship on the civic consequences of educational action (see Anderson-Levitt, Chapter 1, above). This is partly a question of semantics, but it is also a question of where we locate our work and how we connect our insights about power and exclusion in education to a politics of citizenship.

Thus, while anthropology provides an ethnographic methodology and nuanced theories of culture and power that could infuse the research on citizenship education, this has all too rarely happened. We easily become mired in discourses of our own making, all-too-often borrowed and adapted from the simplistic bureaucratic discourses that surround schools (cf. Díaz de Rada and Jiménez, Chapter 24, and Dietz and Mateos, Chapter 29, below). A renovated anthropology of education, engaged with questions of political agency and critical theoretical discourses in the broader discipline, could be extremely illuminating for the challenges of citizenship education, at home and abroad. The anthropological study of citizenship education would importantly link informal processes of identity formation to both the political-economic forces that sponsor and construct educational programs for creating “democratic” publics, and the social groups and movements that create counterpublics. Yet before we get to the discussion of formal educational programs, we must first examine what and how anthropology contributes to the broader study of citizenship education.

EDUCATING FOR CITIZENSHIP: THE BROAD VIEW

The burgeoning field of the anthropology of citizenship is now too vast to summarize adequately in such a short space. Economic globalization, new flows of transnational migration and diaspora formation, a growing online and media culture, new rules of dual citizenship, and other contemporary processes have complicated what had *seemed* like a long and stable relationship between national territory and legal citizenship. The landscape of affiliation and belonging, which previously appeared limited to clan, ethnicity, or nation, has now been made infinitely more complicated. Yet the perspective gained by these new developments has also forced us to realize that citizenship was *never* as stable, uncomplicated, or territorially bound as we might have thought. Class, race, gender, and religious divisions within polities have always cleaved the rules and identities of citizenship (Rosaldo, 1999), just as the facile trope of spatial contiguity was never the sole, or even primary, organizing rubric for “shared culture” or citizenship identification (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992; Ong, 1999).

Questions of identity formation have continued moving to the theoretical heart of contemporary cultural anthropology, as has a burgeoning anthropology of the “public” (Holland *et al.*, 2007). In dialogue with the field of political and legal anthropology, an exciting new anthropology of the state, nationalism, globalization, social movements, democracy, and citizenship has arguably led the way in these developments (e.g., Alonso, 1994; Appadurai, 1996, 2002; Burawoy and Verdery, 1999; Comaroff and Comaroff, 1997; Escobar, 2008; Ferguson and Gupta, 2002; Geschiere, 2009; Herzfeld, 1997; Lomnitz, 2001; Lomnitz-Adler, 1992; Moore, 1993; Paley, 2002; Trouillot, 2001). Such work, broadly speaking, seeks to elucidate the discourses, institutions, and cultural forms that constitute the nation-state, as well as the forms of identity and political action that emerge through, around, and against the state (Stevick and Levinson, 2008).

As a result of such theoretical understanding, anthropologists have undertaken sophisticated studies of citizenship formation; although not explicitly framed as such, I would call these studies of citizenship education – what I have defined here as “efforts of societies and social groups to educate their members to imagine their social belonging and exercise their participation as (democratic) citizens.” Such studies have done so largely by looking outside the school and exploring new modalities through which citizenship identities are formed. They have focused mostly on the national space, though increasingly they have addressed issues of transnational citizenship as well (Coutin, 2007). They also range from the more celebratory tone of an inclusive “cultural citizenship” (Flores and Benmayor, 1997), to a more critical tone of citizenship as constraining or “disciplining” the subject, often in ethnic, class, or gendered terms. For instance, using the Foucauldian concept of governmentality, Aihwa Ong (Ong, 2003) examines the role of social service providers in the San Francisco Bay area in establishing the parameters of acceptable citizenship behavior among recently immigrated Cambodians. James Holston (2009) explores the new forms of citizenship generated in the urban peripheries of major Brazilian cities through self-organized land occupations and movements for municipal services. Purnima Mankekar (1999) and Lila Abu-Lughod

(2005) have written incisively about the role of television viewing in the construction of a gendered national citizenship in India and Egypt, respectively, while Sara Friedman (2006) has explored the fraught relationship between the Chinese state's construction of "modern" socialist citizens and local practices around women's bodies and dress in the rural southeast. Others have explored the role of creative writing amongst immigrant mothers (Hurtig, 2005), of religious ceremony (O'Neill, 2010), of business activity (Werbner, 2004), of diasporic consciousness (Siu, 2005), and of political activism (Coutin, 2000; Oboler, 1996) in forming and shaping new citizenship identities.

One of the most powerful new veins of anthropological scholarship on citizenship concerns the relationship between indigenous groups and the nation-state in Latin America. Over the last 20 years or so, a neoliberal political economy in Latin America paradoxically spawned important new forms of indigenous activism and social movement, which in turn constituted new forms of citizenship and claims on the state (De la Peña, 2006; Fischer, 2009; Postero, 2007; Yashar, 2005). Neoliberal reforms tended to grant a symbolic multicultural pluralism while constricting the actual possibilities for land reform, political participation, and material social justice (Hale, 2002, 2006). Often, such neoliberal reforms have included new "intercultural" educational programs; such programs are intended, in theory, to create opportunities for meaningful indigenous participation in the design of educational programs, as well as competencies for respectful social exchange across the indigenous–mestizo divide in these societies. However, and in spite of the spaces it may open for unexpected alliances and knowledge production, intercultural education in practice often becomes little more than a symbolic form of indigenous empowerment (Gustafson, 2009). What some hope will become a more radical reformulation of the knowledge comprising state and citizenship in Latin America (Walsh, García Linera, and Mignolo, 2006), often devolves into a more subtly insidious form of the old assimilation.

A related vein of work argues that indigenous forms of democratic communitarian citizenship already exist, and that their corresponding forms of citizenship education can and ought to be scaled up (and out) for broader consideration. This is the thrust of Mexican anthropologist Maria Bertely's work in Chiapas, starting with the creation of intercultural pedagogies and teaching resources across three different Mayan languages and groups, rather than between the Mayans and the mestizo majority (Bertely Busquets, 2009). Yet Bertely also wishes to argue for the broader viability of the forms of "active and mutualistic (*solidaria*)" democracy and citizenship that she documents in contemporary Maya communities. In an audacious move, she offers up these alternative forms of grass-roots citizenship not only for the communities themselves, but "for the world" (Bertely Busquets, 2008). One could chart an interesting parallel to this kind of work with the efforts of feminist "counterpublics" to diffuse alternative models of gender equity, or with the paradigm of legal pluralism in anthropology, which recognizes and valorizes alternative, grass-roots legal systems and concepts that must interface with broader national and supra-national systems (Benda-Beckmann, Benda-Beckmann, and Griffiths, 2008).

As I've suggested, the question of identity and identification is central to these broad studies of citizenship. More specifically still, recent work in educational anthropology on *schools* has sought to articulate the relation between formal

education, citizenship, and identity. Among the books that stand out are Aurolyn Luykx's study of indigenous teacher education in Bolivia (Luykx, 1999), Werner Schifffauer *et al.*'s (2004) ambitious comparative study of "civil enculturation" in schools in the Netherlands, Britain, Germany, and France, Ritty Lukose's (2009) account of college students and "consumer citizenship" in Kerala, India, Véronique Beni's (2008) study of nationalist emotion and passion at an elementary school in Maharashtra, India, and Kathleen Hall's original research on Sikh immigrant youth in Britain (Hall, 2002). Meanwhile, the collection of essays by Stevick and Levinson (Stevick and Levinson, 2007) explore a variety of sites and modalities – inside, outside, and even against the school – through which diverse kinds of citizenship identities are formed (Gordon, 2010; Lazar, 2010). Rob Whitman's striking essay about "civic education" in and out of school on the Spokane Indian Reservation (Whitman, 2007) drives home a point made by many of these authors: that the school proposes civic identities that may deeply influence students, but alternative political imaginaries and counterpublics outside the school often bring such identities into creative contradiction.

In the United States, some cutting-edge studies have explored the interface between citizenship education in informal educational spaces, such as the family or the "street," and more formal, school-based education. For instance, Beth Rubin (2007) has developed a compelling "situated sociocultural" approach to understanding how youth learn citizenship identities across school and community contexts. Thea Renda Abu el Haj (2007) has illuminated the complex forms of belonging that evolve among transnational Palestinian-American youth, who must negotiate the contradictory messages they receive about being Muslims and Americans in a US school with the sense of belonging imparted to them through family and community discourses. Finally, Patti Buck and Rachel Silver (2008) describe the citizenship dilemmas faced by immigrant adult Somali women in a Maine town, when the "liberal" subjectivity of citizenship encouraged upon them by their well-meaning teachers at an adult learning center clashes with the forms of gendered adult identity and community solidarity into which they were previously educated.

FROM IDENTITY FORMATION TO CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: A BRIEF STORY FROM MEXICO

This new body of work that explores citizenship identities across multiple contexts is highly significant, for it enables us to tease out the relationships between formal and informal educational registers, and to explore contradictions or continuities between them; to assess the balance of democratic versus non-democratic influences; and to theorize a whole new process and domain for educational anthropology. In order to explore this in greater detail, allow me tell a story about how I discovered and developed the dimension of "citizenship" in my own work.

About ten years ago, I completed a study of student culture and identity formation at a Mexican secondary school (Levinson, 2001). In that work, I sought to understand how students in the school, amid considerable sociocultural diversity, developed what I came to call, following Ortner (1996), a cultural "game of equality." Tropes of

equality and national identity, rooted in the broader history of post revolutionary Mexican education and state formation, formed an important part of school life. The school's creation of diverse class cohorts and structuring of everyday activities also encouraged a sense of equality. Students appropriated these organizational and discursive resources made available to them to create their own cultural forms, and their own meanings, through the informal social domain. As a result, students from otherwise rather different backgrounds and sociocultural circumstances came to see one another as more alike, more "equal," within the terms of this cultural game. Playing the game in 1991 then had consequences for students' identities and trajectories over the next several years.

My study of student culture and equality in Mexico was originally framed by social and cultural reproduction theory in education. This literature is very "political," to be sure, concerned as it is with how schools help reproduce social inequalities. By the 1990s, an ethnographic stream in the literature had begun to emphasize the role of peer culture in the reproduction of such inequalities (Levinson and Holland, 1996). What emerged as a common pattern across these ethnographic accounts was the prevalence of subcultural polarization in US, European, and Australian secondary schools. It appeared that school structures and practices fomented such polarization. I wanted to study whether and how this happened at a Mexican secondary school. What I eventually discovered, in short, was a school structure and culture that promoted unification, even as it gave rise to new and unintended divisions between secondary students and those who no longer studied (Levinson, 1996). Above all, the school promoted a strong common identity on the grounds of national citizenship, and this common identity, appropriated and inflected by students, forestalled the polarization of student peer groups; it also appeared to displace or postpone processes of reproductive differentiation to spaces and times outside or after school life.

Contemporaneous with my extended period of fieldwork (1988–1998) was a burgeoning movement for democracy in Mexico (Preston and Dillon, 2004). In fits and starts, Mexican civil society was beginning to throw off the yoke of authoritarian, single-party rule. Elections became fairer and cleaner, and the flow of information became freer. Human rights and transparency in government emerged as key discourses of an emerging democratic culture. Opposition parties secured important victories, and new social movements generated outside the state came to exercise important influence on policy and public opinion. Concurrent with the democratic turn, Mexicans across the political spectrum also grew increasingly concerned about social "disintegration." The combined influence of mass media, transnational migration, economic recession, aggressive consumerism, and new forms of labor exploitation appeared to create severe dislocations in everyday life. Among the dislocations that adult Mexicans most emphasized was the shifting, precarious attitude of many youth. To hear parents and teachers tell it, Mexican youth were now more likely than ever to gratuitously challenge parental authority, engage in violence or crime, and disrespect the traditional symbols of national and community life. Adults talked a lot about a "loss of values" in the current generation, yet they had few ideas about how to effectively address it (Levinson, 2003, 2005). Many, of course, looked to the school; more specifically, they sought a solution through resuscitating the grand tradition of civic education (Latapí Sarre, 2003).

From the moment of its creation in 1923, the Mexican secondary school, or *secundaria*, has prominently featured a civics curriculum. Through successive presidential administrations of the twentieth century, civic education has varied, but always around certain key themes: learning and valuing the official legal and political instruments of Mexican society, especially the Constitution; developing a sense of belonging and commitment to the nation; and developing forms of solidarity and cooperation at the local level. However, since 1974, and when I did the main part of my fieldwork, from 1990 to 1991, there was no longer a separate course in “civic education” at most secondary schools like the one I studied; instead, civic education themes and discussions of democracy were folded into the omnibus subject, “Social Sciences.” A serious reform of Mexican civic education only began just as I was finishing my year of school ethnography, and it wasn’t until 1995 that the secretary of education gave an internal team the charge to create an ambitious new program in “civic and ethical formation” (FCE) for all three years of secondary school. The FCE program attempted to respond to those societal concerns about the loss of values through a curriculum of democratic citizenship education. Meanwhile, prominently placed advocates of the ongoing democratic opening also saw in the schools, and the FCE program, a chance to build a new political culture from the ground up. For them, values of democratic participation, equity, open debate, and respect were paramount.

By 1999 the new FCE program had been implemented in virtually every Mexican secondary school, public or private (Levinson, 2003). Highlighting a dialogic, student-centered pedagogy, the authors of the FCE hoped that it would form the axis of a new, less authoritarian school culture to offset traditionally authoritarian practices (Fierro and Carbajal, 2003; García Salord and Vanella, 1992). Moreover, the decision to combine the political socialization goals of civic education with the multi-faceted aim of “ethical” values formation brought together a set of so-called democratic attitudes and competencies that had not been articulated in quite the same fashion before. Education for democratic citizenship became inextricably linked with the clarification of values and the “prevention” of undesirable attitudes and activities, such as drug use, prostitution, or illegal gang participation. Importantly, prevention would not be sought through moralizing or punitive measures (e.g., “Abstinence only” or “Just say no”), but through a process of communication and dialogical reflection.

Throughout this same period of the 1990s, my interest in education for democracy continued to grow as I finished a book and cast about for new topics of research. Yet I have continually asked myself how and why I could have missed the importance of citizenship and democracy in my earlier fieldwork; indeed, neither the word democracy nor citizenship appears in my book’s index. I’ve since come to believe that a major factor contributing to this temporary myopia was the absence of a serious discourse on citizenship and democracy in the anthropology of education. Neither social and cultural reproduction theory, nor the prevailing variants of “cultural difference” theory in our field, encourages us to link our research with the concerns of citizenship and democracy. While our existing theoretical frames and normative commitments may carry an implicit democratic charge (justice, equity, and inclusiveness), they fail to orient us explicitly toward questions and debates of political agency and publics. In many ways, this inattention to politics simply mirrors a deeper American educational myopia. The themes of citizenship education for

democracy – political participation, deliberation, civic engagement, etc. – are relatively invisible in our typical school curriculum, not to mention the surrounding civic culture. It's no wonder, then, that we hadn't sniffed them out very well. Tellingly, much of my own inspiration came from outside the discipline – a perennially strong program in social studies education for democracy at my home institution, Indiana University (Patrick, Hamot, and Leming, 2003). It was also the special interest of two of my graduate students in the “new” democratic civic education in Estonia and Indonesia, respectively (Doyle Stevick and Wendy Gaylord), that prodded me to look again, and to look differently, in Mexico.

When I finally “discovered” the broader Mexican debate about democratic citizenship in the late 1990s, and when I learned of recent developments in civic education, I realized for perhaps the first time that what had taken center stage in my ethnographic writing – under a different name – were in fact practices of citizenship education. Even without a stand-alone civics curriculum, the *secundaria* I studied was actively engaged in producing moral subjects oriented toward the collective good. The wearing of common uniforms, the structuring of “mixed” cohorts, teachers' exhortations to solidarity, the Monday morning rituals of national identification – all of these were clearly elements of an integral values education for citizenship (Levinson, 2002). Of course, at the same time there was an active values education occurring in spaces outside the school. In my writing, I describe this varied education of the home, the church, the workplace, and the “street” in a language of identity formation, but it was also, I now see, about the modalities of citizenship. And the sense of citizenship one learned in the school did not always mesh smoothly with the citizenship taught and caught elsewhere. One female student, for instance, was an avid consumer of pop psychology advice in magazines and daytime television programs. Embracing the individualistic ethic of self-improvement communicated there, she chafed against the school's emphasis on group solidarity. Another student, from a rural indigenous community, all but knew that he would soon be joining his brother in the fields and restaurants of California. He remained aloof and skeptical of the school's claim to provide mobility and solidarity through its rituals of identification; one foot was already placed in a transnational counterpublic whose political imaginary questioned the legitimacy of the Mexican state to provide social and economic opportunities. Since my study was framed by reproduction theory, I was still asking what now seem like sterile questions about whether, and how, such phenomena contributed to the “reproduction of inequality.” I did not ask whether, and how, such phenomena contributed to educating the students “to imagine their social belonging and exercise their participation as democratic citizens” across different publics.

In my recent research, then, I have explored one small corner of the educational bureaucracy in Mexico. I have undertaken a modest ethnographic study of how the FCE program came into being, and how it is now faring in the context of other, competing proposals for citizenship education (Levinson, 2005). Yet my broader agenda eventually includes a return to the students – an intensive, multi-sited ethnographic study of civic teaching and learning in early Mexican adolescence. Through both longitudinal and “latitudinal” methods, I will attempt to assess the relative impact of school-based citizenship education on students' broader learning of civic identities and public commitments. I am still interested in the problem of inequality, but

I re-frame it in terms of the identities that inspire and enable democratic commitments to, and participation for, social justice.

FORMAL DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION

To this point, I have argued the need for us to study and theorize practices and processes of citizenship formation occurring in and out of schools, especially when they are not explicitly recognized as such. In this last section, I shift my attention to deliberate and explicit school-based programs. School-based programs in democratic civic and citizenship education (DCE) have become one of the primary sites for the creation of new political dispositions and identities, and for the consolidation of particular meanings about “democracy.” What has occurred over the last 20 years is a veritable explosion of activity in this domain, galvanized by international charters and agreements on the one hand, and civil society activism on the other. The result is a curious amalgam of programs and activities which reflect a minimal consensus on such values as “participation” and “freedom,” but which display a great variety of interpretations of such values in practical implementation. This alone should qualify such programs as eminently worthy of anthropological attention.

Let me illustrate again, briefly, with the case of Latin America in the global purview. Any anthropological attempt to understand the growing phenomenon of DCE in Latin America must first reckon with its historical-institutional context, and ask the following, rather “sociological” questions: what are the major organizations sponsoring democracy, and how do they work?; who funds them?; what laws and policy statements have been passed that are driving these programs?; what is the prevailing political and social climate, and what is the existential context, in which certain kinds of programs and policies are being developed (e.g., a prevalence of human rights abuses; corruption; civil war; narcotraffic)?; finally, what role do government agencies, especially ministries of education, play in developing and implementing these programs, and what role do various NGOS – local, national, and international – play? what kinds of collaborations/relationships, if any, exist between these different sectors?

The kinds of visible programs and initiatives in DCE, while associated with particular organizations, often have their roots in broader social movements that find their expression within such organizations. With the (re)emergence of democracy in Latin America, a variety of social actors who had participated in the democratic struggle have now moved into positions of leadership. Often having endured the worst measures of dictatorship, they now find themselves at the forefront of efforts to consolidate a democratic culture and thereby forestall future swings back to authoritarian rule.

Partly as a result of such activism, since the late 1980s most independent Latin American nations have included some form of DCE in their education plans and reforms, and they have been abetted by multilateral organizations often led by democratic activists as well. The Organization of American States (OAS) is one of the most proactive policy bodies to sponsor DCE throughout Latin America. At

least since the Second Summit of the Americas, held in Santiago, Chile, in 1998, numerous mandates for attention to “democratic values and practices” have been promulgated during OAS general assemblies, plenary sessions, and Summits of the Americas. Such efforts were strongly bolstered by the signing of the Inter-American Democratic Charter of the OAS in September of 2001. Articles 26 and 27 of the Charter placed emphasis on education for developing a “democratic culture” to accompany democratic political reforms, and this provided the justification for the eventual establishment of the Inter-American Program on Education for Democratic Values and Practices at the OAS.

The OAS is one kind of international organization that influences the direction of DCE within Latin America. However, there is also a very active NGO sector, with varying degrees of collaboration with, and funding from, state agencies. For instance, Civitas Latin America is a US-based non-governmental organization that provides democratic education services to its Latin American partners. It receives a major portion of its funding from the United States Department of Education under the Education for Democracy Act approved by the United States Congress. Other strong influences come from member-state organizations, such as the United Nations (particularly UNESCO), the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The IDB enabled an initial “observatory” of regional citizenship education trends to evolve into a well-funded Regional System for the Evaluation and Development of Citizenship Competencies (SREDECC). SREDECC has gained strength more recently by collaborating with the IEA Civic Education Study and developing a unique Latin American module of this internationally comparative study.

Virtually every Latin American State has subscribed to one or more of these regional and international policy-making bodies. State education ministries are thus strongly conditioned by the agreements, mechanisms, and policies that such bodies establish. National laws and policies are often formulated with reference to them. In this way, a broad hemispheric commitment to DCE has been orchestrated. This is the over arching historical-institutional context. Yet when we examine particular programs anthropologically, we should also ask: how is “democracy” implicitly or explicitly defined and conceived by actors in different roles?; what kinds of knowledge, competencies, values, or dispositions are highlighted, and what kinds of political agency fostered?; what is the political-social context in which certain values and competencies are highlighted over others?; finally, how are policy goals transformed or translated into practice?

In virtually all DCE discourses and programs, there is broad agreement about the need to supplement “mere” electoral democratization with more robust and far-reaching cultural change. Policymakers see education – more specifically, schooling – as the most effective way to bring about such change. There is also broad agreement that such education cannot rely on the time-worn accumulation of encyclopedic knowledge that characterized the “old” civic education. Rather, DCE necessarily involves the creation of new values, dispositions, skills, and knowledge. It is not surprising, then, that older terms like *valores* (values), *ética* (ethics), or *normas* (norms), as well as the newer *competencias* (competencies), figure prominently in DCE programs. Such programs claim to seek to instill deep commitments

to democracy in which core values and knowledge undergird reflective action. Where the DCE programs differ amongst themselves is in the values they highlight and the competencies they seek to develop (not to mention the varying degrees of political will to implement them). Some place emphasis on deliberative conceptions of democracy, others rule-of-law, others participatory democracy, and so forth. And in cases where the rhetoric would seem to be similar, the meanings can be quite different as well. For instance, participation has become the ubiquitous watchword of programs for DCE. Schools are supposed to create participatory dispositions, or competencies, through dialogic, student-centered, problem-solving pedagogies. Yet participation has also become a kind of Rorschach image, susceptible to manifold cultural and ideological projections. We know that the term participation can be drafted as easily into a neoliberal project of governance as a social democratic or socialist one (see Paley, 2001). If in Latin America the modernizing, developmentalist state of the 1940s to the 1970s wanted “productive” citizens who worked for the good of the country, the neoliberal state wants “participatory” citizens who can learn to solve their own problems and provide for their own needs privately, or at best through civil society. Meanwhile, the populist democratic state (e.g., Venezuela) wants participatory citizens who become public “protagonists” for state-led social change. Thus, meanings of democratic participation may correspond roughly to state forms and state projects.

When we bring Latin America together with Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and other regions, what we are witnessing is an unprecedented and concerted effort to use formal education to form democratic citizens on a global scale. At least in rhetoric, it seems a striking attempt to retool schools away from their authoritarian roots and refunctionalize them as spaces of democratic conviviality – not unlike the global effort to refunctionalize schools for indigenous and regional language revitalization, and away from the colonial ethos of linguistic assimilation (see McCarty and Warhol, Chapter 11, above). Yet until recently, the study of this phenomenon has been dominated by researchers in the fields of political science, comparative education, and social studies education (Niemi and Junn, 1998; Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2001). Such researchers tend to use survey methods, and they tend to take for granted the limited hegemonic meanings of liberal (representative) democracy. They cannot, for instance, parse out the different meanings that “participation” might have for both education policymakers and the teachers and students who engage in the prescribed activities of DCE. With its diverse methodological toolkit, anthropology has a great deal to contribute to this body of work. Indeed, we cannot afford to concede this field of study entirely to other research traditions. It is too fascinating, and too important.

Anthropology has always had as its strength the elucidation of cultural frameworks of meaning, of local identities; in recent years, as we’ve learned to cross sites and theorize both social scale and connectivity, we’ve also become more adept at understanding the interplay between such local identities and broader social, cultural, and political-economic structures and processes (Lamphere, 1992; Marcus, 1998). We understand how concepts of “the educated person” are structured at the local level and enter into a dynamic interplay with other concepts of the educated person that circulate at the level of the state and the global system (Levinson and Holland, 1996).

Describing with ethnographic detail the interplay between informal citizenship education practices and discourses, and the DCE of schools, anthropology is poised to make a significant contribution.

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CHAPTER 18

Development, Post-colonialism, and Global Networks as Frameworks for the Study of Education in Africa and Beyond

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Schooling in Africa, as elsewhere, presents a fascinating set of paradoxes that, on the one hand, people should place their hopes in schooling even as they recognize its limitations, and, on the other hand, the globalization of the signs and practices of schooling is universal and yet also entirely local. Such juxtapositions point to a fundamental question about education: How, despite the normative conventions of contemporary life it reproduces, does schooling (or more precisely, people's use of schooling) cultivate critical conditions for the transformation of those same conventions? This question applies to schooling both as a global institution and as a local set of practices.

Anthropological research on education in Africa in the last several decades has examined the above paradoxes through three frameworks: development, post-colonial influences, and global networks. Each framework predominated in a different decade, though they are each, in operation, entwined and ongoing in changing forms today. Research on development reflects a legacy of anthropologists' older, functionalist interests in adapting education to meet the needs of new populations and of newly independent and modernizing societies. It also reflects a critical strand in anthropology that links development to enduring relations of colonial domination. Research on

post-colonial influences on schooling examines the ambivalent workings of power within colonial and post-colonial contexts, and explores the symbolic and political reshaping of meaning that generates ongoing and new relations of in/exclusion. Research on global networks, itself influenced more than the other two by a desire to rethink nation-state-centric models of governance, examines relations of production, consumption, and exchange that both produce and ideally carry the potential to transform inequalities; such research addresses education in the context of a range of issues that are often debated at a supranational scale, including the environment, global media, international labor, and health and human rights, to name a few. We review each of these approaches with an eye to understanding how research on education in Africa reflects and sometimes seeks to move beyond, yet often succumbs to, the above-mentioned paradoxes.

EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: TWO STRANDS OF RESEARCH

Development as we use it here has both political and ideological affinity to the earlier concept of International Development, which crystallized efforts to reconstruct post-Second World War economies. The economic plight that soon besieged newly independent countries led to increasing interventions by international financial institutions like the World Bank, with the goal of encouraging growth-focused economic policies as well as rationalizing the production of requisite human resources through education. Research on development came to the fore in the early to mid-1980s. This was a pivotal time for anthropologists, who both advanced the tenets of progress that inhered in the then dominant theories of modernization *and* began to find a language to question the political import of modernization and their complicity in it.

Anthropological research on development was shaped by two strands of engagement with cultural modernization: (a) a history of interest within anthropology in understanding education in relation to cultural adaptation and intercultural teaching, and (b) a critique of Western scholarship as complicit with imperialism. The first of these two strands centered on the anthropological constructs of socialization and acculturation. Socialization derived from British social anthropology and addressed the institutionalization of generational transmission of cultural values and knowledge. The resulting functionalist relation of schooling to socialization itself derived from a much longer line of interest in understanding how so-called indigenous African forms of education (initiation, childrearing, storytelling, apprenticeship) might be adapted to European-style schooling (Malinowski, 1936; Read, 1955), and from an interest in discovering connections between education and processes of urbanization and migration (LaFontaine, 1970; Mayer, 1971 [1961]). Acculturation derived from American cultural anthropology, where it addressed questions of adaptation of immigrants and Native Americans to mainstream American culture, and in this vein became interested in how students' personalities and aptitudes mediated processes of adaptation.

Scholars working in this first line of thought conducted most of their research outside of schools, for they were less interested in matters of teaching and learning than in what people thought about education and how they deployed schooling for their own purposes. Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson (1980), for instance, examine the formation

of an elite in Zambia in relation to access to mission education and economic opportunities, while Grindal (1972) looks at how schooling constructs a parallel world for young people of northern Ghana which results in both forms of alienation from, and capacity to transform, local society. An exception to this extra-school focus of research on urbanization and development, however, can be found in works that documented new class distinctions and forms of social stratification emerging from dependent capitalism and political independence (Bond, 1982; Johnson, 1982; MacGaffey, 1982) – though this work, too, was more interested in understanding the structures and functions of schooling than in contributing to the main anthropological focus in studies of education at that time, which was on generational transmission and student learning.

The second strand of research on development in the 1980s took a more critical approach to the subject of education. This work was influenced by three publications that drew attention to the complicity of Western scholarship in colonialism and in processes of modernization: Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), Eric Wolf’s *Europe and People without History* (1982), and Johannes Fabian’s *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (1983). Although not about the discipline of anthropology per se, Said’s argument was that the representation of non-Western people in European literature and scholarship over centuries continues to reinforce contemporary images of such non-Western cultures as static, irrational, and inferior. By politicizing the concept of representation, a central trope across the social sciences and literary studies, Said’s work helped press for a rethinking within anthropology of how the discipline conceptualized what Said called its “interlocutors” (1989). Eric Wolf’s work developed a similar critique in relation to European concepts of history; he maintained that whereas Europe defined its own history as a series of recorded and remembered events, Europe conceptualized people without written records as those “without history.” Johannes Fabian directed this question of history to an analysis of time within the discipline of anthropology. He argued that analytic divides between tradition/modernity, African/Euro-American, and non-Western/Western were formed around an implicit idea of temporally linear progress, and thereby reproduced an imperialist ideology that presumed anthropology’s subjects were by definition of another world and another time.

Following on the above meta-critical works, historical works by Corrigan and Sayer (1985) and Mitchell (1988) became influential within this second strand, particularly since they (more than the above-mentioned works by Said, Wolf, and Fabian) spoke directly to the subject of education. Corrigan and Sayer argued that mass education had culturally revolutionized the English state, thus echoing a point already established in formerly colonized areas of the world, that education reconfigures the cultural forms of national identity and political leadership. Mitchell made a related, but even more complex point, when he noted how the organization of space and time in colonial Egypt constituted a rationalized and desirable pedagogy of everyday domination and control. Both of these works suggested that governing bodies use education to advance a hegemonic form of social organization – a point taken up in anthropological studies of state-sponsored education, particularly in regard to questions about development and nation-building. Donna O. Kerner’s work (1988), for instance, examined how the independent Tanzanian state used education to craft national citizenship.

Gregory Starrett's (1998) research looked at the Egyptian government's functionalization of Islam – that is, the strategic educational use of religious practices for purposes of state-building. Anthropologically influenced historical work addressed the social uses of knowledge among rural intellectuals in Africa (Feierman, 1990; Temu and Swai, 1981); and demographically informed anthropological work identified how ordinary people interpreted state education policies in terms of their own ideas about marriage, health, and reproduction (Bledsoe, 1990; Obbo, 1987).

A key insight to glean from research within the first strand (on education and social stratification, in connection with urbanization and migration) is that schools were very much a part of the African landscape by the 1980s; few Africans (or for that matter, anthropologists) thought of schools any more as strictly “European” institutions, and instead emphasized how people themselves invested schools with signs and purposes most meaningful to them. This insight is important beyond anthropology in putting to rest simple questions about “either/or” schooling in Africa: the idea that there is either an African or a Western method of schooling, either a global or a local form, is not borne out in anthropological work on development and education – though as anthropologists document, such distinctions have remained persistently a part of some development policy and educational folklore. The question instead that arises from this research is how globally circulating forms of education play out in local settings. Such a question was not asked by most anthropologists of this era but rose to the fore some two decades later (e.g., Anderson-Levitt, 2003).

An important point to take from the second strand (historical- and demographic-anthropological studies) is that what constitutes useful knowledge to those who are engaged in schooling is more complex than simply counting school enrollment. Governing bodies – whether colonial, independent, or international-organizational – embed values in policies and curricula, and the manner in which policies and curricula are implemented can be highly influenced by groups and individuals. This observation is widely shared today by anthropologists and policymakers alike (e.g., Hamann and Rosen, Chapter 27, below), yet a question that rivets anthropologists is whether this complexity precludes anthropologists' involvement (say as consultants or observers) in policy-oriented or development work. Anthropologists' answer typically serves as a divide between applied and basic research; however anthropologists' own point that people simultaneously deploy many frames in response to different social cues (Luhmann, 2007) can be reflexively applied to anthropologists as well, many of whom have, indeed since Malinowski's day, spoken simultaneously – albeit in different venues – to issues of both basic research and education policy (this point is more fully developed in Stambach, 2010a).

POST-COLONIAL INFLUENCES

In the early 1980s, historians and anthropologists engaged in a series of conversations to explore ways in which the two disciplines could benefit each other methodologically and theoretically. The resulting embrace of interdisciplinary approaches to anthropological research exploded the discipline's narrow sense of the research site as

a single, culturally enclosed place (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). Thus, from an earlier focus on educational practices in specific locations and times (as had been done in works by, for example, Johnson, 1982; Scudder and Colson, 1980), anthropological research on education shifted its focus to exploring whole historical eras, institutional practices not directly related to formal education, and general conceptual schemes. This reconceptualization of its vantage point expanded the anthropological purview to include analyses of the pedagogical import of colonial practices and modernity (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1997; Ngwane, 2001; Pels, 1999); the signifying practices of social movements and of traditions as “invented” (Burke, 1996; Coe, 2005); and the reshaping of meaning within and by media and popular culture (Meyer, 1999; Spitulnik, 1993). The Comaroffs, Ngwane, and Pels, for instance, described education as conversion and a colonial administrative tool; they also explored how Africans authorized colonial endeavors (for instance, by rendering the Bible and literacy meaningful, if not always in ways European missionaries intended, Bloch, 1993; Comaroff, 1996). In doing so, these researchers demonstrated the first of the three paradoxes described above: that schooling both recruits students to a dominant framework even as it provides a powerful language for rethinking and recreating this framework. Such recruitment can occur in several domains simultaneously, as Stambach showed in regard to students’ connections with both consumerism and evangelism (2000a).

With regard to engaging new cohorts of youth in the signs and practices of modernity, Burke and Coe address commodification and nationalism, respectively. Burke’s analysis of commercial inroads draws attention to the educational processes inherent in advertisement and consumer practices. This is a lesson also present in Spitulnik’s work on radio and Meyer’s work on video: namely, that mass media both draw youth in to hegemonic projects and are actively used by them to effect the changes they themselves wish to see. Coe’s work examines youths’ engagement with state-sponsored arts programs in government schools. Her analysis of the production of Ghanaian national culture through classes on dancing and drumming draws on a line of analysis traceable to Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), who view tradition as invented or produced, not given. In Coe’s hands, we see how students and national educators alike invest in making and reproducing tradition. All of these works demonstrate that the dualisms of Africa/Europe and tradition/modernity are fertile ground for debate and imaginative reconfiguration.

Expansion of anthropology’s field of vision also entailed a new engagement with scholars of literary theory (Pratt, 1992), cultural studies (Bhabha, 1994; Butler, 1993), and history (Braudel, 1984; Dirks, 1992). Pratt’s work, for instance, inspired anthropologists and historians to consider how connections between Europe and Africa (such as in schools, or as represented in one another’s expressive forms such as art, literature, and ritual) created mutually defining connections that integrated colonies and metropolises (Gaitskell, 2002; Hunt, 1992). Bhabha’s work similarly generated discussion about how colonialist discourses portray some people as legitimately belonging to a particular place and as the cultural norm to which Others are compared and taught to conform (Ferguson, 2006; Piot, 1999). Butler suggested that this pedagogical dimension of the everyday is effected through intentional as well as unwitting re-significations, in which old meanings are slowly transformed into new (Masquelier, 2009). The renowned historian Fernand Braudel (not a post-colonialist

theorist like the others but influential within post-colonial studies) is remembered for insights into how social meanings unfold over a long timeframe in relation to punctuated events on a smaller scale. Braudel's observations, with those of Butler and Bhabha, aided post-colonial scholars of Africa in thinking about education not as a magic bullet for social change but as an institution that, at least in the form of nation-state schooling, first defines and objectifies the social world in a particular way, and then slowly transforms the principles upon which core social relations rest, such as kinship and marriage, reciprocity and exchange, tutelage and apprenticeship.

Post-colonialist writings by Ngugi wa Thiongo (1986) and Masolo (1994) also influenced anthropological studies of education through the 1990s and into the next century. Ngugi prefigured in a more direct voice than anthropologists later adopted a protest to the colonization of Africans' consciousness. Where anthropologists by comparison rather matter-of-factly demonstrated that Africans were transformed through their engagement with the signs and practices of development and colonialism, Ngugi more forcefully and vociferously reviled European domination for indelibly "colonizing the mind." This legacy of domination, he contended, was present well after the time of independence, as evidenced in Africans' ongoing use of European languages and in the social scale and significance of European-style universities and schools. Kenyan philosopher D.A. Masolo took up this issue of cultural incursion in his study of African social thought. His work, which recognized the inextricability of Africa from Western discourse and vice versa, tempered Robin Horton's more literal comparison of African thought with Western science (Horton, 1993; on which see Stambach, 2000c). Where Horton rather generically had stated that both ritual and science hold explanatory powers, Masolo detailed *how* this was so, and in so doing he also drew out their differences.

To these post-colonialist scholars as well as to anthropologists writing in the vein of post-colonial studies, independence was a deceptive concept; in practice, it often just became another signpost on the teleological path toward the presumed endpoint of African modernity. Independence, like the ability to write, or conversion to Christianity, or the wherewithal to dress "properly," was itself seen as a modernizing design of the colonial, and now neo-colonial, imperative. The problem with the depiction of this path, post-colonial writers suggested, was not that Africans should not be (and were not already) modern but that the landscape of modernity should be differently conceptualized. Scholars, however, differed on this redesign. Some, like the Comaroffs and their students (e.g., Jackson, 1997; Ngwane, 2001; Stambach, 2010b; Weiss, 2009), implied that the liberal tradition of promoting deeper understanding through reflexive scholarship was one way forward, even as many also grappled with the irony of anthropology's entanglement in the three paradoxes above. Others writing in a neo-Marxist tradition called for relocating sites of power and production (Koffi, 2000; Mbabuike, 2001). What all shared despite different orientations was a frustration with the ongoing reduction of cultural, political, and historical complexity to a single-stranded conceptualization of social progress that prevailed in both development work and policy studies.

A point for anthropologists of education to derive from this scholarship on post-colonialism is that the pedagogic mode is simultaneously our object of analysis and our own method of communication. We study education and we use educative forms to communicate what we do. This inherent recursivity of our subfield is more

tightly woven than, say, the recursive dimensions of political and legal anthropology, or the anthropology of religion. Anthropologists of religion, for instance, do not convey their arguments in rites of intensification or of passage (except perhaps in academic venues, such as in masters’ and doctoral defenses!). Nor do anthropologists of law typically convey their arguments in court. To be sure, all of these subfields are connected, and all employ rhetorical strategies within the academy that inform and reflect signifying language and practices of their subfields (Mertz, 2007, for instance, studies how law instructors shape the formulation and implementation of law). However, anthropological studies of education more closely convey their information within an educative domain – making it all the more important for readers (lest they accept arguments uncritically) to discern how authors are portraying education: As itself a tool for change? As an arena for understanding how competing interests vie to control the social landscape?

Both portrayals – of education as tool for change and as a social field through which to discern differences – echo the above-described two strands in development work: the former is a variation of intercultural teaching that problematizes (more so than earlier work) the idea that there exist clear cultural boundaries (Simpson, 1999). The latter is a critique of normative and hegemonic values that analyzes the sometimes contradictory and competing innovations people associate with and produce through schooling (Bratton, 2010; Ngwane, 2001). In other words, some anthropologists working in a post-colonial vein see schooling as necessary for changing society. Others see it as a venue that bears upon, but never works alone to influence, matters of sociality. Of course, as with development studies, both portrayals of education within post-colonialist strands are closely interwoven. A key difference, however, is that within post-colonial studies the first strand seeks to identify aspects of schooling that propel people and systems forward; the second invests in the longer term, theorizing that transformation happens in unforeseen ways; and, unlike development studies, both of these strands within post-colonial studies are open to possibilities that “progress” takes many forms. To better grasp the unique recursivity of anthropological studies of education, scholars need to discern how writers animate education. If education is seen as a tool for change, the written (pedagogic) medium becomes itself an instrument. If education is conceptualized as an illuminating lens, its instrumental power is qualified amidst a range of other agentive forces.

Outside of the anthropology of education proper, a point that merits wider reach – and that comes from post-colonial studies – is that local culture is not dead. At the same time, neither was it ever “alive” in quite the same “this-is-what-culture-does” reified way that culture is sometimes portrayed in world polity theory and in policies influenced by this theory (e.g., World Bank, 2008). One of the useful points that *world society* or *world polity theory* makes is that nation-state leaders legitimate their countries’ standing by adopting scripts and norms that carry weight in historically and culturally Westernized international agencies. Boli and Thomas (1997), for instance, point to education as an example that the world converges toward particular norms, that local differences are falling away, and that because nation-state leaders employ common frameworks, distant places and people are becoming more and more alike. Schools, their argument goes, drive people to a common place. Their insight describes well the shared institutional apparatuses of nation-state schools and governments.

Post-colonial scholars, however, wish to discuss another point, including that international leaders' professional work is viewed differently within local communities. Most wish to show that institutional norms at transnational scales occur not as an innate function of supralocal institutions themselves (e.g., schools, courts, markets, international law), but as an expression of (a) the ideas and interests that dominant organizations, professions, and world regions bring to them, and (b) the ways people understand themselves and their communities as producers and products of particular local and translocal polities. Thus, post-colonial scholars press anthropologists no less than world polity theorists to look at "education in the making." They encourage us to focus on *which* and *how* (not *that*) global norms and networks emerge and change, intertwining in complex ways with "local culture."

GLOBAL NETWORKS

Contrary to the classical idea of education as the imparting and acquiring of reasoned knowledge, anthropologists writing about global connections maintain that educative institutions are made in the image of particular ideas about what is reasonable and right, what is meaningful and material, what is worth knowing and what is not. As such, there is a clear continuity of global studies with post-colonial influences on anthropology. Both subscribe generally to the idea that "power and knowledge directly imply one another; there is no power without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, 1977: 27). They differ, however, in their degree of focus on nation-state schooling and questions of governance. Where post-colonial studies focuses primarily on the social location of previously colonized peoples and countries, global studies broadens the landscape to include post-socialist countries of the post-cold war era and to address a range of issues that cut across the globe: environment and climate, health and education, trade and labor laws, transnational migration and mobility.

An interdisciplinary field to which anthropology speaks (*Ethnos*, 2007), global studies analyzes the political liberalism that conventionally also undergirds schools and theories of education. Political liberalism (and its successor, neoliberalism) presupposes a particular relation of schools to territory and temporality, especially to people's loyalty and knowledge of the past and present as nation-state citizens. Globally influential twentieth-century scholar John Dewey (1930), for instance, held that schools were microcosms of democracy where children learned by exploring their surroundings in preparation for their future vocational contributions. Although he did not espouse a strong form of nationalism, Dewey wrote about mass education in connection with a particular vision of democratic polities: as pluralistic but discrete, meaning that different nations have different customs, and live in different places. Similarly, though in a more conservative voice, E.D. Hirsch espoused a liberal political philosophy in arguing that classical knowledge embedded in selected texts fosters social inclusion and national consciousness (1987: 7). His argument was at best paradoxical, though more precisely, contradictory: multicultural education, Hirsch maintained, "should not be the primary focus of national education" because it tends

to reduce and splinter knowledge and identity – contradictory (though again not unusually so) because the national consciousness he sought to foster through social inclusion was itself unabashedly exclusionary.

Scholars of global networks argue that, to the contrary, the power–knowledge nexus links people to nation-states *but* it also and sometimes more securely connects them with other forms of nationalisms (religious, linguistic, ethnic) or with international professional fields, which themselves cut across territories. Such scholars press anthropologists of education to consider the networked communities to which educators – including, for instance, Hirsch and Dewey – belong. Dewey, for instance, had participated in a 1934 conference on education held in South Africa, where Malinowski too (funded by the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations) had presented a talk on native education and culture contact (Johnson, 1943). Looking at such kinds of networks illustrates that education policy is shaped at the supranational level by key leaders, foundations, or institutions, which are themselves shaped by key principles such as liberty, equality, and the merit of open disagreement and debate at the heart of liberal democracies – both in the past and in the present. Thus, the world polity theorists’ observation of a globally shared institutional culture is not discounted but is better understood as historically and culturally contingent, and always changing.

Anthropological research on educational communities of global scale thus attends to the place of actors in shaping education; to the constitutive powers of education in the making of people’s lived realities; and to the differential power of some institutions and associations over others (e.g., of internationally funded projects over un-sponsored grassroots initiatives). It emphasizes the ways human networks operate within but also expand beyond nation-state and conventional “area studies”; and it analyzes central, often competing, understandings of collective well-being and human security. As such, studies of global networks focus on such varied topics as the arts, sciences, religion, and humanities (Rhoads and Slaughter, 2006; Stambach, 2010a, 2010b); business and popular culture (Agozino and Anyanike, 2007); and schools and universities (Vora, 2008).

In addition to emphasizing the constantly changing connections that are shaped by communities, groups, and individuals, anthropological studies of global networks advance a second theme: that human security and economic development (or what is today being reframed as global market integration and environmental sustainability) are integrally related. Put another way, human security, economic development, and human cultural and capital networks are fundamentally entwined. Where economists of education historically have focused on the integration of markets, and on a conceptualization of human capital that posits the same conditions for decision-making everywhere, anthropologists studying global networks illustrate that culture and economics are inseparable; they argue that economists often naturalize human experience (making it seem inevitable that market forces should connect the world); and anthropologists contend that the very field of knowledge (the discipline) of economics works to bring the world into conformity with the virtual reality it defines (Carrier, 1997).

Arjun Appadurai and Arturo Escobar drove a similar point home in their early work, albeit differently. Appadurai (1986) wrote about the “social lives of things” – of material objects having trajectories that trace and reveal different social uses and values.

A group of anthropologists applied this insight to considerations of the transnational social lives of policies (AAA panel, 2003, “Do Policies Have Social Lives?” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois); and in a similar vein, in that their work traced the effects of governmental policies on young people’s social opportunities, anthropologists of youth culture examined generational changes that people attributed to mass schooling (Cole and Durham, 2007; Sharp, 2003). Arturo Escobar (1995) critiqued development discourses for reproducing hegemonic cultural forms. His work has been influential in anthropological studies of health and health education programs in Africa (Adams and Pigg, 2007).

One of anthropologists’ concerns in studying and teaching about global networks is to point out that higher education and the academy – like other norm-making institutions (law, business, governmental policy) – produce global connections and transnational realities (Hall, 2005; Urciuoli, 2005). Their goal is not to understand how higher education, or for that matter global legalism or world markets, functions “most rationally,” or how global institutions arise “naturally” as a result of progress and modernity. Instead, anthropologists studying global networks seek to understand how people in diverse places regard global networks differently, even as people in many places imbue networks with a kind of natural inevitability. Most of this work on global higher education has focused on Europe and North America. Future work might address transnational issues as they relate and connect to parts of Africa.

A point to glean from anthropological studies of global education networks is that national and localized differences do not entirely fall away (Anderson-Levitt, 2003). As historians note, global networks produce “convergence effects” – the coming together of different countries (economically, politically, and in terms of education policy) – but they do not automatically entail the “overwhelming” of diverse situations with “the same distributional outcomes everywhere” (Berger, 2003: 10). Global networks did not erase “culture” a hundred years ago, and they do not do so today. Nor does globalization mean the fall of the nation-state or the end of the need for national or grass-roots organization. To the contrary, some scholars argue, now more than ever nation-states and civil society organizations must step in to redistribute resources and to build social coalitions to support policies of redistribution (Berger, 2003: 125–126). Educational institutions, many argue, are central sites for this activity.

HOW WE ENGAGE THESE FRAMEWORKS IN OUR WORK

Our own research is informed by, and in turn informs, all three frameworks: development studies, post-colonial studies, and global network studies. Stambach’s early research (1998), for instance, appeared in a monograph that was subtitled *Perspectives on the Social Functions of Schools*. Although her chapter did not adopt the argument that schools inherently function to advance change (instead it argued that investment in education is highly tempered by localized understandings of the uses of schooling for mobility), her work at that time was embedded within a larger conversation, particularly in educational research, that framed African education as “other.” It spoke against this other-ing – and simultaneously against arguments about the development of a common world culture – by insisting that differences mask similarities, and similarities of outward

forms belie underlying variations. In other words, Stambach’s early work pointed to the limits of research on education development policy. It also focused on Chagga-speaking communities’ sense that new secondary school opportunities for girls under conditions of economic liberalization brought unforeseen consequences (Stambach, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2003).

Stambach’s more recent work combines elements of post-colonial and global network studies, looking at the two-way, transatlantic and north–south travel of ideas about education policy (Stambach, 2003) and information technology (Stambach and Malekela, 2006). As she and Malekela found, what is important for students of, in this case, information technology is much more than having the latest set of skills. It is also a matter of having the social connections that education promises, including global connections and employment opportunities. Malekela and Stambach document diasporic Tanzanians’ pithy insights into schools’ shortcomings. Their work points to the need for anthropologists– and policymakers, funders, and educators alike – to keep in mind that education integrates with other institutions in a connected society. This means that schooling should remain a focus but should never be seen as an isolated singular institution for social change. Such a lesson has already been well assimilated among select transnational and civil society organizations, including some religious groups from the United States whose members are assertively involved in East African educational arenas, broadly defined to include schools as well as health care, micro-financing, ICT consulting, and media (Stambach, 2010b). This observation, along with that made by Phillips and Stambach (2008) about educational opportunities being seen locally as cultivated rather than objectively open to everyone (even if only in theory, as is the case in the United States – see Stambach and David, 2005), draws attention to the need for future research on education in Africa to look beyond the rhetoric and forms of international or “globalizing” policies.

Ngwane’s early work is most influenced by post-colonial studies, particularly the latter’s criticism of the notion that successful development and education are a reflection of sound policy – a position that elides the creative tension between policy and the diverse projects people bring into the experience of schooling (Ngwane, 2002, 2003). Thus, in an article on mission work in nineteenth-century South Africa, he unpacks the temporal modes by which missionaries operated (Ngwane, 2001), and in later work he shows how these modes converge and merge with African systems of codification in such a way that new semantic structures are formed that constitute *not* a culturally homogeneous world but a world that is nonetheless experienced (very differently by different people) as a single entity (Ngwane, 2004). In so doing, Ngwane makes clearer an anthropological argument heretofore unheard by many comparativists: that tradition and modernity, initiation and schooling, are neither exclusively separate nor homologous categories. Instead, schooling and initiation rites are sites within which debates, struggles for control, and transformations take shape. Equipped with this insight, Ngwane examines the social uses of the concept of “progress” in the social sciences, and, through historical analysis of anthropology’s own social history (Ngwane, in press), particularly that of functionalist “interpreters” such as Monica Wilson, he shows how the concept of progress rises and declines – an argument also borne out in his work on health and medicine (Ngwane, 2009).

CONCLUSION

In brief, our work informs and is influenced by development studies in that we work within a tradition that studies education as a tool for social change, even as our research shows that this change is neither unidirectional nor agreed upon. It speaks to and is informed by post-colonial studies in that we work from the premise that to define knowledge is to wield power, and to wield power entails controlling knowledge. We work inductively from this premise to discern empirically, through participant observation and public records, how power and knowledge are mutually entailed in various ethnographic settings. This empirically grounded, ethnographic approach draws upon critical literary approaches to textual analysis that are the hallmark of post-colonial studies. Last, our work benefits from global network studies' persistent point that questions of education, health, global policy, and environment are wholly interconnected, but we qualify arguments about global connections by insisting that the experience of global phenomena is always profoundly local.

Such grounded understandings of history and politics, culture and economic opportunity – as well as of locally spoken languages – are always essential for field work. Understanding this integration of politics, culture, economics, and history is key to grasping the paradoxes we identified at the outset: that schools reproduce and also change social relations; that they promise the world and yet alone cannot deliver; and that they are simultaneously local and global institutions. The paradoxes with which we began show us, therefore, not only that the promises, lessons, and global forms of schooling are not necessarily universal, but that it is at the level of local agency and practice that they resolve into a constant tension, in which students are simultaneously objects of socialization and subjects of self-actualization.

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CHAPTER 19

Civil Sociality and Childhood Education

Sally Anderson

This chapter explores the contribution that the concept of *civil sociality* makes to the anthropology of education. Although its Latin lineage spans Western history, the concept's own history is short. The notion of civil sociality emerged from an attempt to grasp the political and moral construct of *civil society* as a sociocultural phenomenon and arena of ethnographic research. It grew out of an anthropological frustration with abstract and ideal versions of civil society, which despite, or perhaps because of, much theoretical attention, tend to take on discursive lives of their own, both resisting and enduring critical ethnographic investigation (cf. Hann, 1996; Keane, 1998). The “seemingly awkward concept” of civil sociality (Levinson, 2008: xii) thus grew out of a desire to investigate and grasp civil society in all its messy spatiotemporal, intersubjective, interactive, relational, physical, and performative detail. This level of detail is crucial, I believe, for understanding institutions and venues of civil society – in all their plurality – as sites of childhood education.

The chapter opens with an account of the emergence of civil sociality as a concept in a particular historical period, national context, and field setting. Next I discuss the concept's heritage and possible use as a comparative analytical tool for understanding forms of public or extra-domestic childhood enculturation. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the concept's potential for directing theoretical and ethnographic attention to a wide range of extra-domestic and non-school sites of education.

WHEN SOCIAL THEORY AND STRATEGIC POLICY MERGE

In the late 1990s, when I set out to study Danish “association life” (*foreningslivet*) as a site of non-school, non-state childhood education, the concept of *civil society* was undergoing a renaissance in both political thought and public policy. In a book entitled

Civil Society: Old and New Images, John Keane notes the global spread of the “language of civil society” at this particular moment in history (1998: 32–33, 52). According to Keane, the late twentieth century witnessed a variety of “experiments in the political art of reshaping state forms and setting new limits on the scope and power of state institutions” in a “search for new equilibrium between state and non-state institutions” (1998: 34–35). Seligman also observes the reappearance at this time of the idea of civil society “among writers across the political spectrum, and in many different countries” (1992: 57). For Seligman, this renewed scholarly focus on civil society was spawned by a fundamental crisis, characteristic of the modern condition, of adequately representing a coherent vision of society beyond its individual members. The renaissance of the concept of civil society in the final decades of the twentieth century may thus be viewed as yet another chapter in the modern history of efforts to posit the idea of civil society as a normative ideal and set of institutional practices (1992: 57–58).

While social theorists employed the concept of civil society as an ideal type to describe, interpret, and develop explanatory understandings of complex sociopolitical realities, policymakers were strategically deploying the language of civil society to achieve a predefined and assumed political good (Keane, 1998: 37, 41). Scholars and policymakers alike invoked civil society in attempts to contest despotic power, dismantle existing political orders, democratize populations, and reconstitute an autonomous public domain (Keane, 1998: 41–46; Seligman 1992: 6). In countries with histories of civil society, scholars lamenting the decline of citizens’ capacity or desire to organize themselves into groups were calling for a revitalization of associational life to counter the perceived dissolution of the ties of civil society, symbolized most famously by the image of “bowling alone” (Keane, 1998: 5; Putnam, 1995; Seligman, 1992: 6).

Denmark was no exception to this global trend. Despite the country’s traditionally dynamic voluntary sector, by the 1990s the nature and well-being of Danish civil society (*civilsamfund*) was on the theoretical and political agenda. Scholars explored the relationship between the state and voluntary sector in Nordic welfare societies, the impact of the nineteenth-century folk high school and gymnastics movement on Danish civil society, volunteerism, embodied democracy, and civil society as constitutive of local society (Habermann, 2000; Ibsen, 1992; Klausen, 1988; Korsgaard, 1997a, 1997b; Nielsen, 1990; Norberg, 1998; Trangbæk, 1995). Politicians extolled the virtues as well as the social responsibilities of civil society. In return for ongoing political endorsement and public funding, the government pressured voluntary sport associations – the mainstay of Danish civil society – to create more opportunities for the mentally and physically handicapped, the elderly, as well as immigrants and refugees and their offspring to participate in organized recreation and sport (Anderson, 2002, 2008). In short, the government worked to shift more responsibility for the welfare of marginalized Danish citizenry onto the voluntary sector.

At the same time, government policies endorsed voluntary associations as vital democratic cultural institutions. Throughout modern Danish history, governments and educators alike have promoted voluntary associations, particularly gymnastic and sport associations, as significant sites of popular enlightenment and national, democratic upbringing (Trangbæk 1998; see also Korsgaard, 1997a, 1997b). Based on an

understanding instituted by the Danish gymnastics movement – that properly educated persons are “well brought up” in both body and mind – cultural policies endorsing children’s entitlement to cultural activities emphasized their rights to access and participate in activities run by voluntary sport associations, which were construed as important sites for their democratic enculturation (Anderson, 2008). With an influx of immigrants and refugees in the latter half of the twentieth century, Danish social and cultural policies have also encouraged their participation in voluntary sport associations as exemplary sites of social integration and “Danish” democratic enculturation. Policies have specifically targeted the offspring of immigrants and refugees from economically underdeveloped and war-torn regions commonly thought to be lacking in the democratic institutions of civil society.

To sum up, in the last decades of the twentieth century, Danish politicians strategically deployed the language of civil society to invite debate on the state of the voluntary sector, its role vis-à-vis the welfare state, and how this non-state (yet subsidized) sector might contribute to social integration. Their goal was not to revitalize Denmark’s already vigorous voluntary sector or encourage further growth of ethnic associations. Rather, their mission was to harness existing associations to the political project of incorporating immigrants and refugees into “Danish society” by channeling them into “Danish associations” – on the assumption that this would effectively forge social coherence and support a well-functioning welfare state. Through both moral persuasion and targeted funding, policies prodded and enticed voluntary sport associations to look beyond their own sporting concerns and take on the political mission of enlightening foreign newcomers to the ways of “Danish democracy.”

Keane notes that civil society is often viewed by its proponents as a given good (1998: 49), and to be sure, Danish policymakers and scholars seemed to share a common faith in the constructive aspects of civil society. Although the *idea* of civil society is as much a key symbolic element in an ideological field as it is any organizational reality (Verdery, 1996: 105, cited in Paley, 2002: 475), Keane notes that positive assumptions about civil society as an ideal type often merge with representations of civil society as “a determinate reality existing ‘out there’” (1998: 52). The idea of civil society in Denmark translates easily into a wide range of on-the-ground voluntary associations in which, ideally, all citizens, though particularly incoming immigrants and refugees, might and should take part. In policy discourse, the positive efficacy of voluntary associations to advance social integration and democratic enculturation goes without saying, despite a number of projects and studies shedding doubts on this claim. All in all, in Danish policy-speak the concepts of civil society, voluntary association, and association life (*foreningslivet*) lead positive – though highly abstract – discursive lives. They have a propensity to thus inhibit more comprehensive considerations of what participation in this “life” or “society” might actually entail; they make further and deeper discussion seem superfluous.

CIVIL SOCIALITY

The convergence of theoretical and political discourse on civil society and association life – two powerful conceptual shorthands – attracted my interest, not least because of the ethnographic stones left unturned with regard to actual processes of education

and enculturation. Orthodox political claims that sports associations are socially integrative sites of democratic enculturation begged ethnographic attention:

Assumptions inherent in policies give the appearance that association sport is transformative in and of itself – with little need of explication or exploration of the socialities through which associations or sports inculcate democratic orientations. (Anderson, 2008: 12)

Such taken-for-granted assertions on behalf of categorical abstracts – “civil society” and “association life” – are extremely problematic for the educational ethnographer. Although any number of anthropological approaches to socialization and enculturation (e.g., indexicality, situated learning, implicit knowledge, cognitive models) allow us to assume that some form of social learning and cultural acquisition takes place when taking part in organized recreational sport, it is unsound anthropology to assume, from the outset, particular educational outcomes of childhood membership in a voluntary association. In order to study voluntary associations as non-school, non-state sites of childhood education, we need a concept that affords detailed exploration of both foundational and diverse forms of organization, interaction, and subjectivity in these social arenas. For this, I chose the term *civil sociality*. Such a concept points us towards the shorthand concepts of civil society and associational life without becoming totally caught up in their taken-for-granted grasp.

Anthropologists often use ethnography to challenge policy assumptions, and here I challenge an ideological faith among Danish policymakers in the positive formative capacities of association life. Yet rather than focus on whether voluntary associations indeed live up to policy claims, I have chosen to explore the socialities children encounter and bring forth as members of voluntary associations to investigate what they actually might be learning. The concept of *civil sociality* affords this specific focus on childhood socialization and education in voluntary, organized, extra-domestic social arenas. It does not focus attention on the workings of associations per se, but rather on the interactional genres and forms of relatedness forged by groups of children and adults. The aim has been to examine the socialities of voluntary associations claimed by Danish policies as central players in the cultural production of physically and democratically educated Danish citizens.

An analytical focus on *civil sociality*, rather than *civil society*, is thus an attempt to understand the footprint of much Western political thought – its theoretical problematics and ideal social orders – on the institutionalized social and moral orders and practices children encounter when doing something as mundane as “going to badminton.” Seligman reminds us that it is important to understand civil society *as a concept* before we can fruitfully apply the notion “as either a descriptive or (as Clifford Geertz would remind us) prescriptive model of (or for) social reality” (Seligman, 1992: 4). I admire this scholarly caution, yet as Hann notes, anthropologists are primarily interested in investigating civil society as a term that does have some purchase on social reality (1996: 2). The challenge is to make sense of the everyday “social realities” of institutionalized social orders and performativities referenced by those *ideas* of civil society that are politically employed as prescriptive models. Shifting to the notion of *civil sociality* is one attempt to confront this “social reality,” as it were, to work through

the ethnographic particulars and mundane relational dilemmas of sharing space in spheres of interaction configured as civil or “public.”

This is important not least from an educational perspective. A focus on sociality highlights modes of relationality and genres of interaction, and thus affords detailed investigation of the formative aspects of organized, voluntary sociation. With ongoing political emphasis on the significant role of the civil sphere in the formation of citizens, an analytical focus on civil sociality allows us to explore what children might be learning about commonality, mutuality, and participatory democracy through taking part in voluntary sociational venues.

The notion of civil sociality may well prove a useful analytical tool for studying a variety of forms of extra-domestic childhood sociation in which children are expected to act *as if* they are metaphysical equals: for example, as “children,” age-mates, street mates, teammates, classmates, or affiliates of ethnic and religious communities. As such, it may prove useful for studying across so-called formal and non-formal registers of education (cf. Levinson, Chapter 17, above). In addition, bracketing “the civil space” of voluntary association from both “the public space” of mass schooling, and “the private space” of domestic arrangements may allow us to explore the ways in which contemporary educational sites and childhoods are compartmentalized, as well as how children act as mediators across these social domains. The concept of civil sociality thus offers a fresh approach to childhood education, drawing attention to what children may be learning about the world through voluntary participation in activities motivated by commonplace desires to play football or badminton “together with my friends.”

A PARTICULAR HERITAGE?

Levinson’s observation that the concept of civil sociality “captures a social process that is ... not quite uniquely Danish, but not quite universal either” (2008: xii), raises the question of whether civil sociality *is* a useful universal analytical tool, or whether, like ethnicity, it gains more traction in some sociocultural settings than in others. I address this ambiguity first, by exploring the concept’s heritage and second, by introducing five basic figures derived from the concept. These may serve as particular vantage points for investigating the modalities of extra-domestic sociation through which children learn about the world, and as yardsticks for evaluating the usefulness of civil sociality as a comparative analytical tool.

The universality of sociation/sociality

My usage of sociality stems from Georg Simmel’s discussion of sociation or *vergesellschaftung*, which he defines as “forms of being with and for one another ... in which individuals grow together into a unity” (Simmel, 1971: 24; 1950: 41). In this, Simmel emphasizes the simultaneity of processes of sociation, forms of sociality, and the formation of social units. In a study of community making in Mexico, Monaghan brackets these links between process, form, and unit. He uses “sociation” to explore actions and processes of social interaction, which may or may not lead to particular historically constructed and locally valued forms and units of “sociality” (e.g.,

community) (Monaghan, 1995: 14). This move does not deny the simultaneity of process, form, and unit, but it does offer the universal applicability Simmel sought by allowing us to investigate processes and units of sociation and forms of sociality without presupposing links to any *particular* social forms, units, and interactional genres. Separating sociation and sociality for analytical purposes thus permits us to acknowledge the *discursive* existence of culturally valued forms of sociality, such as community, associational life, or for that matter, civil society, while providing some measure of comparative historical perspective and analytical distance.

In my study of Danish association life as a valued form of sociality, the conviction with which links between processes, forms, and outcomes were articulated in policies – as though *all* processes of organized voluntary sociation automatically result in democratic socialities and inclinations – posed an ethnographic challenge. Anthropological exploration of specific *processes of sociation* and specific *forms and units of sociality* challenge such taken-for-granted links and thereby expose to empirical investigation the culturally informed policy assumptions regarding educational outcomes.

Civil particulars

Whereas the concepts of *sociation* and *sociality* appear quite suitable for comparative analyses of childhood sociation and enculturation, the qualifier *civil* is more troublesome in this regard. Although analogues to *civil* are found in other languages and cultural traditions, the English term *civil*, derived from Latin – *civis, civilis* – indexes a particular social, legal, and political complex – with particular categories of persons, forms of relatedness, behavioral repertoires, and distinct legal and social domains. For example, civil refers to private citizens with *civilian* rather than military or ecclesiastic status. It refers to refined or *civilized* human behavior, to *civil* or polite social intercourse, or to mutual *civil* relations between fellow citizens. It refers as well to private legal affairs encompassed by *civil law*, to the *civil* liberties and duties of citizens, or to extra-domestic spheres of interaction, such as *civil society*.

These meanings and the social order they index are, in anthropological terms, particularistic and ethnocentric, and thus not to be paraded as pseudouniversals (cf. Hann, 1996: 17–24; Kavaraj and Khilnani, 2001; Keane, 1998: 52–64). Nevertheless, it might prove analytically productive to parade them as particulars with universal analytical potential (Goody, 2001). This is, after all, common in anthropology. Scholars have paraded a whole range of cultural particulars (*potlatch, mana, shaman, kula, compadrazgo, dreamtime*) as heuristic devices for discovering – by means of careful (and sometimes not so careful) comparative analysis – universal aspects and principles of human cultural and social exchange. To explore particular meanings of the English term *civil* and to assess the comparative potential of *civil sociality*, I return briefly to the idea of civil society.

A child of both Greek and early modern thought, the Western idea of civil society emerged at particular historical moments under particular political, economic, and intellectual conditions which, Hann reminds us, cannot be replicated in any part of the world today, including Western Europe (1996: 1). The idea of civil society rests on a mutually constitutive (though theoretically problematic) distinction between private and public spheres of interest and sociation. Embedded in this is a distinction between particularistic *private subjects* – as “autonomous, agentic individuals” – and

a public realm shared by freely associating *peers*, a universalistic society, understood as some form of communal or corporative whole, though not necessarily a polity (Goody, 2001: 151; Seligman, 1992: 5, 16, 49). In later versions, civil society becomes wedged between the private realm of family and kin and the public realm of the state, and morally posed in contrast to both. This social realm is inhabited by private *citizens* and constituted by their free association in a range of associations, networks, and groups. This civil sphere is thus at once both public and private, populated by private individuals sharing common public space (Seligman, 1992: 49). The idea of civil society posits an entire cosmology, with distinct social domains and spheres of exchange, universal membership, and free and non-violent association between independent individuals who relate to each other as metaphysical equals.

To the extent that *civil sociality* also invokes this particular cosmology, we must exercise caution in applying it as a comparative analytical tool. This caveat notwithstanding, the concept of civil sociality may still prove useful for comparative study of childhood education. The Western idea of civil society, which, from the perspective of children, looms abstract and adult-centered, reveals little about how children, and other not-quite-autonomous individuals or not-yet-full-fledged citizens of a polity, fit into (or fall out of) the cosmological scheme. This is perhaps a result of the development of “children” as social others and national projects in Europe in the course of the 19th century, during which policies aimed at protecting and educating children relegated them to designated spheres of home, school, and playground (de Coninck-Smith, 1996; Hendrick, 1997). As a category, children were not classed as full-fledged citizens or even (semi)autonomous, agentic individuals in public debate or social theory until the latter half of the twentieth century (cf. James and Prout, 1997; James, Jenks, and Prout, 1998).

The gradual movement of children out of domestic spheres of home and family into civil spheres of age-grade organized activities, such as Boy Scouts and Young Pioneers, started in Europe and elsewhere after the First World War and has grown tremendously up to the present moment, when even babies attend swimming classes and 3-year-olds play organized soccer. I have characterized this gradual “coming out” (no longer as co-workers, but as participants in classes, clubs, camps, and other formative recreational programs) as a *civilizing* move, one that brings with it challenges of how to interact with others as civil persons. Joining together as *civil* peers entails acquiring a set of appropriate classificatory, moral, and performative repertoires and stances connected with *civil* status, *civil* social arenas, forms of relatedness, and modes of behavior. First and foremost it requires that children, and other novices, leave home and kin behind, and go out into the “society of others.”

The concept of *civil sociality* was thus coined to help grasp what children might be learning through taking part in the “civilizing” process of extra-domestic sociation, which is of import to both nationalizing and democratizing movements. These processes and political projects are extremely relevant to the anthropology of childhood education. The concept of civil sociality allows us to explore the more or less institutionalized practices of sociation, commonality, trust, solidarity, mutuality, and reciprocity that tend to be overlooked in macropolitical studies of civil society (cf. Hann, 1996). The concept specifically lends itself to studying the position and experience of “children” and other “child-like” categories, because, unlike the idea of civil society,

it does not posit from the outset a fully-fledged legal citizen or fully autonomous and freely associating private individual.

COMMON GROUND?

Roughly cut, the anthropology of education has not traditionally set its sights on specific processes and sites of voluntary, extra-domestic sociation. Yet the ethnographic literature is rife with educationally relevant gatherings and venues: congregations, cock-fights, village meetings, healing rituals, youth houses, festivals, initiation and mortuary rites, powwows, harvest feasts, temple banquets, and work groups. While normally explored through the lenses of kinship, exchange, religion, production, or community, we might revisit these with an eye to their educational significance (cf. Stafford, 2007; Toren, 2006). Of interest are the processes of classification and identification, forms of relatedness, genres of interaction, and understandings of hierarchy and power relations that children appropriate through participating in these and comparable venues. The following figures are derived from the notion of civil sociality. I see them as strategic vantage points for questioning the modalities and processes of extra-domestic sociation in which children take part. As such, they may prove useful for the comparative study of childhood education, and more specifically for the comparative study of the ways in which particular and universal affiliations are formed.

Extra-domestic sociation

Using the Danish case as an example, engaging in the civil sociality of voluntary association requires participants to leave domestic spaces and relationalities behind and join in arenas of common activity, often public in the sense of being “open to all.” I offer the following depiction of a young girl’s first day of badminton practice to exemplify what this “coming out” may entail:

Rather than joining the 20-odd 10–13-year-olds milling around waiting for practice to start, Emily quietly surveys the scene from the bleachers. The instructor is handing each child a cloth strip for a warm-up game of Tail Tag. As the instructor moves in her direction, Emily slowly makes her way down the bleachers to receive a cloth “tail” and the instructor’s welcome. Following the instructor back to the circle of children gathered in the center of the gym, Emily moves hesitantly, as if testing the floor to see if it will bear her weight. Nearing the other children, she bites her lip, tugs at her oversized T-shirt and winds the strip of cloth tightly around her fingers. When the instructor, shouting to be heard, finishes running through the rules, her sharp whistle signals the start of the game. Shrieking, chasing, skidding, and tugging – the other children swirl neatly around Emily, who pivots quietly in the eye of this storm – as though searching out that first contact that will signal her acceptance. (Anderson, 2008: 2–3)

This extract suggests that one rudimentary lesson of sociation in the civil sphere is the importance of positioning oneself and moving in relation to others in ways that fit into the joint activity at hand. Emily’s debut highlights the potential relational exclusiveness of common activity and the corporeal unease that may ensue when

stepping into social arenas comprised of unknown others. It underscores the existential vulnerability to which one's person may be exposed when joining others who hold the power to grant or withhold social existence (Hage, 2003). The notion of civil sociality thus draws attention to extra-domestic sociation – the act of “going out” into the non-kin based society of peers – as a potentially universal figure of childhood education.

Civil personhood

As we have seen, the English term *civil* denotes a private person who does not hold state, church, or military office, and whose membership in society is not defined in terms of ascriptive affiliations (Seligman, 1992: 146). The civil person is thus ideally a common, universal moral agent, free of family, kin, ethnic, territorial, or religious affiliation. It is exactly this figure of being, rendered separate from family, which distinguishes the civil sphere as a moral realm of mutual cooperation and joint activity extending beyond the narrow, “amoral” bounds of family interests (cf. Banfield, 1958; Miller, 1974). This rendering thus suggests that another rudimentary lesson of sociation in the civil sphere is the importance of acting (at least, for the moment) as an individual, and as one's *own* person, “estranged” from family (Seligman, 1992: 146).

Briggs (1998) writes of the dramatic moments and emotional work of learning to be a “child.” I suggest this might apply as well to processes of learning to be a “civil person”. The identity, performativity, and sociality related to acting as one's *own* person in common spaces of shared activity must be staged, reflected upon, and appropriated. In the Danish case, this form of personhood is forged through childhood participation in an assortment of institutions (day-care, leisure clubs, sport associations) that organize children in age grades and urge them to treat each other appropriately as fellow consociates, erased of ascriptive affiliation. Studying how civil personhood is learned and enacted in and across overlapping and compartmentalized sites of childhood may give us a broader grasp of the range of processes of civil enculturation with which children engage. We might also study what I am calling – for want of a better term – *the civil person*, as a particular type of “educated person” who is in growing demand on the global educational scene (cf. Levinson, Foley, and Holland, 1996; Levinson, Chapter 17, above).

Civil relatedness and affiliation

Simmel writes broadly of *universal (modern) individuals*, yet, as we have seen, the term *civil*, in English usage, often refers to individuals defined as *citizens* vis-à-vis a state. This is perhaps not surprising, as the idea of civil society was shaped by the extension of citizenship in European states. However, understanding civil persons as citizens tends to center attention on the political units that qualify citizenship. This relationship is, of course, both important and relevant, but as Benveniste notes, there is a logical error in positing any political entity as a prerequisite to a mutual relationship of *civis*. He argues that *civis* – or fellow citizen – is a term of reciprocal value, pointing

to a relation and not a status (Benveniste, 1974, cited in Nowotny, 2008: 1–2). Benveniste’s reading of “citizen” does not privilege political entities and institutions as the overarching grantors of legitimate membership (cf. Goody, 2001: 151). Rather, it focuses our attention on the forms of mutual relations constructed between fellow citizens. This understanding of “citizen” more readily includes children, non-nationals, and others with less-than-full citizen status (from a juridical perspective), and allows us to explore the ways in which they construct mutual, reciprocal relations in civil spheres of interaction (cf. Reed-Danahay, 2008).

By bracketing the polity as *a priori* grantor of legitimate membership, Benveniste’s reading allows us to investigate the ways in which children come to see themselves as having something in common, and the processes through which they construct mutual relations and affiliations, both as kinds of metaphysical equals and actual consociates in extra-domestic spheres of sociation.

Many studies of civil society highlight macropolitical tensions and conflicts between the interests of civil society and the state. A focus on civil sociality does not deny these, yet shifts our attention to common everyday tensions between selective/ascriptive and universal/civil forms of relatedness and strategies of exchange in sites of childhood education. As Baumann notes, “most of the civil societies of northwestern Europe ... have been faced with the paradoxical relationship between universalizing aspirations and exclusivist compensatory practices” (2004: 11). He argues that “an integrated civil society based on free exchange is ... a historical aberration,” because it requires socialization counterintuitive to ingrained models of selective exchange stemming from the intuition that “seemingly primordial relationships based on family, friendship, patronage, and perhaps ethnicity must be granted primary importance” (2004: 11). Baumann is keenly aware – as were my own child informants – that balancing inclusive exchange (as civil persons and age-mates) and exclusive exchange (as friends and family) in face-to-face interaction is a quotidian performative quandary (2004: 11; Anderson, 2008: 165–199).

Perhaps of particular interest is the tension between universalistic and particularistic forms of relatedness intrinsic to extra-domestic sociation, and how this tension plays out in relation to children. When children participate in extra-domestic venues, family is often present, either physically or imaginatively (James, 1998). Such family presence, as well as the daily exchange of children between spheres, tends to muddy the lines between “public” and “private,” highlight conflicts between spheres of exchange and mutuality, and throw up power struggles over pedagogical jurisdiction. Thus, a focus on civil venues as educational and pedagogical sites reveals the contradictions and tensions inherent in positing children as universal, civil persons, and allows us to study how children and adults work through the relational dilemmas posed by extra-domestic sociation. Studying forms of “civil” relatedness, mutuality, and affiliation may help us understand the processes through which children learn to fit themselves into universalistic venues, while at the same time establishing and maintaining more selective circles of mutual exchange. Of crucial interest to the educational ethnographer are the ways in which valued forms of social exchange, and the performative balancing acts these exact, contextualize and shape the sociality of educational sites.

Civil space

Paley argues that democracy needs public spaces and locations to happen (2002: 487). The same may be said of civil sociality. It needs locations where people share common space, time, and activity. Traditional locations include town halls, meeting houses, soccer pitches, village plazas, city squares, pubs, public baths, schools – all places where people gather and interact as civil persons. These locations are more than just functions of the activities they house. They are distinguished as civil space by the numbers, kinds, and statuses of people who occupy them – a point which children understand perfectly well (Toren, 1993). These quantitative and qualitative aspects of civil space, while seldom addressed in theory, are regular bones of political and social contention. Often, to come across as legitimate civil space, locations must accommodate a certain balance of kinds. Civil space is thus a fragile construction, easily disrupted and refigured by the numbers and kinds of people who show up. Too many of one family, too many state officials, too many of any one exclusive group or category may tip the scales, rendering the same location – a plaza or a town hall – a non-civil space, one appropriated by a particular kind. Ideally, then, civil space must not *appear* too socially exclusive. Rather, proper civil venues require some semblance of social exchange across quotidian lines of class, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and age. Civil space must appear to accommodate “everybody,” even when that “everybody” is variously configured at any specific gathering or activity. Most importantly, civil space is common space. No one set of participants should appear to have more proprietorship over this space than any others. This is relevant to social justice, but it is also a social aesthetic, and a performative genre.

I suggest that getting the quantity, quality, and aesthetic performativity of civil space right is no easy matter; it demands a certain measure of social competence. By engaging in the intricately structured commonality of shared civil space (however legitimated), children familiarize themselves with physical, emotional, behavioral, and aesthetic forms of expression relevant to extra-domestic sociation (Anderson, 2008: 14). The nature of these “civil” aesthetics and moral performativities, as well as the processes through which they are inculcated, should be of interest to the anthropology of childhood education.

Civil behavior

All cultural traditions demarcate thresholds between appropriate and inappropriate behavior, and operate with distinguishing degrees of refinement. As such, “civility” may be seen as a universal phenomenon (Goody, 2001: 152). Classic markers of civil behavior (and space) in Western social thought are the absence of physical violence and aggression, and “civilized” comportment with regard to bodily hygiene and eating habits (Elias, 2000). Another marker is “civilized” or “democratic” sociability, a stylized, inclusive behavioral aesthetic for acting together *as if equal*, such that there appears to be adequate “room for all” (Simmel, 1910, cited in Simmel, 1950: 45; Anderson, 2008). “Civil” behavioral styles require certain measures of self-constraint and collusion (McDermott and Tylbor, 1995). Participants must not resort to

violence, spitting, pointing their finger at, or taking up so much space, time, and attention (physically or verbally) that other participants come to feel singled out, overlooked, or excluded. An analytical focus on civil behavior thus allows comparative investigation of the character of restraint, manners, and proper social behavior in venues of extra-domestic sociation, as well as the modalities of inculcation through which these are learned.

In studies of pedagogical efforts to “civilize” children in Danish day-care institutions, anthropologists have noted the ludic license children enjoy as “not-yet civilized” creatures (Olwig, in press), as well as the stinging pedagogical distinctions made between those who have and those who have not yet learned to “control themselves” (Gilliam, 2009; Gulløv, 2008). Gulløv’s study underscores how behavioral programs, such as *Trin for Trin* (Second Step), an American program promoting social and emotional learning, has been adapted for use in Danish day-care institutions. These programs are aimed at inculcating “civilized” habits of interacting and speaking, and serve to delineate “well-functioning” children from their more troublesome mates, who appear either less competent in, or less committed to, the social arts of acting *as if* equal, even when it is quite obvious to everyone present that they are neither viewed nor treated as equal. In my own study of civil behavior in Danish sport associations, I note that the social arts of civil behavior do not eliminate tensions between co-citizen categories of ethnic Danes and ethnic others, but do establish a certain moral obligation to grant each other some semblance of social life (Anderson, 2007, 2008). On a broader scale, Meinert and Valentin (2009) have argued that rights-based development projects, focusing on improving the conditions of children’s lives, tend to cast NGOs as *parens universalis*, that is, as guardians whose role it is to cultivate proper parents and children who display forms of civil behavior “universally” acceptable to United Nations and World Bank programs.

Social theorists suggest that public focus on proper civil behavior is actually a mark of politically unstable and socially mobile times. The renewed political and theoretical focus on civil society of the 1990s, as well as current theoretical forays into the many facets of citizenship (Baumann, 2004) and global interest in programs of citizenship education (Levinson, Chapter 17, above) may be viewed in this light. We may expect struggles over appropriate standards of behavior to surface exactly at those historical moments when political and social registers shift with the emergence of new classes and categories of “fellow-citizens,” with whom some form of mutual exchange must be forged (Elias, 2000; Frith *et al.*, 2007). As such, the anthropology of education is living in exceedingly interesting times. For what versions of civil or civilized behavior are children and other novices expected to take up? To what are they being exposed? How and in which settings are they expected to learn proper civil behavior, civil forms of relatedness, mutuality, commonality, and affiliation? How do struggles over appropriate standards of behavior impact their lives? And which political interests are being served by efforts to inculcate behavioral regimes recognized as “civil” or “civilized”? Studying the repertoires, dilemmas, and conflicts connected with learning and teaching civil behavior may well provide fresh comparative views of democratic citizenship and civil enculturation across cultural repertoires, educational sites, and educational systems.

CIVIL SOCIALITY AND THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

This chapter has considered the potential of the concept of civil sociality as a comparative analytical tool, one that might prove useful in understanding the ways in which children learn acceptable forms of extra-domestic sociation, relatedness, and behavior. I have argued that although civil sociality is thoroughly embedded in Western social thought and political organization, it may be a productive heuristic device for probing modalities of extra-domestic sociation valued in other cultural and political traditions. As Goody argues, Western orientation is not necessarily an impediment to the use of certain terminology, as long as we are aware of the conceptual nature and force of this orientation (2001: 151). I have briefly explored conceptualizations pertaining to civil sociality, and presented five “ground figures” – extra-domestic association, civil personhood, civil relatedness and affiliation, civil space, and civil behavior. Separately, they offer analytical points of departure that train our attention on particular aspects of extra-domestic sociation. Together, they provide a common ground for anthropological investigation of civil sociality as a universal social phenomenon.

As such, the concept of civil sociality has potential for opening the sights and broadening the sites of educational anthropology. A focus on civil sociality might prove useful as an indirect, or oblique, approach to studying institutions of “citizen education”, both within and beyond formal educational institutions. It may also prove relevant with regard to the contemporary political currency of shifting educational focus from national imagery to civil culture, a phenomenon Baumann notes in a comparative study of civil enculturation across four European states (Schiffauer *et al.*, 2004). He writes that with the influx of non-nationals in state-directed schools, national imageries appear to have reached their “sell dates.” Educational policy focus is shifting to notions of “active citizenship” and “civil culture” among co-citizens. Baumann characterizes this as a current tendency in political rhetoric, social science, and educational circles alike, to disengage participation in civil spheres of interaction from civic or national status:

The indiscriminate use of the vague term: “active citizenship” in political rhetoric, [and the] proliferation of new adjectives in the social science literature on citizenship, [are necessary attempts to] disengage civil-cultural participation from civic or national status ... and question the link between citizenship and nationality. (Bauman, 2004: 10)

Baumann suggests that educational institutions are also shifting “emphasis from ethno-national content to civil cultural methods,” striving to “inculcate pupils with a civil culture that is nationally specific, yet normatively open to all regardless of their background, identifications or possible loyalties” (2004: 12–13). In short, we are seeing, in northwestern Europe and perhaps elsewhere, the transition from a political emphasis on “who you are” (where rights to citizenship are based on national ancestry: *jus consanguinus*) to a focus on “what you do,” that is, national civil styles and modalities of participation (2004: 3). The dual concepts of civil sociality and civil enculturation allow us to follow this trend in both nation-states and transnational

spheres, and to grasp “citizenship” as quotidian social practice. Like *civil culture*, yet at once more dynamic, *civil sociality* gets us beyond “the criteria of citizenship in the sense of nationality” to view the civil domain and “democratic politics of ‘social life’ as a possible domain of democratization” (Baumann, 2004: 10; Keane, 1998: 8).

In following which notions of citizenship and forms of citizenship education become extended across the globe, we must not, however, disregard the ways in which political forces are acting to inculcate strategic lines of civil relatedness and affiliation; such lines can become a form of “soft” nationalism which may serve to establish and strengthen both national and regional geo-political agendas. Indeed, particular forms of civil sociality, taken for granted as “our way of doing things,” may display more staying power than any overt nationalistic regime ever mustered. Despite the Western orientations embedded in the concept of *civil sociality*, these cultural particulars may nevertheless help us grasp how children in other settings “move out into the society” and the common spaces of others and, through this, learn to navigate the moral, social, and emotional straits of extra-domestic sociation, which is of crucial importance to most forms of communality. In response to Levinson’s previously noted observation – that the concept of civil sociality is not quite entirely particular, yet not quite universal either – I suggest we put this to an empirical test.

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CHAPTER 20

Anthropological Perspectives on Chinese Children, Youth, and Education

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of the English-language anthropological literature on Chinese children, youth, and education. Children and youth born in mainland China after birth planning policies that began in the 1970s stand at the vanguard of the drastic demographic and economic transformations that have transformed mainland China. Because of the importance of these transformations in anthropology and China studies, the bulk of recent anthropological scholarship about Chinese children, youth, and education has focused on the historically unique characteristics of this generation and its role in mainland China's transformation. Most developmental psychologists and psychological anthropologists, on the other hand, are more interested in how Chinese populations' approaches to childrearing and child development have been shaped by aspects of Chinese culture that they believe are shared by multiple generations of ethnically Chinese people in a variety of geographic locations, inside and outside of mainland China, and how these aspects of Chinese culture result in childrearing practice and child development outcomes that are different from those of non-Chinese cultures. This chapter examines both of these bodies of literature, and addresses how they may both benefit from better integration of their insights.

CHILDRearing AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT AMONG CHINESE POPULATIONS WORLDWIDE

The literature on Chinese child development has been dominated by psychologists interested in Chinese culture (defined broadly to encompass cultural values shared by families in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore, and Chinese immigrants and their descendants in a variety of countries worldwide) and how it differs from the cultures of non-Chinese societies and ethnic groups (Bond, 1996; Watkins and Biggs, 1996; Wu, 1985, 1994; Wu and Tseng, 1985). Cultural psychologists have been particularly interested in what they believe are Chinese cultural tendencies to privilege effort and environment over innate ability when it comes to teaching children desired values, behaviors, and skills, and to train children from an early age to develop emotional self-control, diligence, filial loyalty and respect.

Cultural psychologists have worked with psychological anthropologists to compare and contrast the cultures of Chinese societies and Chinese immigrants and their children in Western societies with the cultures of various other ethnicities and societies in their efforts to understand which aspects of childrearing and child development are universal, which are culturally specific, and what consequences result from different cultural practices (Chao, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2001; Fung, 1999; Miller, Fung, and Mintz, 1999; Miller *et al.*, 2001; Tobin, Hsueh, and Karasawa, 2009; Tobin, Wu, and Davidson, 1989). For instance, a study based on interviews with around 50 immigrant Chinese mothers mostly from Taipei, Taiwan, and 50 European American mothers in the Los Angeles area found that European American mothers fostered a cultural model of the independent self, while Chinese immigrant mothers fostered a cultural model of the interdependent self (Chao, 1994, 1995). Another set of studies comparing personal storytelling within the family in Taipei, Taiwan, and in the US cities of Longwood and Chicago suggested that children's transgressions were downplayed or erased in American families, while they were highlighted in Chinese families, but also that the pattern was reversed with regard to parental transgressions: Chinese mothers avoided narrating parental transgressions which might undermine parental authority while American mothers did so to humanize the parents (Miller, Fung, and Mintz, 1996; Miller *et al.*, 2001). A study of nine families in Taipei, Taiwan suggested that these families used shame to socialize children by situating lessons concretely in the child's immediate experience, and that their children actively participated in shaming events, which were often playful (Fung, 1999).

Most cultural psychologists and psychological anthropologists believe that studies of how ethnically Chinese adults and children in a wide range of geographic areas and societies talk about learning suggested that they indeed share a common cultural model of learning that emphasizes values associated with the Confucian tradition, especially life-long self-cultivation towards perfection, and dispositional qualities such as diligence, persistence, and concentration (Li, 2001, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2005, 2006; On, 1996). Efforts to socialize children in such values by emphasizing

the importance of education and family ties were also documented in a study of a rural Taiwanese fishing community and that of a rural community in northeastern China (Stafford, 1995).

Many anthropologists, however, have emphasized that Chinese childrearing, education, and child development are also shaped by values that are not commonly associated with Chinese culture in the psychological literature, as well as by the historical developments, political economies, and social and demographic processes prevalent in particular contexts (Chi and Rao, 2003; Fong, 2007a; Grimshaw, 2007; Watkins and Biggs, 1996). Even psychological anthropologists whose work described continuities between childrearing beliefs in Taiwan and mainland China have cautioned against over-emphasizing these continuities at the expense of contrasts. Drawing on his comparative study of a rural community in Taiwan and a rural community in northeastern China, Stafford wrote that, "Obviously, there are cultural continuities throughout mainland China, and beyond it, among people who identify themselves as Han Chinese ... But there are also profound differences: in economy, history, religion, language, food, ritual, and so on ... It is not my intention to *stress* continuity. Given the circumstances of life in Angang and life in rural Dongbei, to do so would be absurd" (1995: 175). An ethnographic study of PRC university students found that they did not fit the obedient yet uncreative "Chinese learner" stereotype; rather, they defied authority and asserted their agency through collective action as well as through willful lack of participation in class (Grimshaw, 2007). Another study found that, contrary to what other studies found about other communities' Chinese parents' tendency to believe that learning was important for its own sake, parents of children at a rural PRC elementary school had pragmatic motivations for educating their children, considered children's abilities as important as effort, and felt that it was not their responsibility but the teachers' responsibility to educate their children (Chi and Rao, 2003). Another study found that Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands considered the well-being of the family as their highest priority, and education was desirable only as long as it served the interests of the whole family (Pieke, 1991). A study of urban PRC teenagers and their families found many contradictions between the values of excellence, independence, obedience, and caring/sociableness that PRC parents told their children to abide by, and even more contradictions between these values and the more complex cultural schemas that PRC parents actually wanted their children to develop in order to succeed in the global neoliberal system while also maintaining strong ties to their family and community (Fong, 2007a).

A comparison of how American, Japanese, and Chinese educators reacted to videos of child socialization in Japanese, American, and PRC preschools at different historical moments over the course of two decades suggested that pedagogy in all three countries was shaped more by particular social, economic, political, and historical contexts than by unchanging cultural values (Tobin, Wu, and Davidson, 1989; Tobin, Hsueh, and Karasawa, 2009). In the 1980s, Chinese preschool educators valued academic readiness and skill-based instruction above all, and emphasized discipline to counteract the indulgence that educators worried was likely to result from the one-child policy; US preschool educators recognized the importance of

academic readiness but equally emphasized the importance of encouraging preschool children to develop the kind of creativity, independence, and self-expression that reflected US values; and Japanese preschool educators emphasized the cultivation of social skills and teamwork that were considered important preparation for K-12 education and Japanese society in general (Tobin, Wu, and Davidson, 1989). By the 2000s, however, Chinese preschool educators were most concerned about the need to inculcate children with values and skills that would prepare them to compete in a global economy. They therefore emphasized activities that would promote the kinds of creativity, independence, and self-expression formerly associated with American preschools, which ironically were trying to put greater emphasis on academic readiness and skill-based instruction in response to policies like No Child Left Behind, while also promoting play and social skills in response to child development theories. Japanese preschool educators, meanwhile, saw their role as focused on preserving tradition, and therefore retained significant continuity over the decades (Tobin, Hsueh, and Karasawa, 2009). This kind of study comparing national cultures and historical eras does much to problematize essentialist or reductionist assumptions about the effects of national cultures on beliefs about and practices in education, in China and elsewhere.

GENDER, FAMILIES, AND CHILDREARING IN MAINLAND CHINA

In contrast to more cross-nationally comparative and psychologically oriented studies, studies that focus on social change in mainland China have examined how the rapid and dramatic transformations of gender roles and family life in mainland China have affected children and youth. Though many forms of cultural, economic, and social discrimination against women persist, and some have even increased, young Chinese women are more empowered than ever before. Processes of modernization, globalization, neoliberalization, and fertility decline have given young Chinese women fewer (or no) brothers with whom to compete for household resources, more opportunities to do remunerative work in service industries that favor women, more opportunities to fulfill their filial duties throughout their lives, and new educational opportunities such as scholarships targeting girls and educational practices and policies that favor the skills of diligence, obedience, patience, and memorization that Chinese girls are more likely than their male counterparts to have been socialized to practice (Davis, 1989; Evans, 2008; Fong, 2002; Ross, 2007; Seeberg, 2007a; Shi, 2009; Zhang, 2007). Parents had little incentive to invest in their daughters in the patrilineal, patrilocal, androcentric kinship system prevalent in mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong prior to the modernization efforts that transformed all of these societies (Greenhalgh, 1985a, 1985b; Watson, 1986; Wolf, 1968, 1972). In mainland China, this system declined, especially in urban areas, first as a result of the gender-egalitarian socialist policies implemented by the Maoist state between 1949 and 1976 (Croll, 1981; Wolf, 1985), and then as a result of some continuations of those policies in combination with neoliberal economic reforms and birth planning policies. These factors have enabled women to participate more actively in the job market outside the home than before and thus gain greater power to direct

family resources toward their own parents' old age support. Daughters born in PRC cities after the birth limitation policies began in the 1970s enjoyed unprecedented parental support because most of them did not have to compete with brothers for parental investment, because their mothers had already shown that women can support their parents in old age, and because they themselves had increasing opportunities for work and education. Increasing neolocality in urban areas and the expectation that most rural youth, male and female alike, would migrate to urban areas instead of staying in the villages to take care of their aging parents have also reduced the advantage parents perceive in having sons rather than daughters, and to some extent even promoted a counter-ideology about daughters being better than sons because they are more likely than sons to be diligent and disciplined learners in school and maintain close, intimate, lifelong bonds with their parents (Fong, 2002; Shi, 2009). At the same time, lingering patrilineal, patrilineal assumptions have paradoxically favored daughters as well, as brides' parents are not expected to pay for housing to ensure that they can marry—since that is still considered the responsibility of the groom and his parents—and can therefore invest more of their savings in their daughters' education rather than in housing (Fong, 2002).

As gender inequality has declined in mainland China, mothers' and fathers' roles in childrearing have become more similar than in early twentieth-century Chinese gender and family systems, in which fathers were more likely to be strict, distant disciplinarians who spent little time with their children, while mothers were more likely to be intimate nurturers of their children (Lan and Fong, 1999). Following the predominant Chinese cultural model of the "virtuous wife and good mother," most PRC mothers have continued to bear primary responsibility for childrearing (Croll, 1983, 1995; Davis and Harrell, 1993; Honig and Hershatter, 1988; Rofel, 1999; Wolf, 1985). However, in the contemporary PRC, fathers have also become increasingly involved in their children's lives because they feel pressured to share childrearing tasks as their wives take on more paid work responsibilities. Childrearing has become more important and valued for PRC fathers than it was in the past, due to the increasingly child-centered orientation of PRC households, 95% of which were nuclear with a married couple and a single child in the 1990s (Wang, 2008: 51), as well as the increasing influence of global neoliberal definitions of ideal family life that privilege intimacy and affection between parents and children over the patrilineal ideologies that emphasized patriarchal distance and authority (Fong, 2004; Jankowiak, 1992, 1993, 2002; Yan, 2003). PRC fathers and mothers were especially likely to share equally in childrearing tasks associated with their children's education. Among urban PRC students in grades 8–12 who responded to a survey conducted in 1999 (Fong, 2004, 136), 31% ($N = 2,193$) indicated that their mothers had tutored them, and 32% ($N = 2,193$) indicated that their fathers had tutored them.

Recent scholarly findings about the transformation of family and gender relations in mainland China stand in stark contrast to the previous researchers' descriptions of the androcentric, patrilineal, patrilineal system common in many Chinese societies prior to the 1970s. They serve as powerful examples of how quickly and drastically family and gender relations can change in response to demographic and political-economic change.

POPULATION POLICIES, EDUCATION REFORMS, AND “EDUCATION FOR QUALITY” IN MAINLAND CHINA

Anthropologists who study education and childrearing in mainland China have also contributed to a better understanding of the relationship between demographic change, political economy, and educational policies and practices in mainland China. PRC birth planning policies and economic reforms have steadily increased Chinese parents' willingness and ability to spend large amounts of money on their children's education and consumption (Fong, 2004). These policies have successfully met PRC leaders' goal of hastening modernization by creating a generation of singletons (only-children) with levels of educational attainment, parental investment, consumption standards, and educational and career aspirations comparable to those of their counterparts in developed countries. But this success has come at a price. A parent whose love, hope, and need for old-age support are all pinned on just one child tends to do whatever is necessary to make that child happy and successful. Consequently, those born under the one-child policy have been raised with the same high expectations as their counterparts in developed countries, and face extremely high levels of parental pressure, competition, and diploma inflation in the educational system and job market where they must compete against other highly educated and ambitious youth, most of whom are also singletons facing the same pressures and expectations. In addition to being the sole focus of their parents' love and pride, singletons are expected to provide the bulk of their parents' living expenses, medical expenses, and nursing care after their parents become too old to work. Many singletons will also have to support children, grandparents, parents-in-law, and grandparents-in-law. In a political economy that promotes an increasingly large gap between the rich and poor, only a very high-paying job can provide enough income to enable one person to provide so many dependants with a respectable lifestyle. So just about every singleton, male or female, talented or not, aspires to elite status, even though only a small minority can attain it.

While singletons' high ambitions are helping the mainland Chinese state with its goal of accelerating China's modernization, they can also be unrealistic in a society with limited opportunities, and lead to frustration and disappointment. The limited opportunities and high expectations of singletons result in pressure, competition, and teachers' and parents' efforts to make children spend all their time preparing for standardized exams that will determine what, if any, secondary and higher education they will receive, and thus the socioeconomic trajectory of the rest of their lives. My research found that Parents, teachers, school administrators, students, and government officials valued the high achievement and ambitions produced by this competitive system, and also considered the standardized exam system the fairest way to attain educational meritocracy (Fong, 2004, 2007a). At the same time, however, many of them were concerned that over-emphasis on exam preparation at the expense of all other aspects of children's lives might be physically and psychologically unhealthy, as well as stifle practical and creative skills that would be necessary for making China competitive in the global economy.

In the 1990s, the Chinese government began promoting “Education for Quality” (*suzhi jiaoyu*) campaigns and other educational reforms to address these problems.

Linked to broader discourses of population quality (*renkou suzhi*) associated with China's birth planning and modernization policies in general (Anagnost, 1997a, 1997b; Greenhalgh, 2008; Greenhalgh and Winckler, 2005), these educational reforms aimed to increase children's creativity, initiative, well-roundedness, social and practical skills, interest in their studies, and moral and civic consciousness by reducing the amount of time children spent on exam preparation, incorporating more creative, artistic, practical, political, and extracurricular activities into children's education, revising the exam system itself to reward analytical and creative thinking, and offering lower exam score cutoffs to students with unusual artistic or athletic talents.

Anthropological studies of these efforts highlight the difficulties they encountered in an entrenched educational system and political economy that still rewarded high standardized exam scores above all else (Ding and Lehrer, 2008; Fong, 2004, 2007b; Kipnis, 2001, 2006; Murphy, 2004; Paine and Fang, 2008; Woronov, 2007, 2008). Efforts to replace passive memorization and practice tests with new teaching methods that encouraged greater student participation and initiative also encountered resistance from teachers and administrators. When teachers and administrators tried to implement such reforms, they often faced a backlash from other teachers and administrators who criticized them for threatening existing hierarchies and deviating from established practices (Fong, 2004; Ouyang, 2000; Schoenhals, 1993, 1994).

The idea of "quality" (*suzhi*) itself was fraught with contradictions and ambiguity – while everyone agreed that it was something desirable that everyone should have, "quality" could encompass a wide range of qualities, including physical, practical, social, creative, and artistic interests and skills, diverse life experiences, patriotism, morality, good citizenship, high educational attainment, good job performance, and a modern, independent, cosmopolitan attitude and appearance (Fong, 2007b). The term "quality" became increasingly popular and influential in Chinese discourses as reforms intensified through the 1990s and 2000s (Kipnis, 2006). Discourses about "quality" are intertwined with neoliberalism, but also encompass many other values and qualities considered desirable and prestigious in mainland China (Kipnis, 2007). The flexibility, multivocality, and ambiguity of these discourses were used by the mainland Chinese state to give coherence to its policies in China while justifying its failures or shortcomings. For instance, a study of rural primary school education in mainland China suggested that discourses about population quality legitimated the mainland Chinese state's intervention in private family life (e.g., with fertility limitation policies), while also justifying the retreat of the state in public matters (e.g., the reduction of social welfare benefits) on the grounds that people are ultimately responsible for their own quality (Murphy, 2004). Stigmatizing discourses about the relatively low quality of farmers deflected attention from socioeconomic inequalities and state policies that kept the facilities and salaries of rural schools far below the standards of urban schools and made it difficult for rural schools to attract and retain well-educated teachers and administrators (Hannum and Park, 2006; Postiglione, 2007).

It was often hard for students to attain all of the qualities that were supposed to constitute high quality, as some of them impeded others – spending a lot of time on rote memorization and practice tests, for instance, could lead to the high educational attainment that defined one aspect of "quality," but it also reduced the time students

had available to cultivate other qualities that the term “quality” was supposed to encompass. Reduced emphasis on standardized exam preparation, on the other hand, could reduce poorer students’ chances of attaining higher socioeconomic status (ultimately the most important determinant of “quality”), since rural students and working-class urban students were less likely than wealthy urban students to have opportunities for educational enrichment outside of school and a safety net of parental cultural, social, and financial capital to protect them from falling into poverty if they failed to get into prestigious college programs (Fong, 2004; Kipnis, 2001). Efforts to implement “Education for Quality” reforms were therefore met with resistance among rural and working-class urban students.

Often implicit, and sometimes explicit, in discourses about quality were assumptions that ethnic minorities, being far removed and isolated from the centers of development and modernization, had lower quality than PRC citizens who were culturally part of the urban Han ethnicity dominated PRC mainstream (Anagnost, 1997b; Litzinger, 2000; Schein, 2000). Minority students and their parents not only felt conflicted about whether they preferred schools that would pave the way toward upward mobility through assimilation into mainstream PRC culture and language, or schools that would help them maintain their own cultures, religions, and dialects (Lin, 2006), but also faced serious obstacles to educational attainment, which did not yield enough economic returns and was sometimes considered irrelevant to their specific lifestyle (Postiglione, Jiao, and Gyatso, 2007; Seeberg, 2007b).

Studies of PRC discourses on “quality” demonstrate how quickly and effectively educational discourses can be used to legitimate new demographic and political-economic regimes, as well as how students, teachers, and parents can maintain critical perspectives toward such discourses when their own interests are threatened. Such processes have been observed in many other societies worldwide, but they are especially powerful in mainland China because of the power and pervasiveness of the mainland Chinese state (Greenhalgh, 2008; Greenhalgh and Winckler, 2005; Kipnis, 2008).

MAINLAND CHINESE CHILDREN AND YOUTH AS VANGUARD OF GLOBALIZATION, NEOLIBERALIZATION, AND MIGRATION

Mainland China’s rapid transition from Maoist autarky (1949–1976) to intense globalization has attracted significant attention from scholars and the general public. As in many other parts of the world, in mainland China it is youth and children who stand at the vanguard of globalization and neoliberalization (Cole, 2007). Anthropologists who study Chinese children and youth have made significant contributions to the literature on the globalization of mainland China.

PRC children and youth espouse values that reflect the global neoliberal values of the rapidly changing political economy in which they were born and raised. The Chinese slang term *ku* has become popular among Chinese youth, who use it to characterize individuals with emotional control, appearance, willful individualism, competence, and an easy-going personality, and defines the new kind of individualism and modernity valued by China’s millennial youth under the influences of globalization (Moore, 2005). In mainland China of the twenty-first century, Chinese youth face a

growing number of choices and opportunities in the job market. In addition to wanting to find the most prestigious and highest-paying job possible, many Chinese youth also want to find the “right” job that suits their personality and interests (Hanser, 2002; Hoffman, 2001, 2006, 2008, 2010).

Many anthropologists have documented rising consumption standards among youth born under China’s one-child policy (Davis, 2000). Urban PRC parents of a wide variety of socioeconomic statuses have become more willing to spend large amounts of money on their children’s clothes, toys, and extracurricular activities due to rising household incomes and the increasing availability of consumer goods, along with widespread advertising and retail promotions (Davis and Sensenbrenner, 2000). Efforts by the state and parents to ensure that their singleton children have the most modern, scientific, prestigious, and therefore expensive food, clothes, toys, and education begin in infancy, when the state promotes best feeding practices for the “perfect baby” (Gottschang, 2000a, 2000b, 2001) and continue through childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood (Fong, 2004; Jing, 2000; Yan, 1997).

Urban mainland Chinese children and youth aspire to the lifestyle of their developed world counterparts, who they were born and raised to emulate. Many complain about China’s “backwardness” (*luohou*), while praising developed countries (Fong, 2004). They want to be part of the developed world, and aspire to the kind of educational attainment, expertise in English and/or Japanese language, consumption standards, and high-paying, prestigious careers that can qualify them as cultural citizens of the developed world. Despite the legal and financial obstacles that make it extremely difficult for mainland Chinese citizens to get visas that would allow them to enter developed countries, many urban mainland Chinese children and teenagers want to travel abroad to increase their qualifications for belonging in the developed world. Because those born after the Maoist autarky which ended in 1976 have grown up with increasing access to global information flows and with the skills and desires cultivated by participation in the global neoliberal system, transnational migration is both more possible and more desirable for mainland Chinese citizens in their teens and twenties than for older groups. Unlike previous generations of Chinese people, mainland Chinese youth and children born after the 1970s have never known a time when the neoliberal cultures and political economies of developed countries were not prestigious and ubiquitous. Extremely wealthy mainland Chinese parents have sent their children to attend high school and university in developed countries, to learn professional skills and become competitive in the global economy (Ong, 2006). More commonly, mainland Chinese youth in their late teens and early twenties went to developed countries to study and/or work, sometimes spending many years studying and working abroad, trying to gain a better life and become part of the transnational elite with flexible citizenship (Fong, 2006).

Maoist and post-Mao neoliberal policies’ efforts to dismantle Chinese patrilineal family structures and ideologies, along with economic reforms and increasing rural-to-urban migration opportunities, have also had a tremendously empowering effect on rural mainland Chinese children and youth, who have much greater power within the family than previous generations of children and youth did in rural areas of mainland China (Gaetano and Jacka, 2004; Murphy, 2002; Yan, 2003). Rural children and youth are the members of their families with the greatest opportunities for upward

mobility through migration to cities—either as college students who may qualify for white collar jobs in the city after graduating college, or as laborers in construction, factories, and the service industry—and such migration often results in upward mobility for the entire family, as migrants send remittances to their parents or bring their parents to live with them in the city. Consequently, rural parents have become increasingly interested in investing in their children's education to improve their children's chances of going to college and/or getting a better job.

At the same time, however, opportunities for rural-to-urban labor migration have caused significant educational disruptions and disadvantages for children and youth born to rural mainland Chinese parents who migrate to urban areas as laborers and have difficulty finding schools in which to enroll their children, as they are often excluded from the opportunities and services provided to urban dwellers (Kwong, 2007; Solinger, 1999; Wang, 2006; Zhang, 2001). Most mainland Chinese schools either do not allow children with rural registration to enroll, even if they are living in the school's district with their migrant laborer parents, or charge rural migrant parents extra fees that are far above most rural migrants' ability to pay, as well as above the regular fees charged to urban parents. While rural migrant communities have sometimes been able to establish private schools in urban areas to educate migrant children, these schools are often makeshift and substandard in facilities and teacher and administrator quality, not only when compared to urban public and private schools, but also in comparison to rural schools. They are also constantly at risk of being closed down by urban officials for operating outside legal requirements for urban schools.

Within mainland China and worldwide, youth have often been the most eager to migrate from rural areas to urban areas and from developing countries to developed countries, as well as to adopt aspects of the cultures of areas to which they hope to migrate, or from which they returned after migrating. At the same time, however, children have suffered from such migrations that tend to separate them from their parents or subject them to educational disruptions. Studies that compare and contrast how such processes work among mainland Chinese populations with how they work among other populations worldwide would do much to increase understandings of how much national and local cultures matter in shaping relationships between youth, children, and processes of globalization and migration.

CONCLUSION

Much research remains to be done to connect studies of how mainland Chinese children and youth have affected and been affected by globalization, migration, and the dramatic economic, educational, and demographic transformations of mainland China with psychologically oriented studies of aspects of childrearing and child development that are shared by Chinese populations worldwide but different from those of non-Chinese populations. More attention should be paid to how different socioeconomic groups in different Chinese communities worldwide (e.g., Taiwan, mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Chinese immigrants in the United States, Chinese immigrants in the Netherlands, etc.) differ from, as well as resemble, each other when it comes to childrearing and child development. While some aspects of childrearing and child

development may be shared by Chinese populations worldwide, there also seems to be tremendous diversity between Chinese communities and societies and between individuals within each Chinese community or society when it comes to which cultural models are emphasized and how they are transmitted. Greater integration of the studies of cultural models presumed to be shared by Chinese populations worldwide with studies of how social, political, economic, and historical contexts shape those cultural models and their transmission could greatly enrich the anthropology of China as well as psychological, demographic, and educational anthropology. Anthropologists who attribute the changing roles, experiences, and opportunities of Chinese children and youth to the specific educational policies and discourses and demographic and political-economic transformations of particular eras of mainland Chinese history could learn much from comparative studies of similar issues in other Chinese communities worldwide. Such comparative studies may reveal similarities between Chinese communities worldwide that could help psychologists and psychological anthropologists refine their understandings of which, if any, cultural models can legitimately be considered part of a “Chinese culture” that is transmitted across generations and transcends socioeconomic and national boundaries, as well as their understandings of differences that caution against the temptation to essentialize and overgeneralize about Chinese culture. A better understanding of similarities and differences between different Chinese societies and communities worldwide could also help those interested in mainland China gain a better understanding of which aspects of childrearing, child development, and education in mainland China result from specific historical, demographic, and political-economic developments in mainland China, and which result from a Chinese culture that is not reducible to these developments.

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CHAPTER 21

Schools, Skills, and Morals in the Contemporary Middle East

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INTRODUCTION

The contentious politics surrounding curricular changes approved by the Texas State Board of Education in 2010 remind us that what constitutes appropriate knowledge for children to learn in school is still hotly contested in the United States today (*New York Times* March 12, 2010). Some of the issues up for debate in Texas were: the nature of secular government in the United States; the religiosity of the founding fathers; and the teaching of evolution in science classes. This episode is just one in a long history of US citizens demanding that state schooling better reflect their morals and values (McCarthy, 1996). The perception that the mission of schools is to unify communities and nations by properly socializing children raises the moral stakes of schooling, ensuring that schools around the globe continue to be central to debates about identity, politics, and culture. This is as true in the United States or France as it is in Turkey or Egypt. However, the ways in which such moral struggles in and around education unfold in the Middle East need to be linked to a particular history of educational transformations, colonial/post-colonial politics, and contemporary political crises.

It is worth pointing out here that the term “Middle East” is an artificial designation for a nebulous concept. It was coined in 1902 in the context of discussions of British and Russian imperial interests in the Persian Gulf area. The “East” refers to Great

Britain, the “Middle” to previous notions of Near East and Far East: the Levant/Egypt and India/East Asia, respectively. The term’s sense has spread geographically so that today it is used to refer, quite arbitrarily, to the region of north Africa and southwest Asia stretching from Morocco to Iran, despite the fact that all of the region’s cultural features continue in one way or another east and north into Asia, south into Africa, and northward into Europe. Within “the Middle East” itself, historical, linguistic, and religious diversity are the norm. The region’s major languages belong to at least three unrelated families, and it has been the cradle of a dozen surviving religious traditions; some of its states experienced more than a century of colonial rule, while others were never colonized; it is home to some of the poorest and some of the wealthiest countries in the world, and to those which nurture vital contemporary art and musical traditions as well as to some which ban such traditions altogether. Nevertheless, with respect to religious and moral education, we can find similar social dilemmas and cultural processes operating in any number of countries in the region, just as we can outside the area strictly defined, both Muslim (e.g., Brenner, 2001; Hefner, 2009; Khalid, 1999; Lukens-Bull, 2005; Masquelier, 2001, 2009; Sikand, 2005; Soares, 2005), and non-Muslim. (For reasons of space, we cannot include here the vital work on the anthropology of education in Israel, for example, the work of Zvi Bekerman, Joyce Dalsheim, Rivka Eisikovitz, Tamar El-Or, Majid al-Haj, and many others.)

This chapter reviews anthropological literature on religious education in the Middle East, and discusses local moral debates about the proper form and content of contemporary schooling. We will examine some historical transformations in how both political elites and the small but growing ranks of the educated middle classes have thought about the nature of religious knowledge, as well as the impact of this process on public education projects that emerged in the late nineteenth century. We examine the role of state schools in producing and transmitting competing moral narratives, and in struggles over religious authority. A review of the literature points to the limits of state efforts to capture a position of moral authority, despite the cooptation of religious institutions and ideas by state actors. The anthropology of education and religion in the Middle East has been particularly illuminating in this respect, pointing to new conceptions of faith and unexpected transformations in religious traditions put into motion by contemporary schooling.

THE STATE OF THE FIELD

Research on religion and education in the Middle East has concerned itself with four primary “spaces” and sets of actors. First, anthropologists and others, especially historians, have examined “traditional” forms of Islamic education, particularly the training of specialized religious intellectuals called *‘ulama* (literally, men of knowledge), who might, in more specialized roles, act as judges, *muftis* (individuals competent to render legal opinions), preachers, teachers, or scribes (Antoun, 1989; Berkey, 1994, 2006; Chamberlain, 2002; Eickelman, 1985; Fischer, 2003; Fischer and Abedi, 1990; Gaffney, 1994; Hammoudi, 1997; Messick, 1993; Mottahedeh, 2008; Zeghal, 2007, 2010). Second, a significant amount of the literature on modern

state schools is concerned with the arena of public debate, and the policymakers, community leaders, and educational experts who are the most prominent actors in this arena (Kaplan, 2006; Pak, 2004a, 2004b; Starrett, 1998). Related to this space is the literature concerned with state curricula and curriculum analysis (Doumato and Starrett, 2007). This literature ranges from work confined almost exclusively to analysis of the corpus of textbooks, to work situating curricular analysis in the broader policy-making arena and public debates surrounding proper educational content. Third, some recent literature concerns itself with contemporary forms of private Islamic schools: the reasons for their emergence, their relationship to state-sponsored education, and what or who defines them as Islamic (Herrera, 2000, 2003, 2006; see also research on such schools in other parts of the Muslim world in Hefner and Zaman, 2006). Finally, a rich and growing literature in the anthropology of Islam in the Middle East is concerned with educational spaces that have emerged alongside new Islamic movements, particularly what Saba Mahmood has termed the “piety movement,” or the mosque movement, and particularly among the female participants in these movements (Deeb, 2006; Limbert, 2005; Mahmood, 2004). Much of this work has been concerned with the formal and informal education of youth and adults as they strive to define what it means to live piously in the contemporary age. Some of this work has also examined the use of new media and technologies as tools of religious pedagogy (Hirschkind, 2006; Starrett, 1995, 1998). The work on private and/or informal religious study classes has paid closer attention to spaces of pedagogical interactions and the educational narratives of students and teachers.

Particular conceptualizations of religious education and debates about the moral substance of education are embedded in the politics of educational policy and reform. Four such conceptualizations in particular stand out. First, there are two conceptual processes that frame the scope and nature of religion itself. These processes represent ideologies about what religion is and how it works (see Keane, 2007 on the related notions of linguistic and semiotic ideologies, and for a parallel case of redefining the nature of religion in Indonesia). One of these processes is objectification, in which the normally taken-for-granted activities constituting religious experience become reconceptualized as parts of a comprehensive “system” of belief and practice that can be grasped as an intellectual object to be discussed, debated, reformed, purified, and transmitted through school curricula (Eickelman, 1992). The other process is functionalization, which concerns the linkage of that newly objectified body of beliefs and practices to the interests of elites, who deploy new interpretations of particular religious duties to further political or public policy goals framed in the categories of the contemporary social sciences (e.g., using ideas about the ablution before prayer as a way of encouraging standards of public hygiene) (Starrett, 1998, 2008). These broad changes in the understanding of what counts as legitimate religious knowledge, as well as the broader access to this knowledge which mass schooling has provided, have fundamentally transformed traditional religious practice and authority by opening up opportunities for contributing legitimately to religious discussion to broad new publics, including women, youth, and non-specialists (Deeb, 2006; Eickelman, 1992; Mahmood, 2004; Messick, 1993). As Starrett (1998) has argued, “In order for compulsory schooling to relay knowledge of legitimate religious culture sufficient to attain [the school’s] goal of social control, it must use pedagogical techniques that

work to undermine the authority of the holders of religious legitimacy” (p. 187). The growing number of privately controlled Islamic centers and schools throughout the region, even when they are expressly forbidden (Limbert, 2005, 2007; Shively, 2008), points to the ways in which the capacity to produce and transmit religious knowledge has been “democratized,” that is, distributed more broadly to an educated public who do not consider themselves religious specialists (Eickelman, 1992).

Second, approaching this democratization from the other direction, ethnographic research on local pedagogical interactions has illuminated the limits of the authoritative knowledge vested in officially recognized individuals or groups. Taking us beyond an elite-focused analysis or an analysis concerned with national educational polemics, this scholarship points to a range of citizens (educators and students) engaged in delineating what is good, moral, and religiously acceptable in their day to day interactions (Adely, 2007, 2009; Deeb, 2006; Herrera, 2003, 2006; Mahmood, 2004). Because gender – and women’s bodies in particular – serve as a most visible marker for some of the most contentious moral debates, women in the region are actively engaged in such educative efforts. In many respects, the ambiguity surrounding their place in a contemporary Islamic public puts them at the center of this work, and the anthropological research highlighting this reality is rich. For example, Lara Deeb (2006), in her work among pious Shi’ite women in Beirut, Lebanon, shows how these women actively engage in defining the terms of authentic and modern piety. She finds that women have come to define volunteerism and active public engagement as central to their “public piety.” Deeb argues that in their efforts to be better Muslim women – what she calls “women’s *jihad*” (struggle) – they end up transforming conceptualizations of gendered space, the private and the public, or what she labels a “gender jihad” (pp. 213, 244).

This democratization of religious knowledge can also upset generational hierarchies, as a younger generation now has access to religious knowledge that their elders may not have had. More important, perhaps, is the sense among a new generation of self-consciously religious citizens that they can know Islam better because of their education. Thus, for example, a high school student feels empowered to teach Islam in a religion class where the teacher is the official authority (Adely, n.d.), and young Bedouin men object to the singing and dancing of their elders at weddings, while young women emulate the Islamic dress of their urban school teachers, even if older women reject these “modern” forms of modesty (Abu-Lughod, 1993, 1999).

A third important insight emerging from this literature is that, despite the limitations on the state’s ideological and practical hegemony, even in its own educational institutions, resistance to state directives are nevertheless still shaped by the state and its pedagogical organization and methods. For example, in her analysis of daily routines at the Fatima School, a private Islamic School in Egypt, Linda Herrera (2000) describes how school staff in many ways emulate the state-mandated *tabour* or morning assembly, with some alterations to make this morning assembly more Islamic. Thus, for example, students are made to line up and perform their morning calisthenics; however, at the Fatima School, the children shout praises to God to the beat of a drum during their exercises (p. 113). Herrera concludes that even the religious discourse and practices which are meant to distinguish private Islamic schools from state schools often employ the forms of discipline of the modern state school (p. 116).

Mandana Limbert (2005), in her depiction of a religious study group in Oman, reports that Ai'shah, the teacher of the Islamic summer class whom she profiles, explicitly distinguishes between her teaching of Islam and what she deems the devaluation of Islamic knowledge in state schools. However, Limbert observes "clear similarities in terms of the style of instruction and content of the lessons" (p. 198). One example Limbert points to is the way in which Ai'shah divides up categories of religious knowledge into distinct and separate categories as is done in state curriculum; also, her insistence on using a school as a space for her classes indicates the recognition she accords to (and wants from) the formal state institutions of learning. Thus, although Ai'shah's informal study circle for women differs from state instruction (e.g., in its informality, voluntary attendance, and diversity of materials employed in teaching), it also draws heavily on a pedagogical model of education used by the state.

Finally, what most distinguishes anthropological work in this area is the way in which ethnographic research on education has broadened the conceptual frame through which the field more broadly has envisioned educational transformations. Specifically, this scholarship represents a challenge to presumptions that resistance is linked to a liberatory project largely conceived of in secular terms. Much of the recent anthropological work on Islam in the region has been directly engaged in efforts to challenge the theoretical frames that limit our ability to make sense conceptually of contemporary religious movements (Deeb, 2006; Mahmood, 2004; also see Ewing, 1990). The scholarship on education and Islam has been an important contribution in this regard. Herrera (2000) points to the limits of critical educational theory, which has neglected the role of religion as a type of social movement that challenges our typical frame of reference. Private Islamic schools, she argues, are engaged in "a type of nativist struggle to determine the cultural and religious content of their schooling, to intervene in the state's notion of how youth should be socialized and assert an alternative habitus even when it means coming into conflict with the state" (p. 224). Throughout the region, and in many other parts of the world, contemporary religious movements have produced such alternatives, challenging state monopolies on the education of youth. In the process, other forms of hierarchy – gendered and generational – are also being transformed.

THE MORAL EDIFICATION OF YOUTH

Education in school is more reliable and more complete than that which takes place among the family. (Ali Riza, "The Science of Morals," early twentieth-century Ottoman secondary text; quoted in Fortna, 2000: 387)

Going to Qur'anic school for me, and for all children, was like being taken to the slaughterhouse ... it had a meaning akin to death. (Muhammad al-Akwa' (b. 1903), Yemeni teacher, political activist, and Qadi; quoted in Messick, 1993: 75)

Like India and China, the Middle East is heir to indigenous literate traditions of formal cultural transmission. Cultural arrangements for teaching the skills of literacy and the use of literacies for commercial, technical, political, and religious ends are as old as writing itself, which was first developed in the area that is now Iraq about three

thousand years before the Common Era. These traditions of writing and textual production were one of the sources of the region's historical vitality, and also one source of conflict throughout the colonial and postcolonial periods. Because the Middle East has been used so often by Western thinkers as a mirror that appears to display an inverted image of modernity (Euben, 1999; Said, 1978), traditional Middle Eastern forms of schooling have often been taken – by colonial intellectuals and some local elites alike – to stand for blind traditionalism, an unchanging social and intellectual order, and moral backwardness: everything that a “proper” education is meant to overcome (Mitchell, 1988). Longstanding debates about cultural continuity, social and economic change, global cultural flows, gender relations, political authority, authentic spirituality, and cultural difference itself have thus often been fought out by local and international interlocutors through the discourse of education, in discussions about what is to be taught in schools, and how (Yousef, 2009).

One of the key issues that research in the area has addressed is the nature of moral education, and its relationship to other kinds of knowledge. Educational developments in the Middle East were often represented by their sponsors as benign projects designed to propel societies toward modernity, industrialization, economic development, and progress more generally. However, school systems have always been deeply embedded in relations of power, and thus have served to produce and reproduce power through attempts at fashioning particular kinds of subjects (Doumato and Starrett, 2007; Kaplan, 2006; Mitchell, 1988). Simultaneously, contemporary schooling has worked to upset and transform the basic foundations of authority, authenticity, and legitimacy by creating new hierarchies of knowledge and concomitant notions of expertise and credentials (Eickelman, 1985, 1992; Messick, 1993; Fischer and Abedi, 1990; Mottahedeh, 2008).

The concerns of social and political elites with moral education emerged simultaneously throughout the national and imperial formations of the late nineteenth century. Ruling dynasties, military institutions, cosmopolitan intellectuals, and commercial elites of the time were all concerned about the way shifting economies on a global and regional scale, and patterns of morality on a local scale, could be managed and synchronized at the national scale through educational planning. Schooling was to be a process by which the state not only provided new employment opportunities and filled the ranks of the bureaucracy, but also redefined its relationship with its subjects, coming into regular contact with its youngest ones through the insertion of state level institutions and functionaries – schools and their teachers – in towns and villages (Anderson, 2005; Fortna, 2002: 374; for Europe see Weber, 1976).

The most basic fact connecting “traditional” and contemporary educational institutions in the Middle East is the way educational projects have sought to maintain or to transform social stratification. Indigenous ideologies that stress stable social hierarchies and the enduring bonds of obligation between unequals – men and women, ruler and subject, master and disciple, landowner and peasant – are often challenged by modern educational projects that aim to disrupt some kinds of inequality and generate others. In terms of moral authority, nineteenth- and twentieth-century national educational projects in the Middle East have often emphasized teaching people to look beyond the individuals who represented local systems of stratification (prayer

leaders, scholars, Sufi masters), and to identify instead with the ideals and ideas promulgated by metropolitan elites (public intellectuals, government functionaries, and certified teachers), who characterized local beliefs, traditions, and leaders as ignorant, backward, uncivilized, and in need of reformation.

Such processes of change have long been central to anthropological concern. The relationship between social complexity and education was theorized by Margaret Mead (1943), for example, as having to do with the relationship between specific kinds of knowledge, and the motivations and process of learning. With the development of high degrees of social complexity, Mead wrote, there has been a cultural shift in the organization of socialization, from systems emphasizing the desirability of learning, to systems emphasizing the desirability of teaching. There is a complex relationship here between the idea of valuable knowledge and the broader social world. Regardless of content, knowledge is conceived as a hierarchy of superior and inferior possessions. "As soon as there is any attitude that one set of cultural beliefs is definitely superior to another," Mead wrote,

The framework is present for active proselytizing ... Attention is directed toward finding neophytes rather than toward finding masters, and adults and children become bracketed together as recipients of conscious missionary effort. This bracketing-together is of great importance; it increases the self-consciousness of the whole educational procedure, and ... the whole question of methods and techniques of education is brought most sharply to the fore when it is a completely socialized adult who must be influenced instead of a plastic and receptive child. (1943: 635)

Furthermore, as soon as the possibility arises that education might allow for social mobility, it becomes clear that it can also be used as a mechanism for maintaining the status quo (cf. Stambach and Ngwane, Chapter 18, above). Education is thus a paradoxical mechanism for instilling or containing social change. "Just as the presence of proselytizing religions focuses attention upon means of spreading the truth, upon pedagogy," Mead writes, "so the educational implications of social stratification focus attention upon the content of education and lay the groundwork for an articulate interest in the curriculum" (1943: 636).

Mead's articulation of the dual connection between education and stratification – that both the organization and the content of knowledge are sensitive indicators, and constituents, of social inequality – is important for understanding the development of modern schooling's career in the Middle East. Different kinds of social stratification lend themselves to distinctly different subjectivities and ways of thinking about the nature of valued knowledge. Throughout much of Islamic history, the accurate reproduction of particular corpuses of religious knowledge had formed the core of formal educational practice (Eickelman, 1985). As an activity, historian Jonathan Berkey writes, the study and everyday incorporation of sacred texts were supposed to be experienced as acts of worship parallel to prayer, and learning conferred reputation on an individual as part of a hierarchical system of authority that stressed conservation and stability (2006: 44–46). At higher levels, individuals would actively seek masters who could teach them particular texts or spiritual disciplines, sometimes traveling across the known world to do so (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1990). Nevertheless, this

process of seeking masters presupposes the prior development of a highly disciplined subjectivity that values such knowledge enough to seek it and to engage in the labor of committing it to memory. The practice of children memorizing culturally significant texts is, in Mead's frame of reference, something very specific to highly stratified societies where the necessity of teaching is prized over the desire for learning, and in these pedagogical encounters in the Middle East children often experienced such discipline as confining and hateful, a fate "akin to death," in Muhammad al-Akwa's reminiscences of his early Qur'anic schooling. Such schooling consisted of the years-long process of memorizing the recited text of the Qur'an and sometimes other works (highly condensed summaries of particular traditions of Islamic law, for example; see Messick, 1993), in what amounted for most boys to the foreign language of classical Arabic. The explanation of the *meaning* of the texts was a separate enterprise that was never attempted until the text itself had been incorporated – literally made a part of oneself (the Arabic verb for such memorization is *hifdh*, which means to take to heart, to memorize, to protect).

We are used to thinking about education, in contrast, as a process associated with progress and change, rather than stability and conservation. In the early part of the twentieth century, Mead wrote, public schooling in the United States had come to be seen largely as a means of managing rapid ongoing social change by educating "other people's children," socializing immigrants to ways of life they would not share with their parents (1943: 637). In much of the Middle East, in contrast, modern systems of education have been seen by elites not as a way of coping with change, but as a way of generating it and channeling it to particular nationalist and elite ends. In the nineteenth century, modern forms of school-based education were conceived in semi-magical terms as a kind of "secret wisdom" from Europe (Fortna, 2002; Ringer, 2001) that would jolt stalled societies out of their comparative backwardness, stimulating progress by aligning the subjectivities of children with goals, expectations, and values associated with new scales of political and economic integration. Such integration would include far more regular and intensive kinds of service to political power, in the form of participating in manufacturing, technological development, military service, and state bureaucracy. In the twentieth century, such participation in and for the well-being of the polity is generally phrased as a patriotic duty of every individual. In contemporary Middle Eastern school textbooks, the values of hard work, obedience, and productivity are phrased as divinely ordained (Doumato and Starrett, 2007; Kaplan 2006; Starrett, 1998).

Thinking about the nature of morality and of religious belief and practice in the contemporary Middle East requires the recognition that what counts as "authentic" religion – at least to the modern-educated subject – has changed substantially over the course of the twentieth century with the spread of literacy and mass public education. To return to the outline of the field with which we began this chapter, Dale F. Eickelman (1985, 1992) has shown that "Islam" has been transformed from a largely taken-for-granted way of being, to a consciously evaluated "system," through the process of objectification. "An unintended consequence of making Islam a part of the [modern school] curriculum," he writes, "is to make it a subject which must be 'explained' and 'understood'" (1992: 650). No longer content to follow the practices of previous generations, educated Muslims throughout the region now insist that elements of

ritual, belief, and proper comportment be examined and authenticated through reference to legitimate sacred texts and discourses, rather than accepted at face value as parts of culture and tradition. "People here do not know Islam," a rural Omani schoolteacher explained to him. "They pray and they sacrifice, but they do not know why" (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996: 38). A number of scholars have extended Eickelman's insight, to show that in Egypt (Hirschkind, 2006; Mahmood, 2004), Lebanon (Deeb, 2006), Jordan (Roald, 1994), and elsewhere, Islamic movements subject even the most widely practiced customs (saint veneration, holy day processions, the use of amulets, styles of dress) to critique and discussion, in an attempt to forge a self-conscious engagement with "Islam" as a coherent and rational intellectual object.

This kind of engagement is one result of an intellectual style associated with modern forms of schooling in which competing forms of belief constitute an implicit backdrop to one's own choice of religious practice, as opposed to historical forms of socialization in which the mastery of particular texts within an unchallenged civilizational framework was the goal of learning. This new sort of systematization is facilitated by turning "Islam" into a school subject comparable to chemistry or French (Fortna, 2002) – something that can be laid out in chapters, captured in bullet points, and examined at the end of term. It has resulted in a concurrent tendency to radically simplify, or even ignore, the complexity of received traditions of Islamic scholarship.

Historically in the Sunni Muslim world, four major methods of analyzing and applying scriptural wisdom were accepted, each one differing in the sources and interpretive procedures it held as legitimate. Shi'ite scholars had their own procedures. Pedagogically, although practices throughout the region were highly variable, traditional Islamic schooling in places such as Iran could be similar to traditions of Jewish Talmudic scholarship, emphasizing argumentation, comparison of traditions of commentary, and interpretive originality (Mottahedeh, 2008). In modern systems of schooling, by contrast, such complexity is sacrificed in favor of synoptic interpretations of "the Islamic tradition" in which there can only be a single "true" understanding of duty, one based on reference to a very limited corpus of trustworthy texts and often encoded in new formats such as modern legislative codes (Messick, 1993), school textbooks, and even video games, computerized reference works, and web sites (Bunt, 2002, 2003, 2009). A review of state religious curricula has found that this kind of synoptic streamlining is a general feature across the region (Doumato and Starrett, 2007).

Earlier forms of scholarly and pedagogical practice were highly restricted in their demographic scope; very few people ever became fluent in the textual traditions because of the years of training involved (Wagner, 1993). These practices aimed instead at generating a cadre of men who could conserve the word of God as expressed in sacred texts through the process of memorization, and conserve the methodologies through which those texts could be interpreted and deployed in the service of social life: legitimizing marriages, burying the dead, mediating commercial disputes. Although this was an overwhelmingly male endeavor, historically elite Muslim women received some religious instruction at home, and some women were well-known authoritative transmitters of *ahadith* (sayings and teachings of the prophet), and a smaller number were legal scholars in the Islamic tradition (Berkey, 1994). Islamic education in modern schools is aimed at the mass socialization of children, and emphasizes the learning, not of the textual corpus itself, but of specifically national

visions of “Islam” as a total religious system. Such visions are based on elements of the textual corpus as well as on local traditions and histories, the concepts of modern science, philosophy, and psychology, the political goals of national elites, and the ethnic and linguistic identity of national majority populations. Each vision of “Islam” is tailor-made, in Eleanor Doumato’s words, to cater to the historical, nationalist, and moral visions of particular regimes, but paradoxically presents itself as universally valid. The Egyptian vision of what constitutes the ideal Muslim subject is quite different from the Saudi or the Iranian vision (Doumato and Starrett, 2007; Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995; Mehran, 2006).

While powerful men and groups have always used Islamic ideology as an instrument of rule, the entry of Islam into the modern school curriculum as a synoptic object of study has generated a further series of changes in the way Islamic practice is justified, explained, and contextualized. Changes in the mode of presentation of Islamic belief – its standardization in textbook form – are associated with changes in its content. Elements of Islamic belief and practice must be explained, justified, and linked to broader goals of governance in order to align Islamic precepts with local political structures. This happens through processes of functionalization, in which the meaning of specific Muslim beliefs and practices come to be framed in terms of the categories of contemporary public policy. Indeed, the development of evolutionary and of structural-functionalist theory in the social sciences revolutionized the way the nascent educated middle classes in the Middle East thought about the nature of society and morality (Mitchell, 1988; Starrett, 2008). One of the results of this change is that Islamic beliefs and practices are presented in school as God’s way of ensuring harmonious social interaction, economic progress, and healthy personal conduct. Religious duties are not taken for granted, but are explained as *doing something* for us as individuals and members of the community. For example, school textbooks present prayer as not only a ritual duty, but one which teaches self-discipline, the value of order, and keeping appointments, and provides physical exercise. The ritual ablution before prayer is presented not as a symbolic cleansing in preparation for the special spiritual experience of prayer, but as an act that guarantees personal hygiene, and also an act that is in itself a sign of civilization. Fasting during Ramadan teaches us about sacrifice, and ultimately makes us more productive at work for the benefit of the nation (Starrett, 1998). Moral behavior is expressed very explicitly in the framework of a functionalist theory of social order.

STATE SCHOOLING AND THE STRUGGLE FOR MORAL AUTHORITY

“Orthodoxy” is not easy to secure in conditions of radical change. This is not because orthodox discourse is necessarily against any change but because it aspires to be authoritative. (Asad, 1993: 211)

Governmental attempts to shape and control the religious content of the public sphere sometimes backfire, however. In addition to providing people with the literacy skills with which they can discover and appreciate critical or oppositional literature, state projects of moral development sometimes establish conflicting sets of interests as they

navigate between the moral socialization of the masses, on the one hand, and the training of religious specialists, on the other. In Egypt, where Islam is the state religion, members of the official religious establishment sometimes use their reputation as guardians of classical traditions of learning to oppose policies developed by “secular” ministries, including the Ministry of Education (Zeghal, 2007). In Turkey, on the other hand, the officially secular government both requires religious education in public schools, and administers the country’s mosques. Soon-Yong Pak’s (2004a, 2004b) study of Imam-Hatip schools (state schools for the training of prayer leaders and official mosque preachers) shows how the Turkish state’s desire to monopolize religious expression and thereby maintain a secular public sphere, has actually allowed families to avoid sending their children to secular schools, thus bypassing the state’s ideology by using vocational forms of Islamic instruction as an alternative to secular public high schools, which some parents perceive as alienating. The Imam-Hatip schools are popular among parents who perceive secular schools as places where children might learn values and goals they do not share. Sending children to training institutes for religious specialists allows them to avoid generational conflicts with their children’s interests and cultural environment. Interestingly, the idea that Imam-Hatip schools offer a conservative haven has even allowed rural and recent urban migrant families to send their daughters to high school, when they might not ordinarily have done so (Pak, 2004a, 2004b). In a good example of the unintended consequences of schooling, an element of Turkey’s nationalist secular worldview is achieved here not through shaping subjects with an explicit investment in that worldview, but insofar as the *practical* policies of the secularist state have furthered women’s education. On the other hand, this success is achieved through providing cultural alternatives to the state’s own ideology.

As Kim Shively (2008) shows, however, the ban on headscarves in Turkey has driven some women out of state education altogether, particularly universities (as well as out of other public institutions such as parliament). The secular vision of Kemalism holds up Islam as a core tenet of Turkish identity, but decrees belief to be a private matter. Many religious women view modest practices and comportment in public spaces as central to their efforts to be pious (Deeb, 2006; Mahmood, 2004), and the state intrusion into such realms of religious practice is viewed as a trampling on their rights to live piously. The irony is that the Turkish state’s ban on headscarves in school, where it is seen as a sign of primitive mentality, keeps some women from furthering their educations. The school serves as a “public” space in which secular disciplining can occur. In forcing women and their families to choose between education and religious practice, the state hardens the line drawn between public and private. While Americans take this distinction to be about choice, in Turkey – as in France (see Bowen, 2008) – the notion of the public is an actual spatial and institutional sphere. The end result is a furthering of the growth of political opposition (Shively, 2008).

Linda Herrera (2000, 2006) charts similar struggles in Egypt in her analysis of what prompts citizens to establish and/or enroll their children in private Islamic schools. Herrera argues that the demand for these schools is a rejection of secular state schools as insufficiently Islamic. In addition, some of these schools fill a particular niche for wealthier Egyptians who are seeking English language and computer skills for their children while also desiring a school environment imbued with more Islamic values and practices. Herrera finds that what actually makes these schools “Islamic” varies

from school to school. Generally those claiming religious authority within these schools are lay people with different backgrounds and understandings of how Islam should be instilled in young people. School ideology and policies are mediated through actors in the school, with a variety of outcomes concerning dress code, the permissibility of music and/or music instruction in school, and a range of other day-day-day decisions that teachers and students face as they work to define how to be good Muslims in situations where this may not be immediately apparent. Thus, responses to the perceived secularizing tendencies of state educational institutions and policies result in the creation of a range of possibilities for religious schooling. Such are variously defined as private Islamic schools, separate tracks within the state system (Iman-Hatip schools), and supplemental religious education found in informal study circles (Limbert, 2005; Shively, 2008), as well as private Islamic centers (Boyle, 2006). However, even within schools, ethnographic research points to resistance to the state's conceptualization of religious propriety and moral education. Although there are many contexts for learning about Islam in communities throughout the region – family, religious study circles, television preachers, and private religious instruction – schools are critical spaces for anthropologists to explore efforts to “be authoritative.” Embedded in the educative process are day-to-day efforts to monitor and control the behavior of young people and to shape them in particular ways to be obedient, productive, moral, and successful. These efforts go beyond explicitly religious efforts, although with increased religiosity in much of the region, the religious idiom has greater currency than other narratives, and states have responded to this increased religiosity by both co-opting and amplifying their own religious credentials (Adely, 2007, 2009; Starrett, 1998). Textbooks are the most palpable tools in this endeavor, presenting “official wish-images” about proper faith and religious practice (Limbert, 2007: 121). However, they provide a limited view of the religious debates that circulate in schools, and the myriad ways in which people seek to be morally authoritative in and outside of state-sanctioned religion classes. Despite the school being the domain of the state, other actors bring their own perspectives on Islam into the school, and textbooks do not stand alone (Adely, n.d.; Herrera, 2000, 2006).

As Fida Adely has shown in her ethnographic research in a girls' secondary school in Jordan, both teachers and students are actively involved in religious debates in school, drawing on a variety of sources: textbooks, outside literature, media, and religious experience. Individuals with varied conceptualizations of proper faith and what it demands of young Muslim women work to define what constitutes authoritative religious knowledge (Adely, n.d.). Adely demonstrates how such efforts go beyond the predictable spaces of religion class or the prayer room, pointing to the moral debates that emerge in the context of in-school patriotic performances, among friends who debate the appropriateness of a pink headscarf, or in a math class where a teacher admonishes students not to watch an “immoral” TV program which happens to be the most popular program in the region at that time.

The patriotic performances of the “music girls” at the al-Khatwa Secondary School for Girls are an instructive example of the struggles over moral authority. Drawing on observations of student performances in Jordan on national holidays such as the King's birthday and Independence Day, Adely (2007, 2009) shows how such events illuminate competing conceptualizations of the proper moral edification

of young women in Jordan. At these events, the music girls sang patriotic and folk songs, dressed in “traditional” embroidered dresses, and danced Jordanian folk dances. Some of the girls recited poetry or speeches in honor of the king, the nation, or a number of related patriotic themes. At the al-Khatwa School, a number of teachers and students criticized the music girls, arguing that such performances did not sufficiently conform to local expectations of modesty for a respectable Muslim girl (Adely, 2007, 2009). Some also viewed the performances as un-Islamic, arguing that the music itself was forbidden in Islam. The young women who performed, however, defended their participation on a number of grounds. First, they argued that their dress – traditional folk dress of rural Jordan – was sufficiently modest, distinguishing between their dress and that of scantily-clad pop stars who were frequently criticized by some of their teachers and peers. Furthermore, they drew a distinction between their music – songs about the nation – and songs which might be deemed immoral – songs about romance and love. “We sing for the nation,” one student argued. “How can that be forbidden?” The remarks of these young women are particularly poignant as the state clearly endeavors to display young women at these performances as a sign of progress or development. However, these very patriotic events with young women at their center also highlight the disjuncture between the regime’s vision for Jordan and the moral sensibilities of some of its citizens.

Such tensions again emphasize the gendered dimensions of contemporary debates surrounding “public piety” (Deeb, 2006), and the modesty and comportment of Muslim women as key markers of such piety (Roald, 1994). Adely’s analysis of these events and the ways in which they are interpreted by participants and observers alike, demonstrates how patriotic rituals, and the visions of gendered progress at times embedded in them, serve both to embolden the state’s legitimacy and to implicitly challenge its moral authority (2009: 140). As this example reveals, in addition to proffering a particular vision of Islam (and inadvertently a space for some religious debate), state schools promote other values – in the case from Jordan above, the value of women’s public participation – although these principles do not go uncontested.

Both the political aims and economic designs of elites in the region are moral projects in their own right – working to fashion students for particular ends. As a result of the influence of international development agencies in the region, especially in heavily donor-dependent nations such as Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, and Yemen, these moral, political, and economic projects are increasingly global in scope. In a changing educational landscape that places a greater premium on technical and marketable skills, the notion of moral edification competes with, or is re-inscribed in, the new values associated with a global “knowledge economy” (Mazawi, 2010). Thus, for example, the emphasis on English language skills in the Middle East in the past decade rests on the assumption that English is necessary for success in the global economy. In the process, however, the Arabic language is characterized as a stagnant language, a language difficult to teach and perhaps even of little use. This denigration of Arabic in turn becomes the source of new moral struggles surrounding cultural authenticity and authority (Bashshur, 2010; Farag, 2009). The scholarship on education in the region – ethnographies of education and of the discursive debates surrounding education – has helped to shed light on these significant moral polemics.

CONCLUSION

In 2002, Andres Mazawi, a sociologist of education, took scholars of Arab education to task for their persistent reliance on state-heavy modernization theories in their analysis of schooling. He argued for the need to analyze conflicts surrounding education as important contests for power between civil society groups and the state in contexts where little political space is available (2002: 59). A number of the authors mentioned here have taken up this challenge, paying particular attention to the political contests surrounding religious education and schooling more broadly in local contexts.

Anthropologists have made important contributions to the examination of religious institutions of knowledge production and transmission, particularly as they worked to chart major shifts in the creation and reproduction of knowledge in a post-colonial era. The emergence of modern state-sponsored schooling has been an important part of this narrative. In addition, schooling figures as an important local and/or state institution in broader ethnographic research on particular communities (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1993; Rosenfeld, 2004). Of course, there is more work to be done. The research on informal and adult religious educational spaces has been rich; more anthropological research on state or public education would deepen the existing scholarship. Related to this, we see a need for greater attention to schools as important cultural and political spaces in the lives of young people in the region, particularly young women (Adely, 2004, 2009, n.d.), and as state institutions – peopled by a range of state representatives – with which young people interface in their day-to-day lives.

The over-representation of studies that consign the effects of schooling to the black box of state power or contests between elites, means that debates about moral authority and legitimacy often remain confined to debates about religious curricula and education, when struggles over morality and the values that should be transmitted to young people in fact go well beyond the bounds of religion classes or even religious idioms more broadly. As the anthropological study of schooling in the Islamic Middle East develops, we need to shift our emphasis to focus increasingly on the ways in which contemporary education constructs new ideas, values, and beliefs about what is good and desirable, and about what constitutes progress.

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CHAPTER 22

Educational Policy, Anthropology, and the State

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INTRODUCTION

In the last three decades, massive social, economic, and political changes have led to major reforms in formal education systems around the globe, and have brought about important disciplinary shifts in the social sciences, including anthropology. In this chapter, we argue that such transformations have set the ground for the emergence in the late 1990s of a new subfield within anthropology of education in the Anglo-American context: *the anthropology of educational policies*. Here we suggest that in order to account for the complexity of the phenomenon, this subfield should orient towards developing a *cultural political economy of education*. In a globalized world, we believe that it is necessary to pay attention to the articulations and the tensions between the local, the global, and the state – whose role has been redefined, thus redefining the public sphere as well.

Moreover, we contend that in order to better comprehend the current status of educational policies, it is imperative to move beyond the analysis of policy-making processes of schooling as a cultural phenomenon and consider the nature of the contemporary state and its configuration. In order to do so, we propose to establish a dialogue between two disciplinary traditions: the anthropology of education, and political and economic anthropology, or more specifically, the anthropology of the state. We suggest that recent scholarship on educational policies that has articulated elements from both traditions has also brought attention to elements before

overlooked. Such scholarship has shed light on the redefinition of the public sphere as a key element in the transformation of the conception of educational policies, in the delegation of the administration of public education to the forces of the market, and in the alienating conversion of citizens into mere consumers. Using this frame will ultimately help us to refine our analysis and, consequently, bring new political elements into the public debate in order to devise better alternatives for public education.

To understand the need for such an approach, we consider it necessary to provide a brief historical account that shows the main tendencies used in anthropology for the study of public education policies. We will briefly describe the emergence of the sub-field of anthropology of educational policies in the context of neoliberal educational reforms primary set in the Anglo-American context, but then adopted and adapted in many Latin American countries.

More specifically, we connect these elements by examining recent educational reforms in the South American country of Colombia, and the transformations that its educational system has undergone over the last 15 years, mainly guided by global neoliberal and neo-institutional tendencies. Our argument is the product of a decade of research in the Colombian educational system and our work – and that of many other junior and senior scholars and research assistants – with various governmental educational agencies at different levels involving principals, teachers, administrative staff, and students at public primary and secondary schools. We aim to show how the current education system is conceived as a service, and the citizens/users as consumers, thus redefining the concept of the public. This analysis aims to illustrate the way larger forces operate in everyday contexts, and the profound impact they have in the lives of diverse teachers, students, administrators, parents, and other educational actors.

EDUCATION, PUBLIC POLICY, AND ANTHROPOLOGY: THE EMERGENCE OF EDUCATION AS A PUBLIC GOOD

In contemporary debates, the question of who is responsible for the universalization of education is a central issue because the answer depends on the role assigned to the state and the public nature of education. Although some argue (West and Institute of Economic Affairs, 1965) that the key forces behind the universalization of modern education were private, religious, or progressive groups, when closely analyzing the historical conditions it is clear that it was the state which ultimately assumed this task and inserted it in the public sphere, even in “anti-state” tradition countries such as England (Hunter, 1994). Even though modern institutionalized education was first conceived as a tool for moral and religious indoctrination, it was eventually taken over by the state as a powerful instrument to spread nation-state ideologies, thereby securing its citizens’ loyalty. It also served the purpose of homogenizing the population and reproducing social hierarchies (see Benei, Chapter 16, above, and Díaz de Rada and Jiménez Sedano, Chapter 24, below).

The universalization of school-based education in the twentieth century was a result of a change in the notion of schooling as a privilege of the elite to a view of education

as a common good of society and, consequently, a duty of government. The adoption and dissemination of dominant ideas of formal education was to a great extent part of the racialized “civilizing” project of the ruling classes. It aimed to acculturate ethnic groups or “rescue” the poor according to a modern European model. Even though schools around the world were often administered by religious groups, these were not enough to secure education for all. Later in the twentieth century, the influence of multilateral organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank, and the OECD became central to the universalization of a notion of education as a mission of the state, particularly in developing countries (Ramírez and Boli, 1987). In this manner, schooling became solidly associated with the public domain. Indeed, it is precisely because formal education became a public matter that educational public policy exists.

EMERGENCE AND CONSOLIDATION OF AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

In order to understand the origins and consolidation of the anthropology of education, and its study of educational policies in particular, it is important to take into account two interconnected topics: the interest of anthropology in education and the state, and the way in which different national traditions of anthropology impacted the development of educational policies and, consequently, the subfield within the discipline.

Anthropology’s concern with schooling, educational policies, and the state started very early on, but it was only institutionalized as a subfield relatively recently (2000s). Due to the fact that within the colonial project state educational policies were used to integrate and acculturate – and therefore dominate – those minority groups which anthropology had sympathetically studied, anthropologists have tended to value in a negative way the role of the state in education, and by extension, educational policy. Yet despite their critical stance, until relatively recently anthropologists’ analysis did not go beyond a cultural critique to articulate a conception of the structural, political, or economic aspects of education. On the other hand, different nation-states have configured their educational policies in accordance with these earlier models. And these, in turn, have had an impact on the configuration of topics and areas of interest in anthropology of education, as well as in the geopolitical production and distribution of educational research (see Anderson-Levitt, Chapter 1, above, about *world anthropologies of education*).

As a field within the discipline (using sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of *field*), anthropology of education first emerged in the United States (in Britain and France, sociologists were the first to take a more critical, qualitative approach to formal education as a subject of study). It was also in the Anglo-British context where an anthropology of colonial educational policies appeared as a formal body of research. The development of such interest in educational policy is related to various historical moments. First, there was a moment of engagement with colonial educational regulations and the expansion of public education to minority populations within nation-states. Anthropologists’ role consisted mainly in advocating for the preservation of native socialization practices, while warning against the negative

impact of cultural change through formal education. Their advice was nonetheless marginal since it appeared in the conclusions of their books or as appendices to their reports (Raum, International African Institute, and Moore 1996 [1940], or most of Margaret Mead's first books; in Latin America and Colombia, similar warnings first appeared in the 1970s).

Second was a moment that aligned with the emergence of the theories of *development* in connection with the interventionism of transnational organizations such as the United Nations in the postwar period. Under this perspective, formal education was conceived as a factor of modernization, industrialization, and progress, that is, as "the driving force of economic growth." In this model, the concept of *planning* – not yet educational policies – was used by international organizations as a strategy to organize and control the use of international loans earmarked for national development programs. This model that connected education and development through planning was economic in nature, but tailored for controlling each specific national context. For example, in developing countries the anthropology of education was fostered by international organizations in order to obtain qualitative information on the impact of educational policies (e.g., Avalos, 1986); in the United States, meanwhile, the field of anthropology of education was institutionalized in the 1960s as a response to the internal pressures caused by the increasing problems of formal schooling, the demands of the civil rights movement against segregation, and the universalization of secondary education (Spindler and Spindler, 2000).

Finally, a recent period from the 1980s on has been characterized by the analysis and critique of neoliberal reforms, the impact of the new capitalism, and scenarios of post-colonialism and globalization. We will center our analysis on this latter phase.

ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN THE ERA OF NEOLIBERALISM AND GLOBALIZATION

After the 1980s, the neoliberal free market reforms proposed by the economists of the Chicago School started to be implemented in various points around the globe (with General Augusto Pinochet ruling in Chile, Margaret Thatcher in Britain, and Ronald Reagan in the United States). The "Washington Consensus" (1989) would impose the economic policies for the 1990s based on the experiments of the previous decade. In this trend, education was transformed from a public right to a negotiable commodity in the market, thus allowing private companies to benefit from state investments. Public funding was oriented toward the poor only under a logic of demand; managerial logics from the private sector were introduced in the public sector, and educational markets were deregulated and globalized. A concept of neo-institutionalism that came from *rational choice* theory provided a set of strategies to impose these reforms in the absence of an authoritarian government, thereby maintaining a prevalent neoliberal individualism and minimizing the involvement of the state at the same time that reforms were reinforced through rules and incentives.

In this context a sociological school of critical analysis of educational policies emerged in Great Britain (in particular with the *Journal of Education Policy*, 1986; see Ball, 1990), taking as the object of study the Thatcherite neoliberal reforms and

analyzing them using qualitative approaches and discourse analysis. Meanwhile, from the 1970s to the mid-1980s anthropology reconsidered the links between the discipline and development projects, as well as its contribution to public policies (Escobar, 1988; Foley, 1991; Grillo and Rew, 1985). The various anthropological associations on both sides of the Atlantic organized symposia about anthropology and public policies, thus setting the stage for the consolidation of the subfield. By the end of the 1990s a good part of this critical balance crystallized in what is called today the *anthropology of policy*, a critical analysis of public policies (Okongwu and Mencher, 2000; Shore and Wright, 1996, 1999; Wright, 1994). The development of the anthropology of policy is also a product of a revisited holistic perspective in anthropology that in the contemporary world highlights the interconnections between local realities and global discourses of development, globalization, and neoliberalism (cf. Appadurai, 1996; Gupta and Ferguson, 1992; Tsing, 2000).

Only in the first decade of the 2000s did the US-based journal *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* compile a significant collection of articles around educational policies (between 1999 and 2008, 16 articles compared with five in the previous decade). The publication of *Policy as Practice: Toward a Comparative Sociocultural Analysis of Educational Policy* (Sutton and Levinson, 2001) by two US-based anthropologists of education also served as the platform for the consolidation of the study of educational policies as such within anthropology. As the authors highlight in the introduction of this seminal text, unlike sociology, in relation to educational public policy “a fully anthropological approach has yet to be developed” (p. 1) (see Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead, 2009 for a more recent methodological discussion about ethnography and critical analysis of educational policies). Interdisciplinary research carried out by scholars who combined undergraduate or graduate studies in anthropology and in education also contributed to the consolidation of the subfield (see Hamann and Rosen, Chapter 27, below). As a consequence, the anthropology of educational policies was institutionalized inside the American Anthropological Association in 2006 with the creation of the Council on Anthropology of Education’s (CAE) Task Force on Advancing Anthropology and Education Perspectives in Public Policy, and an Ad Hoc Committee on Education Policy (Hamann *et al.*, 2007; Ladson-Billings *et al.*, 2007). Likewise, the American Educational Research Association recognized the contributions of anthropology to the analysis of educational policies in a Handbook published in 2009 (Dixon, Borman, and Cotner, 2009).

The majority of academic research in this field in the United States and in Latin America has been oriented to critical analyses of neoliberal reforms in educational policies. The studies have been undertaken from various perspectives and on various key aspects, such as: the impact of standards and new forms of evaluation and control, for example, Lopez, Valenzuela, and García’s (Chapter 32, below) advocacy study of policymaking practices in “Texas-style accountability”; Sloan’s (2007) ethnographic research on the varied ways in which accountability policies affect teachers and youth in a Mexican American community; Bartlett *et al.*’s analysis of privatizing and marketing processes of education and how they achieve “a remarkable cultural change in the perception of school’s purpose” (2002: 6); the teachers’ and unions’ opposition to official education reforms in Mexico, through which they become unofficial “policy-makers” (Street, 2001); Hamann and Lane’s (2004) study of the state and local

agencies' role as policy intermediaries at federal and state levels in the United States; Levinson's analysis of programs for democratic citizenship education in Mexico's Ministry of Education (2005); or Martinic's international analysis of Latin American policies centered on interest groups, decision making, and implementation (2001).

In relation to higher education reforms, research has been promoted by two of the leaders of the anthropology of policy movement, Susan Wright in the United Kingdom – since 2003, with her team at the Danish University of Education – and Cris Shore in New Zealand (Shore and Wright, 1999). Reforms in public universities have attempted to curtail the budgets and demand efficiency, to stratify the sector by establishing ranks, to specialize functions and, ultimately, to marketize the sector (see also Shumar and Mir, Chapter 26, below). These works have warned the academic community about the impact of the reforms not only inside the discipline of anthropology, but also in more general terms of research, funding, teaching, and academic freedom (Wright, 2005). Degregori and Sandoval López (2009) have also written about the impact of neoliberalism, university reforms, and political violence in the discipline and teaching of anthropology in Peru.

These studies have been influenced by political anthropology and approaches to critical discourse analysis. Wright and Shore have suggested that anthropologists should center the analysis around “keywords” such as “quality,” “freedom,” “flexibility,” or “audit,” as a way to study the processes “whereby concepts migrate between contexts and are used in new ways by positioned actors or communities of interest” (Andersen, 2006: 2). In addition, they have proposed to study *up* – using Laura Nader's (1972) original concept for researching powerful political and economic actors – as well as studying *through* the interactions of actors, while “rethinking the ethical codes designed with studying ‘down’ in mind” (Wedel *et al.*, 2005: 40, 42).

ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION AND THE STATE

At the present time, the state that originated and gave sense to public education is suffering great transformations. It is “being reorganized territorially and functionally on subnational, national, supranational, and translocal levels” (Jessop, 2002: 206) to adapt and serve new capitalism in the processes of globalization. The legitimacy of the state in education in today's world is based on showing its relevance for competitiveness in the global context. The state has delegated its responsibilities such as health, education, and security – in numerous private or mixed agencies. As Jessop argues, “there is a trend toward the destatization of the political system” (Jessop, 2002: 207). The state role has moved from government to governance, that is, the capacity of articulating actions of various agents such as NGOs, private companies, and para-state organizations to achieve its public policies. This displacement of the centrality of the state toward multiple agencies has weakened the capacity of citizens to control key decisions through democratic procedures.

The influence of international organizations, multilateral banks, and multinational corporations in the decisions of nation-states, particularly in the global south, is more and more powerful. Particularly, there is increasing interest in the creation of a global educational market, where credits can be transferred between systems – implying

homogenizing the educational systems of dissimilar countries across the world. Influential and prestigious educational institutions in the core countries influence the politics and train politicians of global south countries, who then import those models to their countries of origin. Such an educational global market is consolidating itself at the higher education level (Shore, 2007; Shore and Wright, 1999). Nevertheless, globalization of education does not necessarily eliminate the state. For example, as we shall see for the case of Colombia, the implementation of virtually all the formulaic recommendations provided by the World Bank has strengthened the power and central role of the state in education.

Despite the incessant attempts to depoliticize the action of the state, policy processes represent highly politically charged issues (Tarr, 1965: 42). Nowadays, public policy is part of the great political game, indeed it is *the* politics in itself (Lowi, 1979: 229). That is, policies are embedded in networks of political signification that respond to certain conceptions and understandings of what should be done, for whom, why, and how. Due to the fact that they respond to the diverse interests and positionalities of different social groups, oftentimes these policies and the perception of their effects are very much contested. What seemed like basic questions, such as whom shall we educate?; how much money should the state invest?; how much education does a child need, for how many years?; and what subject matters? become sites of political and ideological struggle. These conceptions are historically, culturally, and socially constructed; they are products of larger forces that interact with particular contexts. Actors attribute meaning to the decisions that are made in the instances of power and affected by them. Because these understandings exclude and include some elements and groups of people, they are a matter of conflict and imply a constant negotiation of power. Public policy is thus a mode of political action in which the state and the government have a privileged role, but in which many other actors are mobilized.

The state conceived not as a single and unified entity but as a set of agencies, departments, tiers, and levels “that cannot, qua structural ensemble, exercise power” (Jessop, 1990: 116) in and of themselves needs to be rendered susceptible to being ethnographically investigated rather than taken for granted (Gupta, 1995). The state, understood not as what lies above us all or confined to the walls of the bureaucrats’ offices, but as what crosses us, that is present at every level, has a major role that is necessary to make visible. As Trouillot has suggested:

If we suspend the state-nation homology ... we reach a more powerful vision of the state, yet one more open to ethnography, since we discover that, theoretically, there is no necessary site for the state, institutional or geographical. Within that vision, the state thus appears as an open field with multiple boundaries and no institutional fixity ... Though linked to a number of apparatuses not all of which may be governmental, the state is not an apparatus but a set of processes. (2001: 127)

The concept of the state and, therefore, the concept of the public, are thus historically contingent, and their potential unity is a matter that needs to be solved empirically, as for years anthropologists have shown (Geertz, 1973).

Attempting to overcome the increasingly problematic and limiting use and understanding of *culture*, as an intrinsically local, territorially bounded category that operates

isolated from other forces, anthropologists have not only situated their analysis in larger spatial and temporal scales, but also developed a new approach in which anthropologists are no longer limited to the comprehension of phenomena at a local scale but have expanded their scope of inquiry to the global – thereby making new and illuminating connections between the two (cf. Gupta and Ferguson, 1992; Tsing, 2000). This disciplinary shift was a reaction to an anthropological tradition too centered in a localist and exoticizing gaze, grappling with its colonial legacies, which had tended to overlook the interdependencies between the local and the global. Under this tenet, scholars have suggested that to understand contemporary societies we need to consider the ways in which larger global forces have worked to transform the nation-state in post-colonial yet still imperial settings. In turn, an understanding of the nation-state will lead us to a better comprehension of public policies, particularly in the countries of the periphery (Coronil, 2000; Escobar, 2008).

EDUCATIONAL PUBLIC POLICIES AND NEOLIBERALISM IN COLOMBIA

Colombia is located in northwest South America. It has a diverse population of 41 million people (Census, 2005), 60 recognized minority ethnic groups representing 3.4% of the population, as well as a vibrant population of Afro-Colombian communities, representing 10%. According to its GDP, Colombia is considered a low–middle income economy (55.3% of the population live below the poverty line, and 19.5% live on less than US\$2 per day, *Quality of Life National Survey*, National Statistics Department, 2003). A protracted sociopolitical conflict has thwarted the achievement of fair economic development and social justice.

In the Colombian educational system, compulsory education lasts for nine years. Basic elementary education lasts for five years, preceded by one year of pre-school education. The secondary school system covers six years divided into two cycles: the basic cycle covers four years (sixth to ninth grades; compulsory, but not fully free: “In Latin America, there are essentially no tuition fees (only Colombia has these).” World Bank, *User Fees in Primary Education: Draft for Review*, Washington, DC, 2002: 7), and the final secondary cycle two years (tenth and eleventh grades). The enrollment totaled 11 322 620 in 2009, indicating just how young the Colombian population is. The net enrollment rate reached 90.03% (Ministry of Education, <http://www.mineduacion.gov.co>). Despite these positive rates, though, historically Colombia has been characterized by a very weak, underfunded, or even unfunded, public education system, which denotes a lack of governmental interest in it. Not until the Constitutional reform of 1991 did the state recognize basic education as a universal right. Still, in some cases tuition fees and some education expenses, as well as school supplies, in public educational institutions must be partially covered by parents.

In this context, the research fellows of the *Programa RED*, an interdisciplinary team at the National University of Colombia, decided to open a research line in 2000 to analyze Colombian educational public policies and their ongoing changes. This process required the design of a variety of creative strategies and techniques, such as multi-sited fieldwork carried out over longer periods of time –given that it is difficult to adequately assess the processes of implementation of educational reforms in periods

of less than five years. Since then, we have conducted eight research projects for various department and city education boards. We have carried out fieldwork in several places, such as the Colombian Caribbean region (Department of the Atlantic), Bogotá, the capital city, in rural areas of the central Andean region (Department of Cundinamarca), and in indigenous territories (*nasa* people) in the Andean southwest. We have focused our fieldwork in elementary, middle, and high school settings (usually in periods of between three months and one year). We have also visited the local and regional administrative centers. In addition, we founded a collaborative research group of public school principals that held biweekly gatherings for a period of two years. Such gatherings were used to collectively discuss and analyze public policy in the light of their own experiences. We have designed and applied quantitative data collection instruments (surveys) and carried out workshops for the recording of memories associated with policies. We have also consulted, classified, and analyzed a great variety of documentary and media sources, including pamphlets, official and statistical reports, WEB pages, national press reports, local radio (e.g., the weekly program of the teachers' union of Bogotá on Sunday morning) and television, debates in the Parliament, educational legislation, and jurisprudence. In addition to this, in 2004 we applied a large survey in Bogotá to principals, coordinators, teachers, and students. This data was thus the accumulated outcome of eight research projects (reports available at <http://www.humanas.unal.edu.co/red>) that involved anthropologists, social science professionals, undergraduate and graduate students, as well as teachers and principals.

These research projects covered different time frameworks. We started the international overview of the educational policies and the ideological debate in the 1980s; then we adopted the 1990s as the starting point for the Colombian policies, because of the impact of the new political Constitution in 1991. With regard to Colombian social and educational indicators, we gathered figures from the 1990s to 2007. We carried out the fieldwork in 2003–2008, although we also took into account some personal experiences and fieldwork made in the context of other studies done between 1986 and 2000. Research findings have led us to important conclusions; in this section we would like to highlight some of the most relevant ones.

In the first place, there is enough evidence to suggest that neoliberal policies have changed the traditionally weak and highly disorganized education system (54% public sector, 46% private in 1996) into a centralized and homogenized educational one, establishing sophisticated systems of information and regulation, and increasing the public enrollment rate without a proportional public investment (83.9% in the public sector – including vouchers and public schools privately administered – and 16.1% in private schools in 2009).

In the last decade, even though the state apparatus has, through numerous decrees, shrunk in terms of its bureaucratic apparatus and the reduction of public social services, it has also strengthened as never before in Colombian history. It has reasserted the administration and control of all the aspects of the education system, thereby gaining legitimacy. However, this is not merely the result of a revitalized social interest in which the state invests and directs all its efforts to fill the gaps with new policies. Instead, it has re-absorbed and appropriated the energy of traditional local political clienteles, which historically controlled teachers' contracts and students' access to public

schools, and it has built its apparently new policies upon those clientelist dynamics. It has also drawn from the efforts of grassroots community networks, which had previously built and provided – literally – most of the Colombian public schools, from teachers to chairs and tables. For example, in a city like Barranquilla of more than one million people, most schools were built by the community, and only two secondary schools were built by the state based on an original plan (in 1908 and 1932).

In this way, the government deploys the autonomous and independent energy of communities for its political benefit, to the extent that it discursively presents educational programs as the result of its own political will without acknowledging the community efforts. This ultimately legitimizes the current political regime and its leadership. This dynamic has become visible during the last decade in the policies of the current government, as we can see in these quotes:

The National Government announced that by 2004 it will open 250 000 new school places across the country for primary and secondary education, which are part of the Educational Revolution in the administration of President Álvaro Uribe Vélez. The Deputy Minister of Education for primary and secondary education, Himelda Martínez, said this is the figure put forward as part of the goal of extending school coverage, by which the National Government gives more Colombians the opportunity to access education. (*El Heraldo*, January 15, 2004)

The Development Plan 2002–2006 does not mention the right to education, nor does it provide for a strategy to extend free education or reduce education costs. Quite the reverse, it espouses the principle of co-financing by families and students, thereby shifting the State's human rights obligations on to private individuals. The imposition of value added tax on enrolment fees illustrates the application of market principles to education ... So Colombia does not have a rights-based education strategy. (Human Rights Report of the United Nations, prepared by Katarina Tomaševski, 2004: "The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Right to Education." Mission to Colombia, October 1–10, 2003. Addendum. United Nations. Economic and Social Council. Commission on Human Rights E/CN.4/2004/45/Add.2. New York)

While feeding from the social and political energies of local communities, the state delivers public education—quantified and budgeted as a commodity – to the market (Miñana Blasco, 2006). The new state, moreover, has attempted to produce equal citizens by creating homogenous educational institutions, with homogeneous times and schedules, and standardized tests (Miñana Blasco, 2008). Despite the fact that the 1991 Constitution consecrated the nation's diversity, state educational policies actually have been indifferent towards that diversity; the only difference the state recognizes is the line that demarcates the poor from the non-poor, the very definition of which it creates and measures at its will with sophisticated information systems. This limit is used to identify those whom the state should regulate (the middle classes) and those over whom it should exercise tutelage (the poor).

In Colombia, the public sphere in education and its very definition are contentious topics disputed among many actors and organizations: international agencies and organizations, large transnational corporations, the government (particularly the Department of National Planning), teachers, unions, politicians, national, regional, and local level governmental institutions, the media, the church, political parties,

parents and parents' organizations, and students. The relationship between the public and the private has always been confusing and disputed: somewhere between the right by which the central state feels entitled to train and discipline its citizens, the privileges of the provincial political elites to shape their clienteles controlling the local administration of education, the right of churches to shepherd their congregations, the desire of private organizations to offer a service for fee, the collective demands of indigenous organizations, and the right of parents to guard their children, thereby seeing schools as an extension of the domestic sphere. In spite of this, in just the last ten years the central state has achieved a major leading role in the definition of the public sphere.

The sense of the public in formal education is also shaped by the particular local context in which people are situated. The "public" in a small town, or in a rural area where there is only one school, is different than in a city like Bogotá, with its 8 million inhabitants, or in territories controlled by indigenous peoples (Bolaños *et al.*, 2004). Within the city, the social geography has an impact on the concept of the public because neighborhoods vary in socioeconomic and cultural terms as well. For example, the attitude of a community towards public education is different – and generally speaking less supportive – in a neighborhood populated by people with diverse economic status than in one with a more homogenous population in terms of social class. For years, public education has been conceived in Colombia as schooling for the poor. The policies of "focalization" recently promoted have reinforced and legitimated this idea by creating informational mechanisms to establish who and where the poor people are. There is nothing wrong with identifying educational needs and enhancing efforts in the most vulnerable zones; however, we have observed that the secondary effect of such policies is the subsequent reduction of services to sectors of the population that are not "extremely" poor. In consequence, the central government does not promote a notion of public education as "schooling for all" – the basic right to which all citizens should be entitled according to the Constitution of 1991 – but rather, education for the poorest of the poor population; and since the government defines the criteria to assess who is and who is not poor, it also determines, by extension, who deserves or not to get free public education.

Focalization policies have been oriented towards a new "almost-citizen," that is, an individual who needs the state because she or he is poor and therefore becomes a beneficiary of its policies, but who is not quite a citizen yet because s/he cannot claim his or her full rights. This is the population – more than 60% – that is deemed to need only minimal public education. In this new situation, wherein the public has been redefined, citizens are entitled to their partial rights as long as they keep their position of submission, inferiority, and exclusion that makes them eligible for these benefits of the state, and as long as they fulfill the requirements and match the data required in the "poverty survey" – another data-collection tool based on criteria that divide the poor from the non-poor. Those qualifying now as poor are even afraid that if they get a job they will lose the benefits because they will not count anymore as poor:

It turns out that the SISBEN [poverty survey] had a description or a characterization, I'm not sure, but mothers came crying to me saying, "I did not get classified in this category [as very poor] because I had a refrigerator, or a stereo, and then they did not

give me a place [did not give access to her son or daughter in a public school].” But it wasn’t just one or two, there were many mothers with the same story, and they were weeping, and my hands were completely tied. (Statement by a supervisor at a gathering of school principals, 2004, Bogotá)

“True” citizens, meanwhile, are those who do not need public education or the tutelage of the state. Those are the citizens with rights to choose in the educational city-market, who can claim their rights, participate, and debate because they pay for a service offered by a private entity that they can either choose or leave, unlike those who are “poor” and have to “remain” in the public education system.

A constitutional reform in 2001 established a new mechanism to allocate public resources: schools would be funded, and teachers would be hired, primarily based on the enrollment figures, and not according to their specific necessities or the social, economic, or cultural characteristics of the population enrolled (a so-called “demand-led” funding model). Nowadays, students are counted several times during the year to verify the numbers, as well as the resources and the quantity of personnel increases or reductions according to these:

Only 195 000 students of the Department legalized their enrollment, when the authorities hoped that at least 198 000 children would be attending schools and colleges. The Secretary of Education of Boyacá, José Gómez Acosta, said the situation is worrying, because for this reason there are too many teachers. The official insisted that it will initiate a new campaign to get kids back to classes. (*El Nuevo Siglo*, Boyacá, February 23, 2005)

In this scenario, new tactics emerged at the local level in order to maintain control and autonomy as much as possible over resources, and the political and social energies embedded in the education service. In Bogotá, for instance, a school in a lower middle-class neighborhood indirectly excluded working-class students who came from other neighborhoods, thereby closing down the school restaurant. In this way, teachers and the principal guaranteed the support and the additional resources of the lower middle-class parents, and the concurrence of students with a higher cultural capital. By contrast, in a small village in Cundinamarca Department with a very big school the mayor established several privileges such as a school restaurant and various prizes to students from rural zones, and promised to contract some of them as teachers in the future, in order to avoid the danger of closing the school because of a dropping enrollment rate. In addition, the small economy of the village got a boost thanks to the small economy associated with the school (housing, catering, stationery, etc.), thereby increasing also the popularity of the mayor. These tactics caused several rural schools in this region to be closed because students were “stolen” by the big school, thus increasing educational costs because of bussing, and disrupting the educational pertinence of local community ties.

In the Colombian case, public action usually is not built in the conventional Deweyan manner, that is, through debate or *voice* (complaint, grievance, or proposal for change) in local democratic spaces, or by citizens who claim their rights. Public action is rather usually built through the kind of *exit* or defection (withdrawal from the relationship) characteristic of the behavior of consumers in the market (Hirschman,

1970). It is also built through everyday *tactics* and *strategies* – in de Certeau’s sense (1990 [1980]) – or through formal mechanisms such as the *tutela*, a legal tool that allows individual citizens to claim their rights when denied (in the Colombian case, the *tutela* is always used by students or parents at schools, not by the children who have not managed to enter to the system altogether); or through collective action to solve a local and specific problem. Because the private sector has appeared as a solution for the services the state does not provide or guarantee, citizens’ demands in this regard are diluted because they often feel satisfied with the private services – which are usually considered to be better than the public ones. Perhaps the only long-standing effort to defend education as a universal right has been by the teachers’ unions and the leftist union movement more generally. However, such defense has been accompanied by denominational, paternalistic, motherly, and sexist practices that are observable in everyday situations in public schools. In the southern portion of the Colombian Andes, meanwhile, *nasa* people (140 000 strong) have taken advantage of neoliberal outsourcing policies to increase their autonomy and to manage the formal education in their territories on the model of “charter schools.” Nevertheless, the *nasa* do not contract education with the state according to the logic of market competition, but rather as part of the struggle for collective rights for cultural and territorial autonomy.

The new “public” in Colombian education is oftentimes the result of the effort of communities and neighborhood associations, as well as charity or international donors who patronize the poor (for instance, recently a foundation of the pop star Shakira built a big school – *macro colegio* – in Barranquilla, her natal city). Through fundraising that involves intense community labor – such as food fairs and “barn-raisings” – they have managed to build their local schools (Arango Vargas, 2004). The state has stimulated local community solutions to the absence of public education at all levels. An example of this is the program *Madres Comunitarias*, designed in the mid-1980s under the sponsorship of the United Nations to attend to poor preschool children. It aimed to remedy the lack of childcare centers in very poor areas and to stop malnutrition. The idea is that community mothers, who informally took care of the neighborhood’s children in their houses, would volunteer to become part of the program in exchange for a small subsidy. The Colombian Institute for Family Well-Being (*Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar*) recruits them, offering minimal training and a monthly subsidy (nearly US\$130 to care for 15 children), food, and some additional financial aid. Until very recently, the program was mainly configured as basic care, and the educational component in early childhood was not clearly defined. These very committed mothers struggle to offer better services to children who otherwise would be left alone in their houses, and they have fought with the government to keep the program, increase the subsidy, and generally improve their conditions. Paradoxically, the state absorbs and appropriates the efforts of these “community mothers” and incorporates into its overall enrollment figures the number of children served by the mothers, as if it were the state’s own achievement.

Unlike these community-based solutions for early education, basic and upper secondary education detaches parents from the school system through various mechanisms. For example, the state has centralized its services, such as the annual registration, rather than locating them in the schools themselves. It has increased bussing children to schools located miles away from their houses; implemented computer managed information

systems that are not easily accessible for all the population; and centralized hiring processes (*Contratación a la vista*) in the name of efficiency and transparency. Even though these measures aim to improve the system as a whole (efficiency, centralized information), there is evidence that this has not occurred and that, on the contrary, it has negative secondary effects: it removes people from their local contexts, decreasing the participation of local actors in the decision-making process, and it concentrates the delivery of educational services (catering, guards, cleaning, etc.) in a few large private companies that contract with the state. In sum, it creates a series of additional bureaucratic steps in a geographically distant setting, which alters the sense of the public and the local relations between local community and school. This, in turn, has an impact on people's motivation, support, and sense of belonging to the public school. In sum, it detaches people from their community ties (Miñana Blasco, 2006).

A new concept of the "public" has thus emerged from the central government during the last decade. This new concept is based on a managerial view of the country and of the school system in particular, which is supposed to be run like any for-profit business. Here, the notion of "public" is restricted to some ambiguous practices of "accountability." Clearly, the concept of *accountability* is a fundamental one. It refers to a central aspect of governance, an ethical call for "whether and how those in the public arena are held responsible for their decisions" (Fox, 2007: 2). However, the use of this notion in Colombia is relatively recent, and it has been imported and translated into the expression *rendición de cuentas*, which does not quite convey the same meaning as the original phrasing. When government officials present to the citizenry the public *rendición de cuentas*, it is mainly a collection of facts and figures on a given policy (attendance rate, enrollment rate, academic performance rate, etc.), many times out of context and imprecisely described, or even distorted (partially because information processing mechanisms are not unified). As a result, this information – necessary indeed – hides important qualitative aspects, as well as elements related to political responsibility for decisions made by government officials that might help citizens to assess the actions taken in one field.

The inclusion of the entrepreneurial class as a central actor in achieving universal public education has been fundamental to the redefinition of the public sphere in education as well, because it changes the role of the state and the balance between the public and the private spheres. An example of this is the foundation *Empresarios por la educación* (Businessmen for Education), born in a meeting that took place in the United States, and which urged the private sector to play a more decisive role in the improvement of education in Latin America and, by extension, to curb the power of teachers' unions and left parties in education.

During the last two governments (2002–2010), Colombia has configured itself as a communitarian state (the governmental agenda's own title is, "Towards a communitarian state") that appropriates and deploys community relationships for its own control and defense, and in order to devolve its responsibilities to the middle and working classes while benefiting private capital. If in a modern democratic state political parties are supposed to configure a specific arena for the enactment of politics, in today's political climate the role of parties dissolves into thousands of actors and organizations rather than in to a particular identifiable group. As a consequence, the state and its allied political forces become unaccountable for their

actions because, discursively, every individual has primary responsibility for her or his social and economic failure, rather than the structure in which he or she is embedded. All individuals are guilty and need to be blamed for the current situation. In this model, children, parents, teachers, educational institutions, and school boards are seen as equally responsible as the government for the critical condition of the system.

In Colombian education, then, the public has become like a “game of mirrors”: institutions tell the students that they are “entrepreneurs” who compete and manage their future at their will, and simultaneously they are “customers” of the educational service; they are also an unfinished “product” to be transformed and molded by schooling, so their capacity of action is limited and only partially recognized. Families are seen as autonomous business companies, in charge of reproducing their economic, social, and cultural capital; however, they are also clients of a service controlled and managed by the state. Public schools and teachers – service providers and state clients – are thus no longer sure what they are even competing for: children, parents, or state resources.

The Colombian state seems to show two faces: on the one hand, it appears to be a great provider of educational services that attend to its chameleonic clients – electors, users, opportunists, vulnerable populations, children, parents, school boards, local institutions – and subhires public or private institutions to administer the service; on the other, it appears to be a client that chooses and hires the “best” educational services from all of those available. According to this logic, the educational “product,” that is, the education of children, becomes a slippery matter. It is not clear what is sold, offered, transformed, or measured: Is it the academic performance, the signs of intelligence, academic credentials, test scores, a teacher’s career, or class distinction? The educational public sector becomes a *quasi-market* in which the product is determined by the funding actor – the state – rather than by the consumer.

Taking into account the way in which capitalism has been reorganizing itself in Colombia, particularly in the education sector, the facts thus seem to indicate that the state, the community, and the market are orienting more towards the growth of transnational capital and the economic interest of a few rather than towards the overall wellbeing of the population. As Hannah Arendt (1958) foresaw half a century ago, the question at stake today is if it is possible to continue speaking of equality and citizenship without affecting the logic of capitalism – if emancipation and freedom in the contemporary world have a meaning beyond abstract conceptions and are possible in the lives of millions of citizens who seem subjected to the larger forces of the market and who need to make rather consequential decisions related to their education. The question here is if it is legitimate to treat the citizen as consumer without addressing issues of property, political, economic, and social inequality, and exclusion.

We are not suggesting that individuals should not be accountable for their actions in the public sphere, or that they do not have a capacity for agency. We are contending, however, that not all individuals hold the same capacity of maneuver within the market system, and that such presumed equality of individual responsibility in the neoliberal system is a risky fallacy, designed to shrink the space of the public and enhance the role of the market. Our fieldwork in Colombia shows that community and collective

political struggles for schooling – with the exception of the *nasa* people – have been displaced by individual strategies and tactics of survival. Meanwhile, all political debate, that is, all debate around ethics and core values as well as methods or pedagogy, is removed and replaced by a language of efficiency, by showing management results (*rendición de cuentas*) which are measured in numerical statistics that obscure understanding of the qualitative aspects of the education system and of daily life in schools.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Some authors have suggested that within our discipline, the “anthropological perspective” is the result of the articulation among four dimensions: “historical, comparative, local, and cultural,” in a holistic view (Foley, Levinson, and Hurtig, 2000: 38; see also Hamann and Rosen, Chapter 27, below). We suggest that the holistic perspective in the anthropological analysis of educational policies needs to account for the larger economic, political, and cultural forces that have shaped the configuration of the contemporary state and its policies in relation to local contexts, actors, and institutions.

Articulating the political, economic, and symbolic dimensions has been particularly enlightening in the analysis of public policy. It is important to point out that the economic dimension of educational policies is perhaps one of the most understudied and underestimated aspects in the anthropology of education field, even knowing that all policies are ultimately related to the allocation of public resources. In the same sense, from the perspective of symbolic anthropology, studies of ritual and performance have proved their capacity to analyze contemporary public policy as spectacle (Rosen, 2009). In the words of Bob Jessop, it might be worthy to attempt an analysis of public policies in education from a sort of “critical cultural political economy” of education.

The study of educational public policy from an ethnographic and anthropological perspective constitutes a privileged site to theorize the more fluid, less organizationally and geographically fixed new capitalist state that is configured in the context of globalization (Trouillot, 2001). At the same time, it constitutes a good site to study the changing character of the borders and senses of the public and the private, in contexts where education tends to be transformed from a right to a negotiable commodity.

It may sound paradoxical that at the moment in which neoliberalism has delegitimized and reduced the state apparatus to its minimum expression, we propose that the anthropology of education approach the theme of the *educational state* seriously. As some studies have suggested, even though it is true that the state has been minimized, paradoxically it has been simultaneously strengthened as a result of this process. The difference is that it operates with more subtle tools of control and intervention, which ultimately constitute tools of education in a broader sense. Such controls displace the state from a unique center position and become omnipresent in social life. The *pedagogization* of the social, as Deleuze (1990) has suggested, implies the explosion of subtle pedagogies in mass media, companies, workplaces, hospitals, the Internet, and everyday life in general. As Trouillot

proposes (2001), the processes and practices of state public policy can be recognized in unexpected places through its very effects, such as “isolation, identification, legibility, and spatialization.”

Articulating these reflections in the analysis of educational policies may lead us not only to better and more solid ground for our investigations, but also to make visible the political implications of our knowledge and the concrete social impact that anthropology can have. The role of anthropology of education cannot be underestimated; its knowledge has been important in the configuration of social struggles and in the systematic denunciation of social inequality, as well as in the understanding of culture and education in a deeper way. As seen in the Colombian case, research on education policy increasingly requires the formation of interdisciplinary research teams and the participation of stakeholders. Finally, an anthropology of educational policies can play a very important role in making visible the new global context in which power operates. It can help “develop[ing] strategies for *re*politicizing politics and the state, strategies that draw their power from the project of a *different* globalization and a *different* modernity” (Beck, 2005 [2002]: 167, 168).

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PART IV

**Roles, Experiences,
and Institutions**

CHAPTER 23

Immigrants and Education

*Margaret A. Gibson
and Jill P. Koyama*

Over the past 40 years the United States has once again experienced a major period of immigration. As a result of the 1965 changes to US immigration law, coupled with the forces of globalization, US immigration flows have reached 1 million per year, comparable with the peak numbers in the early 1900s. Most “new wave” immigrants have come from Latin America (54%) and Asia (27%) (McCabe and Meissner, 2010), a sharp contrast to the first “great wave,” which was comprised largely of immigrants from Europe. Today, nearly a quarter of all children in the United States under the age of 17 have at least one immigrant parent (Terrazas and Batalova, 2009), and in many school districts the numbers are far higher. Most of these children were born in the United States and thus are US citizens, but about 25% are foreign born.

In this chapter, we review the contributions of anthropologists of education to the topic of immigrants and education over the past 40 years, a period that roughly parallels the history of the Council on Anthropology and Education (CAE), founded in 1968. We focus on the scholarship that has been published in the *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* (AEQ), but we also include in our discussion other ethnographic work that has advanced the anthropological study of immigrants and education. Most of the studies cited are US-based, but we acknowledge the work of anthropologists studying the schooling experiences of immigrants in other countries and later argue for greater attention to cross-country comparisons. In addition, we attend to how our understanding of the schooling experiences of immigrant children has been framed by and has bridged a variety of disciplines, especially anthropology and sociology. The terms immigrant children, immigrant-origin children, and children of immigrants are used interchangeably, and we address the contestations and complications embedded in these terms in a later section.

The following broad questions inform the chapter: what have anthropologists considered when they have examined the educational experiences of immigrant-origin

children and youth, especially in the United States?; what frames, perspectives, and theories have guided the major threads of their research?; what frames have emerged as alternatives? Given the limitations of space, we center the discussion on K-12 schooling and on lines of inquiry that have received the greatest attention by anthropologists of education. In many cases, we reference one particular piece of work as representative of a larger body of scholarship. Issues related to higher education and to bilingualism and second language learning, although central to the immigrant experience, are not included as they are addressed elsewhere (Bartlett *et al.*, Chapter 10, above; Shumar and Mir, Chapter 26, below). Nor have we attended to the role of families in the education of immigrant-origin children (see Baquedano-López and Hernandez, Chapter 12, above; Hurtig and Dyrness, Chapter 31, below).

THE IMMIGRANT/INVOLUNTARY MINORITY TYPOLOGY

Prior to the 1980s, anthropologists of education focused their research mostly on long-settled minority groups. New wave immigrants were for the most part too freshly arrived to catch their interest. An early exception is Gibson's (1976) study in the US Virgin Islands, which compared the school adaptation strategies of immigrant West Indian and native-born Crucian students. But it was really the work of John Ogbu that brought widespread scholarly attention to the differing patterns of school performance between immigrant and non-immigrant minority groups. For more than 30 years Ogbu sought to answer the question of why some minority groups – most often those who have immigrated to a new country voluntarily – are in the aggregate more successful in school than minorities whose incorporation into the host society has occurred as a consequence of conquest, colonization, or slavery (Ogbu, 1974, 1987, 2003). This latter type he referred to as “castelike” or “involuntary” minorities.

As set forth by Ogbu in his *cultural-ecological theory*, minority students' engagement with and performance in school are influenced by two key sets of factors: first, system factors, in particular the historical and current treatment of a minority group by the larger society and by the schools; and, second, the minority group's interpretations of and collective responses to its treatment, which Ogbu called “community forces.” Although Ogbu emphasized the interactive nature of these two sets of factors, his own research centered on community forces, which he steadfastly argued were given inadequate attention by other scholars seeking to understand the variability in minority children's school performance. Two key premises drove his work: that immigrant and involuntary minority groups “appear to differ in the way they perceive American society and in how they respond to the education system” (Ogbu, 1974: 2); and that these differing perceptions and interpretations stem from the groups' differing modes of incorporation into the host society and their subsequent discriminatory treatment (Ogbu, 2003: 51–52). Ogbu maintained that learning in situations of cross-cultural contact “is a common human phenomenon generally accompanied by some cultural discontinuities” and that for immigrant minorities these discontinuities tend to be temporary in nature due to the “perceived incentives” of learning the “alien culture” and doing well in school (Ogbu, 1982: 304).

SHORTCOMINGS OF CULTURAL-ECOLOGICAL THEORY

Ogbu's theoretical framework became one of the two or three main orthodoxies in the anthropology of education (Anderson-Levitt, 1997). Particularly in the early years, his work played a major role in influencing anthropologists of education to reframe their questions about the school performance of minority children, to ask why differences between home and school cultures appear to pose more serious obstacles to academic success for some groups of children than for others. Many disagreed with the dichotomous and rigid nature of Ogbu's framework, and yet in seeking to portray more fully the nature of immigrant students' school experiences, these scholars often described their work in relationship to Ogbu's theoretical frame, either seeking to refute or refine it.

Among the shortcomings, Ogbu restricted his analysis to only one type of immigrants – those who had migrated for economic purposes and who had arrived in the new country with the advantages of permanent residence. Refugees, asylum seekers, workers with temporary work permits, undocumented workers, and transnational migrants were not included in his framework, nor were they a focus of his research. Further, Ogbu neglected the impact of generation, lumping together as immigrant minorities not only the immigrant generation but also their children and all later generations whose ancestors had originally arrived as immigrants. Noting the problematic nature of this catch-all category, scholars studying immigrants and education in Europe have suggested that the second and third generations (i.e., the children and grandchildren of immigrants) are in many instances more like involuntary minorities because they have not chosen to immigrate, are unwanted in Europe, and face enormous barriers to equal opportunity both in school and in the job market (see Alba and Silberman, 2009; Crul and Holdaway, 2009; Gillborn, 1997; Keaton, 2005; Suárez-Orozco, 1991). Likewise, in the US context scholars have challenged the validity of pigeonholing an entire ethnic group as either immigrant or involuntary. The shortcomings of Ogbu's dichotomous typology are particularly apparent with students of Mexican descent, who may be fifth generation Americans or recently arrived immigrants and whose perceptions of the United States' opportunity structure may be equally as varied (Hayes, 1992; Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Trueba, 1988).

Additionally, cultural ecology theory has drawn sharp criticism for being overly deterministic, neglectful of the fluidity of ethnic and racial identities, underplaying the importance of human agency, and offering insufficient attention to the dynamic nature of a group's educational decision making and strategies for success (Foley, 2005; Foster, 2005; Trueba, 1988). Nor did Ogbu attend to the variability of school-response patterns within a single immigrant group, although as many studies have shown, there are wide ranging patterns of school response and performance. His research also underplayed or even ignored the importance of such variables as social class, gender, and generation.

Perhaps most problematic was Ogbu's persistent neglect of the full impact of school factors on academic engagement. His work can be read as preaching to involuntary minorities to discard their concerns about unequal treatment in schools and instead to adopt the strategies of voluntary immigrants. In his last major work Ogbu gave greater attention to the role of institutional factors, but in the end his view remained

the same: that school performance differences between immigrant and involuntary minorities stem largely from community forces (Ogbu, 2003: 55).

ACCOMMODATION AND ACCULTURATION WITHOUT ASSIMILATION

Gibson was among those whose early work was directly influenced by Ogbu's theoretical framework, but her work included greater attention to what schools might learn from the successful school adaptation strategies of immigrant youth. Her study of Punjabi Sikhs in Northern California, like Ogbu's earlier work, underscored the role of family and community forces in shaping school engagement strategies, but it also brought to light a key immigrant adaptation strategy that Gibson termed *accommodation and acculturation without assimilation* or, alternatively, *additive acculturation* (Gibson, 1988). In the Punjabi view successful and respected individuals are those who can move skillfully among the different cultural groups that surround them while maintaining strong roots within their own community. The Punjabis regarded the acquisition of skills in the dominant group's language and culture as essential to their children's successful participation in the larger society. At the same time, they rejected the schools' assimilationist agenda and severely sanctioned those young people who deviated too far from community norms. "Take what's good from the new culture, but leave the rest," they admonished their children. As Gibson points out, this success strategy has aided Punjabi immigrants in their adaptation to life not only in the United States but in many other countries where they have settled (cf. Bhachu, 1985; Ghuman, 2003; Hall, 2002).

Other scholars have shown that accommodation without assimilation and additive acculturation are strategies utilized by many minority students, immigrant and non-immigrant alike, and particularly by those who are academically successful (e.g., Carter, 1999; Deyhle, 1995; Hoffman, 1988; Mehan, Hubbard, and Villanueva, 1994; Mouw and Xie, 1999). Like Gibson, these scholars have found that minority students often do better in school when the acquisition of school knowledge and competencies in the ways of the dominant culture are viewed as additional skills to be drawn upon as appropriate rather than as a replacement for their home cultures and identities. As Gibson (1998) notes, educational policies that reinforce additive forms of acculturation will, in the long run, prove more effective in serving the needs of immigrant children than policies, whether implicit or explicit, that foster subtractive or replacement forms of acculturation.

SEGMENTED ASSIMILATION

Over the past two decades much of the research on immigrants and education in the United States and in Europe has been carried out by sociologists not anthropologists, but there has been a clear flow of ideas between the two fields. Beginning in the 1990s, US sociologists drew directly from the ethnographic work of Gibson, Matute-Bianchi, Ogbu, and Suárez-Orozco (see below), as well as from their own studies of immigrant and refugee populations, in order to develop the theory of *segmented assimilation* (Portes and Rumbaut, 1996; Portes and Zhou, 1993). According to segmented

assimilation theorists, assimilation does not always occur in a linear fashion and is better viewed as a segmented process that can follow different paths and lead to differing outcomes. They cite three. The first is the traditional model of linear assimilation, which assumes upward mobility and integration socially and politically into the middle class. Cubans in Miami provide one example (Portes and Stepick, 1993). The second pattern is one of *selective assimilation* or *accommodation and acculturation without assimilation*. Primary features of this type are rootedness in a strong ethnic enclave coupled with the deliberate preservation of aspects of the immigrant culture. A pattern of selective assimilation can lead, as in the first type, to rapid mobility into the middle class. The Punjabis in California (Gibson, 1988) and the Vietnamese in New Orleans (Zhou and Bankston, 1998) are two examples. Thus, immigrant students who have the support of a strong ethnic community, as in the Punjabi and Vietnamese cases, or who have the support of parents who themselves are acculturating to their new surroundings at a pace parallel to their children – what Portes and Rumbaut (1996) term *consonant acculturation* and which occurs most often among middle-class immigrants – are often protected to some degree from the injurious impact of assimilationist pressures.

Many other immigrant youth experience what Portes and Rumbaut (1996) describe as *dissonant acculturation* and are placed at risk of *downward assimilation*. This third pattern occurs, they suggest, when the children of immigrants from low socioeconomic status backgrounds feel pressured to acculturate at a pace much faster than their parents and when they have no strong ties to an ethnic community that can buffer the negative forces encountered in their peer and/or school worlds. In such situations the second generation is at risk of becoming estranged from the first, especially if the parents do not know English and the children feel pressure to speak only English, thus losing their ability to communicate on a deeper level with their parents.

ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION, DUAL FRAME OF REFERENCE, AND SUBTRACTIVE SCHOOLING

Suárez-Orozco's (1987) early work, which was also one of the building blocks for segmented assimilation theory, explored the psychosocial aspects of achievement motivation among Central American youth whose families had fled to the United States to avoid war and deprivation in their home countries. Suárez-Orozco found that students' perceptions of the opportunities available to them in the United States versus their home countries, in combination with their sense of duty to their parents for their sacrifices, helped to propel them to "become somebody" and to succeed in school "in spite of the odds." Drawing initially from cultural-ecological theory as well as the work of De Vos (1980) on the psychosocial consequences of prolonged exploitation, Suárez-Orozco found that, in spite of the "poisonous" conditions of the US inner city schools they attended, the young people he studied still viewed schooling as the key to a better life. Another major theme of Suárez-Orozco's work is the comparative or dual perspective that helps immigrants to view the opportunities available to them in the new country in a positive light in spite of the severe hardships and discrimination they face in achieving their goals of becoming somebody. This comparison of the "here" versus the "there" Suárez-Orozco termed a *dual frame of reference*.

Yet optimism, a dual frame of reference, high aspirations, and a belief that formal education is the path to a better life – qualities identified as characteristic of many successful immigrant youth – frequently prove insufficient catalysts for school success when immigrant youth are faced with institutional racism, low teacher expectations, and under-resourced schools. Similarly, a strategy of additive or selective acculturation, while helpful, may not be enough to promote school engagement when immigrant-origin youth are confronted by a system of schooling that embraces and indeed fosters *subtractive acculturation* (Gibson, 1988), or what Valenzuela (1999) has aptly termed *subtractive schooling*. As Valenzuela notes, “Rather than building on students’ cultural and linguistic knowledge and heritage to create biculturally and bilingually competent youth in an additive fashion, schools subtract these identifications from youth to their social and academic detriment” (1999: 326).

GRAND THEORY VERSUS LOCALIZED STUDIES

As the pace of globalization has increased, and with it the pace of immigration to countries of the developed world, it has become evident that no overarching theory of immigration will prove adequate and likewise no single theory of immigrant students’ school performance will suffice (Foley, 2005; Portes, 1997). The types of immigrants, their histories and current circumstances, and the nature of the schools they attend are so varied that, as Portes notes, “they can only be unified at a highly abstract and probably vacuous level” (1997: 810; see also González, Wyman, and O’Connor, Chapter 28, below). Earlier grand theories have all but given way to studies that examine the localization of global formations and forces and the complex processes of identity formation (Lukose, 2007).

Moreover, it is important to note that immigrant youth in this new century may likely enter and exit multiple countries throughout their lives and, with the help of advanced technologies, can remain connected economically, socially, and culturally to two or more countries simultaneously. Enhanced mobility and rapid forms of communication have spurred increased attention by anthropologists of education to the new types of experiences in which immigrant-origin children now participate. This newer work is also a response to the way in which grand theories, like that of Ogbu, inevitably run the risk of essentializing those groups identified as particular “types” of immigrants.

IDENTITY FORMATION: NEGOTIATION AND CONTESTATION

Nozaki (2000), who takes up this notion of group essentialization, argues against theory and pedagogy in which scholars and educators define groups of people and instead suggests that discourses of difference are best conceptualized as an “essentializing dilemma” (p. 358). It is with acute awareness of this dilemma that the multifaceted schooling experiences of immigrant-origin youth have more recently been examined and interrogated. Students of Asian descent offer one example well documented by anthropologists and other scholars studying immigrant youth.

In her ethnography confronting the myth of the model minority, Lee (1994) challenges the notion that Asian Americans are a “monolithic group with shared achievement levels and shared attitudes toward schooling” (p. 414). Like the scholarship of Trueba, Cheng, and Ima (1993), Li (2003), and Louie (2004), Lee’s findings suggest that Asian Americans do not share common attitudes toward schooling or about the benefits that will accrue from high academic achievement. Lee’s (2005) more recent ethnographic work also shows us how the oppositional identities constructed by first- and second-generation Hmong American high school students provide legitimate critiques of the inequalities these youth encounter in a high school that clearly privileges whiteness. Lee’s findings resonate with those of Olsen (1998), who, in her study of an urban public high school in California, found that immigrant newcomers were positioned by their teachers and white peers at the bottom of America’s racial, linguistic, and cultural hierarchies. In her examination of the normative production of whiteness within school settings, Lee joins other anthropologists of education in confronting complex issues of white middle-class hegemony and its impact on immigrant-origin children.

Lew’s (2004) analysis of the schooling experiences of Korean American high school dropouts also complicates earlier findings related to oppositional cultural frames of reference. Lew demonstrates that although second-generation poor and working-class Korean American students internalize “the model minority stereotype that conflates Asian Americans with whiteness” (p. 319), these students resist this racialized stereotype for themselves, opting instead for associations in school with other working-class minorities, including blacks and Latinos. Lew’s work importantly situates immigrant youth’s multifaceted negotiations of racial and ethnic identities within Americanizing and racializing discourses and practices in schools.

Likewise, but with additional attention to gender, Lei (2003) investigates the ways in which southeast Asian females’ identity constructions confront and sometimes disrupt regulative regimes in a public comprehensive high school that privileges behaviors associated with “good students.” She examines the interplay between the school’s stereotypical representations of hypermasculinized black males and hyperfeminized Asian females and the students’ actual identity negotiations. Explicitly linking the process of identity formation to the production of students as academic and social beings, Lei demonstrates that the stylized acts of racialized gender performativity of the black female and Southeastern Asian male students challenged the school’s “normative notions of the ‘good student,’ the ‘good/desirable girl/woman,’ and the ‘good/desirable boy/man’ based on the privileging of white hegemonic masculinity” (p. 179).

Also investigating gender performativity but among Mexican-origin youth, Hurd (2004) illustrates how the acting out and teasing behaviors of male students attending English Language Development (ELD) classes are “meaningful social practices and performances” (p. 82) that promote an important bond of solidarity and inclusion, even when such behavior is antagonistic to the practices and norms of academic engagement promoted by the school. In similar fashion, Goto (1997) demonstrates how Asian students’ school behaviors may be more influenced by their concern about “moving between different peer groups, reinforcing friendships and not making enemies” (p. 82) than by worries about their academic achievement.

Gibson, Gándara, and Koyama (2004) elaborate on this theme of peers and academic performance. In an edited volume centered on the schooling experiences of US Mexican youth, they draw together scholars from across the social sciences to demonstrate the important role that “peer social capital” plays among youth from working-class and poor economic backgrounds in promoting school achievement, creating spaces of belonging, and fostering identity development. Following Stanton-Salazar’s (2004) framework, peer social capital is defined as “adolescents’ connections to peers and peer networks that can provide access to tangible forms of support that facilitate the accomplishment of academic goals” (Gibson, Gándara, and Koyama, 2004: 8). The cases in the volume demonstrate that whether or not students are able to create and maintain networks rich in peer social capital directly affects their participation, their sense of belonging, and their achievement in schools.

Using a critical race perspective to illuminate the ways in which race, class, and gender intersect and to complicate identity formation and academic achievement, Lopez (2003) draws our attention to Dominicans, Haitians, and Anglophone West Indians of immigrant origin attending schools in New York City. She argues that young women of Afro-Caribbean descent translate their responsibilities in the home and their deference to authority figures into behaviors that are rewarded in schools (cf. Gibson, 1991). Further, teachers interpret these female students’ behaviors as reflective of their commitment to education and thus treat them more favorably than their male counterparts, who do not exhibit comparable deferential behaviors.

Sarroub’s (2001) study of a group of Yemeni girls attending a US public high school points to a different type of school-adaptation strategy and identity construction. Using the concept of “sojourner,” she describes how Yemeni youth often remain tightly connected to their homeland and separated from aspects of American life. Sarroub also notes both the liberating and threatening aspects of US schooling for the community she studied and suggests that some Yemeni girls, when faced with this dichotomy, disengage from both home and school contexts to create “imagined” spaces betwixt and between these two settings.

Immigrant youth in culturally plural societies negotiate their possible identities across a wide range of relations and social settings, including schools. Who immigrant youth become or are becoming, as well as what they do or do not accomplish or are in the process of accomplishing, is often predicated on the relationships they build and come to draw upon across various school settings. Importantly, as illustrated in these representative studies on identity formation, the dynamic and active processes of identity construction by immigrant-origin youth encompass both the ways in which individuals “define” themselves in relation to others and the ways they are “constituted as a subject by dominant discourses and representations” (Lei, 2003: 159), including those of schools.

MEMBERSHIP AND MARGINALIZATION IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

For immigrant-origin youth, finding and constructing safe and familiar places within mainstream school settings is paramount. The emerging literature on immigrants and education suggests a strong relationship between students’ sense of feeling connected

or belonging in school and their patterns of academic achievement. In one example, Koyama and Gibson (2007) show how migrant students of Mexican descent attending a California high school, with the support and guidance of the Migrant Education Program (MEP) and the Migrant Student Association (MSA), created a new set of “game rules” that allowed them to participate socially and become engaged academically in their schooling in spite of inequitable practices of tracking and isolation, racist discourse promoting English monolingualism, class stratification, and discrimination against students of Mexican origin by white classmates. Yet with the support of the MEP staff, the migrant students were able to create and inhabit spaces of belonging that promoted their academic development and achievement.

The inverse seems also true. For instance, in her research on US Mexican youth in Texas, Valenzuela (1999) describes how a lack of caring by teachers leads students to disengage academically. Using a framework of *multiple marginality*, Vigil (1999) details how “the cumulative, additive effects of being subjected to continual marginalizing forces and circumstances at several sociocultural levels” (p. 272) interfere with the schooling experiences of California Chicano youth who are also gang members. He argues that the sense of belonging these youth experience in gangs is unmatched by any sense of belonging they experience in school.

SUCCESSFULLY EDUCATING IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

Increasingly scholars have turned their attention to identifying, describing, and even helping to create whole schools or school programs that are successful in educating immigrant-origin children. For example, Gibson and Hidalgo (2009) explored the role of the federally funded Migrant Education Program in supporting the children of migrant farmworkers. Findings were drawn from four years of ethnographic research in one California high school, where 80% of the migrant students graduated (class of 2002), and from comparative interviews with MEP teachers in four other high schools. The analysis centered on the teachers’ multiple roles as mentors, counselors, advocates, and role models and the nature of the support provided to help students navigate successfully through high school. In a second example, Alvarez and Mehan (2006) describe a Grade 6–12 charter school that prepares students from low income backgrounds, including many children from immigrant families, to finish high school prepared to enter directly into a four-year college course. Key features of the Preuss School, which was founded by Hugh Mehan and other University of California faculty members, are a culture of learning, academic and social supports to help students meet the demands of a rigorous curriculum, and an environment designed to make students feel both confident and safe.

A third example, also of whole school reform, is Gregorio Luperón, a high school for Latino newcomers in New York City. Even in the face of the city’s divisive educational politics and policies that emphasize English only, the school successfully promotes a bilingual (Spanish–English) curriculum, supports additive acculturation or *additive schooling*, and brings together parents, community members, teachers, administrators, and students to promote student learning (Bartlett and García, 2011). It is notable that in a city where only 53% of Latino

students finish high school, Gregorio Luperón has a four-year graduation rate of 84% (in 2008). In another study of immigrant newcomers, Louie and Holdaway (2009) shift our attention to the role of Catholic schools as sites of belonging and supportive in-school relationships. Their findings suggest that in schools where parent meetings and home visits are common, as was the case in the schools they studied, immigrant students often find relationships that bridge their home and school worlds.

TRANSNATIONALISM AND CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

In the 1990s Rosaldo (1994) and others (Flores and Benmayor, 1997) introduced us to the notion of *cultural citizenship*, which challenges the hegemonic official citizenship and assimilationist discourses associated with the assumption of discrete nation-states. Similarly, Suárez-Orozco (2001) reminds us that “globalization undermines the workings of the nation-state – from national economies to traditional ideas of citizenship and cultural production” (p. 348). In her ethnography of Sikh youth in Britain, Hall (2002) provides a detailed account of these politics of citizenship and cultural production. In spite of encountering race as a barrier to being truly “English,” the immigrant-origin youth in Hall’s study were nonetheless able to negotiate and enact their collective identities in the public sphere, a contested terrain replete with the possibilities and limitations of citizenship and national belonging.

In another ethnography focused on immigrant-origin youth in Europe, Keaton (2005) argues that arrogant assimilation – the elimination of non-dominant groups’ cultures – should not be accepted as an explanation for variable immigrant academic achievement. By examining and revealing the “mechanisms of cultural transmission and racialization through statist institutions” (p. 405), Keaton demonstrates how the French national education system serves both to assimilate and exclude Muslim teenagers of north and west African backgrounds. While the young women who were the focus of this study identified themselves as French, or French of specific African origin (e.g., Algerian), they were seen as “delinquent” youth from the “other France” by those who considered themselves to be the “real French.” Keaton’s work highlights “how ‘national identities,’ predicated on categories of perception, fall apart in multicultural and multi-ethnic societies in which belonging is narrowly conceived” (p. 419).

Other recent studies illuminate the importance of alternative framings of citizenship for immigrant youth who do not rely on the nation-state as a given and who are negotiating their positions simultaneously across multiple national boundaries. As explained by Ríos (2009: 9), “the challenge is thus articulating frameworks that situate youth beyond ‘origin’ and ‘destination’ and recognize immigrant youth’s own imaginings of citizenship that emerge from their more ‘glocalized’ locations,” that is, simultaneously global and local (Anderson-Levitt, 2003). Utilizing the framework of diaspora, Lukose (2007) elaborates on these themes to “interrogate the complex cultural production of national identities in an age of increasing globalization” (p. 408). Like Hamann, Zúñiga, and Sánchez García (2006) and Villenas (2007), who draw our attention to the transnational nature of the Latino diaspora, Lukose argues that identities are constructed through the tensions between host country and

the country of origin. As she points out, the social worlds of immigrant-origin youth are mediated not only “through the school, but through organizations, networks, media, and trajectories that link them with others of their migrant community and communities of origin” (p. 415).

In research focused on Palestinian American teenagers and their struggles to create a sense of belonging in the United States, Abu El-Haj (2007) also points to the “dynamic nature of belonging in this era of transnational migration, as youth are positioned and position themselves in relationship to multiple imagined communities” (p. 287), and she calls for theories to more adequately attend to the linkages between schooling, citizenship, and nation formation. Similarly, but in an ethnography of immigrant-origin youth in Spain, Ríos (2009) reveals important alternative visions of citizenship that emerge as Latin American and Moroccan youth develop and enact their *hyphenated selves* (Fine and Sirin, 2007) in a secondary school in Catalonia. Ríos examines the ways in which the identity performances of the students in her study reflect not only their simultaneous relationships with more than one nation-state but also their ongoing struggles to achieve a sense of belonging within a contentious political climate of surveillance, which called into question their right to belong and rendered their belonging “conditional” and their citizenship “delinquent.”

This body of work on transnationalism and cultural citizenship challenges us to think in new ways about the education of immigrant-origin youth. It points as well to the need for more comparative, cross-national studies and for frameworks that more adequately attend to how global politics frame the identities and everyday experiences of immigrant youth.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The anthropological study of immigrants and education over the past 40 years has yielded rich descriptions of and theoretical insights into the educational experiences of immigrant children and youth. However, much of this work has focused on highlighting and framing the shortcomings of schools in promoting the social and academic inclusion of immigrant-origin children. Missing is an equally robust literature that describes in detail what successful school programs look like and that addresses how research findings can help to inform educational policy. Also missing is adequate attention to how anthropologists of education conducting research in the United States might draw upon research on immigrants and education from other countries or might themselves team up with colleagues in other countries to conduct comparative, cross-national research. In closing, we point to several examples of such studies. We call as well for work that looks beyond schools in order to attend to more holistic views of education and to the comparative aims of anthropology.

Comparative cross-national studies of the educational experiences of the children of immigrants and their social and educational outcomes is an area of research which is poorly developed both because of the complexities of conducting such studies and because of the paucity of scholars prepared to do this sort of work. The Children of Immigrants (CIS) in Schools, a four-year international study of how receiving-society educational systems and processes impact on the children of immigrants in Britain,

France, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the United States, was expressly designed to address this void (Alba and Holdaway, forthcoming). In the one CIS sub-project staffed by anthropologists, team members conducted comparative ethnographic research in six high schools in Catalonia (Spain) and California (United States). In both countries they found that in spite of official goals to include youth of immigrant origin socially and academically, the educational systems actually operate in ways that serve to exclude these youth. The similar outcomes in both countries were found to be related to the nature of the cultural and linguistic hierarchies that work in both settings to preserve the privileged status of students from the dominant groups, maintain the ascendancy of their languages and cultures, and contribute to the subordination and “othering” of the children from immigrant families (Gibson *et al.*, forthcoming).

In a collection of studies by anthropologists whose work extends beyond US borders, Vavrus and Bartlett (2009) argue that “comparatively knowing, requires simultaneous attention to multiple levels, including (at least) international, national, and local ones, and careful study of flows of influence, ideas, and actions through these levels” (p. 11). The collection draws together ethnographies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas that compare educational actors, policies, institutions, and practices as they circulate both vertically and horizontally. This seems a promising approach to future comparative studies of the education of children from immigrant families, both in schools and in other settings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to Bradley Levinson and Mica Pollock, editors of this volume, and to Anna Ríos Rojas for their very helpful comments on this chapter as it was evolving. We also thank Qiongqiong Chen for her editorial assistance. An earlier version of the chapter was presented by M. Gibson in a keynote address titled “Changes, Challenges, and Lessons Learned: Ethnographic Research on the Children of Immigrants and Schooling in the USA, 1968–2007,” II International Congress on Ethnography and Education: Migrations and Citizenships, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain, September 2007, which appears in S. Carrasco, ed., Forthcoming. *Etnografía, educación y diversidad. Contribuciones de la antropología y otras disciplinas*. Colección Congresos, 3. Bellaterra: Servicio de Publicaciones de la UAB.

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CHAPTER 24

Variations on Diversity and the Risks of Bureaucratic Complicity¹

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This chapter presents two different research projects carried out by the authors in Spain over a period of 20 years. With two other essays available to give a detailed exposition of the short history of the anthropology of education in Spain (García Castaño and Pulido, 2008; Jociles, 2008), we will not provide an exhaustive historical review here. Rather, the purpose of the two projects that we are presenting here is to answer one question: how has the subject of diversity been addressed in the anthropology of education in Spain? With this question, we also mean to raise a broader theoretical point: as anthropologists of education, we are, ourselves, always embedded in social contexts and are at risk of being blinded by them. While we anthropologists of education often begin our projects using the obvious logics and categories of school and national bureaucracies, our job is to move past any simplistic thinking we encounter. We will focus on this problem, highlighting the formulation in Spanish schools and educational anthropology of an action domain that has been defined, politically, as “intercultural education,” generated when “foreign students,” particularly students from Africa, Latin America, and some non-EU European countries, began to arrive. This immigration process is quite recent and dramatic for Spain. In the 1991–1992 school year, there were 36 661 “foreign students” registered in the Spanish school system (CIDE, 2002); in the 2008–2009 school year, there were 742 470 (MECD, 2009).

The two projects that we will briefly describe in this chapter are offered as pretexts for reflection; they constitute two specific windows through which we, as researchers, can contemplate the variations in the concept of *diversity* in Spanish school bureaucracies, as well as our struggle in Spanish anthropology to analyze that diversity fully.

BUREAUCRACY AND SCHOOLS

Since the concept of bureaucracy is essential throughout this chapter, it is worth devoting an initial few lines to it. Intuitively, any of us would agree that school is a bureaucratic institution. Its teaching contents are programmed in writing and standardized by the public authorities of the different national states. Their working hours are equally defined and standardized. Its purposes and social functions are included in the political agendas of the parties, in public deliberations of national parliaments, and finally in the regulations and laws that guide the actions of their agents in a relatively homogeneous way for large groups of citizens. In a deeper sense, the school is a bureaucracy to the extent that it shares with other modern institutions the following set of properties: A bureaucracy is a moral order in which the justification of human actions is based on the rational legitimacy of the ends (Weber, 1984), the supposed technoinstrumental effectiveness of its procedures (Habermas, 1984, 1988), and in the functional ordering of people and their tasks (Mayntz, 1985, 1987). With all these properties, any bureaucracy – including the school bureaucracy – is both a moral order, an expert system of representational and procedural knowledge, and a social organization made up of concrete human beings (Díaz de Rada, 2007: 207).

Historically – and taking into account *some* of these properties – the bureaucratic configuration of education systems is not exclusive to the institutional development of the matrix derived from Greco-Roman and later European civilization, which today we call “the West.” For example, it is well known that the school system was compulsory and relatively standardized in the pre-Hispanic Aztec Empire (León-Portilla, 2009: 251). However, in no other known institutional environment has the bureaucratic design of schools been developed so vigorously as in the West, especially from the time of the European Enlightenment onwards. Founded on the institutional form of doctrinal schools of the Church (Lerena, 1983), the promotion of an ideal of equal citizenship in the emergence of modern nation states made “public instruction” into a national necessity and an obligation of governing elites (Condorcet, 2000). This text from Jovellanos, written in 1809, expresses in an exemplary way this *enlightenment discourse* which, in Spain, encouraged the institutional program of schooling (Díaz de Rada, 1996; cf. Dubet, 2008):

The purpose of the Board of Public Instruction will be to supervise and promote all the ways to improve, promote, and extend the national education system. All reports, memoranda, or statements that pertain to this subject will pass through the *Comisión de Cortes*.

Only based on the presence of these writings, on the commentaries made of them by the members of the Board, and on the results that are produced by such wise counsel, will any steps considered necessary for the achievement of this important subject be undertaken. Considering it the object of the Board’s reflections in its fullest extension, all branches of instruction that belong to the national education system will be encompassed.

It is proposed that the ultimate aim of the Board's work shall be to achieve the fullness of instruction that can empower all citizens of the State, *regardless of class or profession*, to acquire their personal happiness, and to concur in the well-being and prosperity of the nation to the greatest extent possible. (Jovellanos, 1985: 351, emphasis added)

As Louis Dumont has shown in a general reflection on the genesis of modern individualism, the European and American Enlightenment translated the Christian idea of the equality of all individuals before God into the civil idea of equality of all individuals before the state (Dumont, 1987). The institution responsible for training these individual and supposedly equal agents would be the modern school. In each nation-state, schooling becomes a bureaucratic form, because the bureaucracy is the best organization we know for ensuring the standardization and equalization of knowledge and subjectivities. However, especially in recent decades, the egalitarian ideology of nation-states has been complicated by increasing attention to issues of diversity (Dietz, 2009; Schiffauer *et al.*, 2004). And so, never before have schools had to strive so much to resolve a paradox that is now constitutive: the bureaucratic production of equality from the premise of recognizing diversity. This chapter addresses this issue by examining the development of some basic transitions in the anthropology of education in Spain. In reflecting on ways to approach diversity from the anthropology of education in Spain, our argument opens up a problem of great importance: how can we build an anthropology of education able to overcome the risks of bureaucratic complicity?

In their endeavor to rationally manage diverse societies, a basic operation of bureaucracies consists of *creating stereotypes and categorizing populations*, which, once registered in policies of standardized design, may be administered with only minor technical problems (cf. Herzfeld, 1993: 71ff., 2005: 201ff.). This rhetorical production of stereotypes connects precisely with the establishment and reproduction of “national character,” and embodies “the tendency of all official discourse to treat meanings as absolute and unchanging” (Herzfeld, 1993: 73).

This practice of creating stereotypes is contrary to the ideal mode of constructing ethnographic knowledge (cf. Díaz de Rada, 2007: 209). But, as noted by Michael Herzfeld, such bureaucratic rhetoric is no stranger to the concrete practices of stereotyping that abound in the anthropological discipline (Herzfeld, 2005). Only through careful and thoughtful examination of our own practices of knowledge construction *about* human institutions, including schools, can we come to an understanding of the extent to which our anthropological knowledge becomes complicit with bureaucratic knowledge, as well as how we can minimize that complicity.

FIRST VARIATION: BEYOND BUREAUCRATIC HOMOGENEITY, 1986–1990

Our first discussion concerns fieldwork that extended from 1986 to 1990, under the direction of Professor Honorio Velasco. This study was Ángel's doctoral thesis, published in 1996 (Díaz de Rada, 1996).

The way this project was first formulated in 1986, was with the title: “Strategies for Using Educational Resources in Middle School Education: A Field Study.” This title, faithfully reflecting the school technocracy that took shape in Spain in the 1970s,

before the death of General Franco, incorporated an incipient ethnographic impulse by mentioning the concept of “use”: it would be ethnography because the researcher would pay attention to specific social practices.

Ángel focused his field research on two high schools. One of these schools, the *Instituto*, was a public school. The students’ parents were mainly employees at medium–low positions in terms of income and occupational status. The *Instituto* was located in a characteristically “working-class” Madrid neighborhood. The other school, the *Colegio*, was a private school, managed by a religious order, and it was located at the heart of the business center of Madrid. The students’ parents were mainly business managers and liberal professionals.

Influenced by the picture of the school from Pierre Bourdieu’s theory in France (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) – disseminated by Carlos Lerena (1985) in Spain and criticized by Paul Willis (1978) in Great Britain – the study paid attention to the diversity produced with regard to occupational groups. Influenced, likewise, by classic contributions to the anthropology of education in the United States, which Ángel helped disseminate in Spain in a volume published in 1993 (Ogbu, 1974; Velasco, García Castaño, and Díaz de Rada, 1993; Wolcott, 1989), the study analyzed these schools by looking at their cultural logics in a holistic perspective, not just according to their pedagogical principles and practices as these were technically defined in the school curricula and institutional plans. That is, Ángel attempted to move past simplistic bureaucratic thinking by examining how different institutional agents (teachers, parents, students, and staff), who had to work with different relations between school and occupational experience, appropriated in diverse cultural ways a school that had been ideally designed as a technical pedagogical device, supposedly equally valid and pertinent for everybody.

The resulting ethnography formulated and illustrated a fundamental thesis. Beneath the apparent normalization and homogenization that the school attempts to impose through its technobureaucratic configuration (Díaz de Rada, 2007), an attentive ethnographer finds cultural principles of diversity that the school’s agents effectively incorporate. The school, promoted by the state as an *instrumental* or technical mechanism that is homogeneous for everyone (i.e., a machine for transmitting universal knowledge that is objectified in curricula, and for evaluating this knowledge technically), is actually experienced in diverse institutional versions by specific agents. Beneath the ideal homogenization designed by state educational authorities (MEC, 1989a, 1989b, 1990), Ángel observed that different school–occupational relations produced diverse scholastic experiences. These experiences, far from being generated as a direct consequence of a mechanical or technical design, were generated through diverse practical conceptions of what a student should actively be in the full context of domestic group and labor relationships (cf. Everhart, 1983).

The *Instituto* was a public school inspired by the state ideology of a school that is the same for everybody. This led to a characteristic format of action that tended to highlight the homogenizing emphasis of the institution. For example, ethnographic evidence and interpretation showed that being staff, a teacher, a student, or a parent there meant giving priority to the narrowly defined teaching and pedagogic evaluation functions of the institution. Simultaneously, the specific *local*, community-based processes of organization and socialization were conceived of as secondary aims, marginal activities in the work time of the *Instituto*. The *Instituto* incorporated no specific

local rituals. Of course, teaching and assessment were ritualized in classes, exams, and so forth. These practices responded to the social organization of the universal program of instruction. The emotional atmosphere promoted by these practices was that of a working environment, purely technical. Readers of this chapter socialized in other national traditions can perhaps get a concrete idea of the emotional tone of the *Instituto* if they imagine that in schools in Spain we do not sing hymns or render tributes to the flag. Teachers and students simply came to school at 9 am, and began to work on their assigned subjects. Teachers and students were not expected to be in the building during times outside the instruction and evaluation practices, and parents were invited to participate in the institution's life only within the strict limits of pedagogic information settings. And, what is more important, when some individual agents *wanted* to change this situation by promoting local socialization activity, they soon became burned out by the meager support that they found among the staff.

A case contrary to Ángel's interpretation took place in February 1989, when a very active group of teachers and students promoted a big carnival festival celebrating the second centennial of the French Revolution. The festival, full of color and symbolic apparatus, was astonishing, especially to an ethnographer who had been used to an institutional life without rituals. A deeper interpretation and a more cogent grasp of the agents' intentions revealed that this big festival was no more than an extended lesson on universal history. This lesson was not narrated in the local time of the *Instituto*, but in the universal time of Western history. In 1990 and after, the carnival could not be performed as any kind of universal commemoration; there was no kind of universal scholastic pretext for the performance, so the mode and rhythm of celebration became colorless and fragile, once again. To be a scholastic agent at the *Instituto* was not understood as being engaged in the *local* organization of the school, but as being responsible for technical work and pedagogical accomplishment in a *universalistic* framework of means and ends.

The *Colegio* was a private Catholic school in which the state ideology of a school that is the same for everybody was strongly mediated by the religious order's ideology. Moreover, the parents' occupational standing, oriented toward self-control through professional employment or to the control of others through managerial responsibilities, made it explicitly clear that the students should not be instructed only in math or history. In their workplaces, those parents led other personnel, established business policies, and otherwise socially controlled their own independent work. They sent their children to the *Colegio* in order to get *something more* than mere technical knowledge (Everhart, 1983). If they fulfilled their expectations for employment, these children would eventually work to organize and control human action, not to control the operations of a commercial vehicle, catalog the books in a library, or make deposits in a bank. Fully aware of this specific demand of the families, the school's administration edited an annual insert for the School Program Book, which explicitly stated the organizing meaning of the school's institutional action – to produce agents oriented to organizing and creating society:

The school is organized as a service to the individual learner for him to learn about, interpret, and transform the world around him, in order to build a society that facilitates the personal realization of all. (School Program Book, 1986–1987 school year)

The *Colegio* was the concrete local place for this organizational learning. The everyday life of the *Colegio* was full of local religious celebrations, extrascholastic activities, and socialization events that were understood to be as relevant for the definition of institutional life as the tasks that took place within the limits of the classrooms. To be a scholastic agent at the *Colegio* meant to be engaged both in universal instruction *and* local organization. Throughout their school trajectory, the students at the *Colegio* learned to make the institution with their own hands.

While the evaluation committees at the *Instituto* reduced their function to hearing without comment the grades dictated by each teacher, the evaluation committees at the *Colegio* were expected to comment on each student's performance in the context of the classroom, and even to frequently take the decision of *modifying* the grades of entire groups, following a politics of motivation or a marketing standard related to the demanding expectations of the families. "Raise the hand" is an expression we teachers in Spain use to indicate that we have lowered our expectations for knowledge outcomes in order to help our students achieve better grades. This is a political operation, insofar as it places the commitment to an image of the institution, or to the motivations of the students (and parents), ahead of calculating academic performance in strictly pedagogical terms. In the *Colegio*, this political operation did not depend on the decisions of each individual teacher, but rather was done corporately in the meetings of the evaluation committees and with reference to the overarching goals of the institution. During 1985–1986, evaluation committees of the *Colegio* agreed to "raise the hand" in 9.4% of the assessment decisions. This figure becomes even more eloquent when one notes how it was distributed across the academic years: in the first year 6.8%, in the second by 10.1%, and in the third and final year of high school 12.5% (Díaz de Rada, 1996: 372). The relevance of this political operation on the technical processing of grades thus grew as students came closer to becoming emblems of the institution upon graduation. Notwithstanding this political work on grades, the students coming from the *Colegio* got excellent grades on the national tests for access to university. Indeed, a political process of constructing a concrete human institution was articulated, at the *Colegio*, with the technical task of making universal students.

Let us go back to the title of Ángel's first project in order to summarize how this ethnographic process illustrates moving past simplistic bureaucratic ideas: "Strategies for Using Educational Resources in Middle School Education. A Field Study." This title implies a position for the researcher consonant with the general state ideology in the 1970s and 1980s that there may be *diverse* individual strategies within a *unitary* "Middle School Education" system. This ethnographer position, or better, this not-yet-an-ethnographer position, is perfectly reasonable. After all, Ángel was, at that time, in relation to his field, a product of the same bureaucratic school he was bound to interpret; he had been taught and socialized in that very ethnocentrism of bureaucratic simplifications. Throughout his ethnographic adventure, he learned that beneath and beyond that simplistic version of diversity that claimed bureaucratic homogeneity, there were diverse forms of understanding and practicing bureaucracy, diverse cultures of schooling that were relevant for comprehending social structuration. The students at the *Instituto* were socialized for a future in which they would pass through an institutional world made by others; while the students at the *Colegio* were socialized for a future in which they themselves would be the makers of their institutional world.

More importantly, Ángel learned that diversity is not a one-dimensional concept. There is never a unique form of diversity in a sociocultural process, but instead there are *diverse relationships to diversity*. This means that the concept of diversity itself depends on the construction that each concrete institution produces in order to make its agents competent to cope with difference. While the students at the *Instituto* learned to accept the tenet that all relevant diversity regarding bureaucratic institutions consists of individually different “strategies” in a system in which unity is taken as a factum, the students at the *Colegio* learned that the bureaucratic version of diversity is malleable through the concrete organized action of those who make the institutions.

SECOND VARIATION: BEYOND ETHNIC AND ETHNONATIONAL DIVERSITY, 2009

In 2001, under the direction of Ángel, Livia initiated the project of her doctoral thesis, which she is presently writing. At that time, the existing bibliography, the graduate courses offered at the universities, and the discourse of school actors, particularly teachers, shaped a new common feeling about what the main educational “problem” was in Spain: “immigrants” and “gypsies” adaptation to school. This same common feeling proclaimed that the ideal framework of analysis was “intercultural education.” And Livia initially went along with the majority opinion among the teachers she encountered: the root of the problem was not in the schools, but in the families. Today, Livia can put quotation marks around the concept of “immigrant child,” aware that this label, produced by school bureaucracy, essentializes in successive generations the condition of foreignness with respect to the host country (García Borrego, 2003). But when she began her fieldwork, her object of study implied a naturalization of this category that was very hard to question.

Following advice from Ángel, who by then had begun a study on ethnopolitics in Sápmi, in northern Norway (Díaz de Rada, 2007), Livia tried to re-approach her field of research more holistically, questioning the typical school labels. Ángel, as a more experienced ethnographer and anthropologist, was able to advise Livia in order to get her to track the complex relationships between the agents of her field (including bureaucrats), and in order to not take for granted, as an analytical tool, any discursive product of any particular agent. “Tracking relationships” means here “holism” (Dumont, 1987). The practical recommendation, which Livia was unable to accomplish fully, was to leave the study of the school for the end, first concentrating her attention on these people’s daily educational environments. In this way, the families would not be viewed solely through the school bureaucracy. It would be the school that would appear in perspective, seen through the eyes of the children and their families (cf. Ogbu, 1974).

After establishing contact with an immigrant family from the Dominican Republic, Livia decided to enter the social networks of people of this nationality. Judging by the ethnographic literature produced in other theses, in the twenty-first century an anthropologist working in the area of education in Spain had to write about “gypsies,” “Ecuadorians,” or “Dominicans” – groups defined in each case according to an ethnic or ethnonational category, automatically identified with a *culture of origin* (cf. Franzé,

2008). All these ethnic and ethnonational words (ethnonyms) are in quotation marks here. They are linguistic labels in the native (both bureaucratic and non-bureaucratic) world, which, as we shall see below, the anthropologist should not take as analytic tools. Between 2001 and 2003, Livia became socialized into two “Dominican” networks of residents in Madrid: in three neighborhoods identified as “working class,” and in a “well-to-do” area. She accompanied mothers when they took their children to the park, she visited their homes, she went to bars and discotheques, and she talked to people in the “Dominican” beauty shops. She was also invited to first communions and celebrations, and she spent several weeks living with two of the families.

With this approach, there was a surprise waiting for Livia in the field. Against all expectations, these social networks were not delineated ethnonationally. The “Dominican” mothers met with “Ecuadorian,” “Colombian,” and “Spanish” friends in the park. Nor did the children’s social relations seem to be structured following an ethnonational criterion. Livia finally surrendered to the evidence. Because ethnonational identity could no longer be treated as an ascribed attribute of these people, an assumption about social structuring, the problem now was to try to understand what kinds of educational processes constructed the children’s ethnonational identity within the family. This change of approach to the problem involved new difficulties. These people had the habit of ignoring this ethnicity that continued to seem obvious to Livia. They hardly ever made an issue of it, except when the researcher explicitly asked them to. How could she study the way such “unethnic” people constructed ethnicity?

In 2004, Livia obtained a scholarship for a project at the University of Granada, funded by the Council of Andalusia, one of Spain’s “autonomous communities.” Now, she was definitely working for the school bureaucracy, evaluating the “Plan of Educational Attention for Immigrant Students.” Over the course of a school year, she visited schools with a high number of “immigrant” students in the regions of Granada, Málaga, and Almeria. In her research team, Livia carried out participant observation in the classroom and the schoolyard, interviews with teaching staff, and discussion groups with teachers, parents, and students in secondary school. She organized debates with primary school students and asked them for essays and drawings.

One of the neighborhoods in Almeria attracted her attention. Labeled an “area needing social transformation” by the Council of Andalusia, nearly 50% of the students in these schools were “immigrants” and nearly 30% were “gypsies.” “Moor” and “gypsy” were ethnonyms that the children used conspicuously. Very soon, the teachers pointed out to Livia that the big problem was racism: “the gypsies don’t want to mix with the Moors.” Livia decided to compare the material that she had obtained in Madrid with the material from this Andalusian neighborhood. In this case – since the Council of Andalusia was in charge – she began with the schools, she socialized herself in the children’s networks and, through them, met the families. She began by playing with the children in the schoolyard and offering to teach dance classes for children in two associations. For over two years, she accompanied families to their religious meetings, on their outings, and to their celebrations.

It soon became clear that, with their ethnic expressions, the children were making a complex childhood experience come alive. Although these expressions did exist in the field, the ways the children used them were, first of all, much, much more *diverse* than the contents of the bureaucratic theme of “social exclusion.” For example, while

the bureaucratic use of these ethnic expressions implied a logic of semantic exclusions (being “gypsy” excludes being “Moor”), the children’s everyday use implied a complex repertory of exclusions, inclusions, displacements, and other tropes. More importantly, while the bureaucrats tended to reduce the use of those expressions to the practice of mere *designation* (thus, implying that what is designated is a taken-for-granted object), the children tended to elaborate them in a rich repertory of pragmatic uses, one of which was irony. For example, a child might use the word “Moor” to address a child new to the neighborhood, indicating that he or she did not belong to his or her group of friends; but at the same time he or she would shout “You, Moor!” for calling a close friend, thus reversing all the hostility and transforming it into complicity (Jiménez Sedano, 2009). Second, these expressions occupied a partial place in an expressive repertory of strategies which pointed, unmistakably, to one basic issue: children’s agency in a world designed by adults. When Livia spent most of her time with children, she began to abandon the adult-centered position that sees education as a unidirectional process of transmitting and acquiring culture (Prout and James, 1990). Diversity constructed ethnationally was now only one part (and not always the most meaningful part) of a panorama of diversity, and of diverse relations to difference, that had many more nuances.

But the more Livia advanced in this theoretical interpretation, the harder it was for her to make the school actors understand the purpose and meaning of her research.

DIVERSITIES

Ángel’s and Livia’s ethnographic experiences involve a learning process. Both experiences started out with the same assumptions that school bureaucracy had forged historically, and both progressed toward different assumptions. Ángel’s first impression of the school was one of a unitary bureaucratic machine that, at the beginning of the 1970s, had translated Franco’s idea of the unity of Spain into the design of a unitary school technocracy. Livia’s first impression was one of a school which, during the 1990s, had translated the demographic characteristics of its students and parents, a heterogeneous composition as far as their ethnic and ethnonational diversity went, into an “intercultural school.” By paying attention to the specific social experiences and practices of the educational actors, both researchers were able to examine more completely the full *cultural diversity* that characterizes the ethnographic view. This is a fine-grained diversity that becomes evident when we approach the concreteness of social life, and which does not unfold solely, or basically, as a consequence of the distant classificatory system promoted by bureaucracy. Just like when we look at an Impressionist painting, as ethnographers we draw near to the fine lines of the varied forms of human action and experience, forms of action and experience that nourish anthropologists’ concept of culture (Díaz de Rada, 2010). That is, we often proceed with a limiting concept of “culture” until our research forces us to adopt a more complex one. This is the transformation that is required of us, long before we become capable of trying to transform others (Rockwell, 2008).

Ángel’s thesis exemplifies a research scenario that still existed in Spain in the early 1990s, when it was possible to give a 45-minute dissertation speech to a board of

specialists without even once mentioning ethnicity as an axis of diversity. And it was not that anthropologists had ignored the issue. In the 1980s, studies by Knipmeyer, González Bueno, and San Román (1980) and Juliano (1993) paid attention to educational and school dynamics in interethnic fields; and in 1993, the year that Ángel defended his doctoral thesis, Juan Luis Alegret defended his thesis on the racialist presentation of ethnic diversity in textbooks used in Catalonia (Alegret, 1993). However, in the mid-1990s, school bureaucracy was just beginning to digest the immigration boom in a Spain which still, even then, saw itself as an indisputable political unit, at least from the watchtower of the schools located in the country's capital. This immigration boom, which multiplied the number of foreign students by twenty between 1991 and 2009, led school bureaucracy to make immigration an issue, a "social problem," and consequently, to orient the research agenda. In the 15 years following 1993, 14 of the 16 doctoral theses defended in the field of anthropology of education in Spain studied the field of ethnic minorities (Jociles, 2008: 126). Today, this is virtually the only existing research subject (García Castaño and Pulido, 2008).

In 1998, the ministerial agency in charge of documenting and researching the Spanish school system, the Center for Educational Research and Documentation, published the following:

The consolidated tendency throughout the decades previous to the 1980s in Spain, as a country producing emigrants, has reversed to the point that, in recent years, as in the rest of Europe, significant levels of immigration are being reached ...

Thus, the progressive interest in intercultural education in Spain has been shaping a clear awareness of the need to analyze the implications derived from the incorporation of the new ethnic minorities into the educational system and to rethink the situation of the most numerous ethnic and cultural minority in Spain: the gypsies. (CIDE, 1998: 113–114)

In fact, the way this political document shapes the issue of "intercultural education" derives from an international trend (see Dietz and Mateos, Chapter 29, below). The label "intercultural education," already in use in the anthropological tradition, nevertheless also clearly arrived in our country by means of a wider bureaucracy. In 1992, the European Commission made each member country responsible for preparing a report on the "Intercultural Education" situation. The consolidation and expansion of this issue has been reflected in Spain, as in other European Union countries, in the creation of specific agencies, such as the Resource Center for Attention to Cultural Diversity in Education, created by the CIDE in 2004. The reduction of the concept of "interculturality" to the category of "immigration," as in the words previously quoted, is a constant in these bureaucratic developments. A review of the catalogs of publications from these agencies leads to the simple conclusion that researchers are often studying the same old school problems that have always existed but are now, with the arrival of "immigrant" children, framing them as "intercultural" problems.

Thus, the view of bureaucratic school agencies on cultural "diversity" flagrantly confuses "culture" and "immigrant's country of origin," thus requiring anthropologists to push ourselves past simplistic definitions of "culture" to more complex versions of actual cultural experience. Adela Franzé attributes this simplification to a unitary concept of these agents and their forms of action in terms of a unitary national culture (Franzé, 2008). This simplification is also, doubtless, the consequence of a

fundamental operation carried out by all bureaucracies: the census-taking, and, with it, an *individualistic* framing of school actors (starting, naturally, with the school's students and parents). This census view of the bureaucratic agencies, obsessed with counting students "according to their country of origin," is individualistic because it considers solitary individuals, apart from any concrete social relations, to be the only relevant subjects; such individuals are taken to represent, one by one, the undivided ethnopolitical unit formed by each nation-state (Dumont, 1987).

At different moments in time, ethnographers encounter different bureaucratic oversimplifications. In Ángel's research scenario, where ethnonational diversity was not yet an issue, the instrumental dimension of teaching, with the technically homogeneous view of the subjects and of the school processes involved, was at the forefront of schools' discourses of institutional legitimization. In this scenario, the ethnographer discovered the subtleties of cultural diversity by examining the way this homogenizing institutional mechanism turned it into a *political* issue: the subtle ways in which the diverse local organization of action and experience in each institution leads to a differentiated structuring of social relations among actors and to the legitimized hierarchical order. Thus, while bureaucratic discourse legitimizes the school system as an agency of "equality" through its unitary and monocultural machinery, ethnographers find that concrete institutions elaborate diverse kinds of agents who are hierarchically unequal in terms of political agency: the ones who are eager to *accept* the idea that the institutional world is made by others, like the *Instituto*, and the ones who are eager to *make* the institutional world, like the *Colegio*. To be sure, this statement could be perfected through closer ethnographic attention to the specific forms of agency in each case (Kockelman, 2007). For the purpose of this text, however, it is sufficient to indicate that the *Instituto* and the *Colegio* offered to Ángel two different images of the supposedly universal factory school: two different ways to educate students for effective participation in the construction of their social world.

Meanwhile, in Livia's research scenario, the ethnonational unity of the school system can no longer be taken for granted, and the school appears before our eyes, definitely, as a *political* agency, not just a *pedagogical* agency. And it can even dazzle us with the way it acknowledges its own "diversity," making us believe that the bureaucratic coding of "ethnic groups" offers the anthropologist a comfortable framework for putting its ethnically differentiated agents into play.

However, the school institution has never stopped being, above all, a political institution (either before or after the immigration boom). It has never stopped being a factory that constructs political conventions regarding the concept of citizenship. It has never stopped being, on the other hand, an individualistic bureaucratic system which, from its point of view, perceives the subjects of the school process as *individuals* aggregated in occupational classes, or as *individuals* aggregated in ethnic groups. This individualistic ideology is taken here as the opposite pole to the holistic approach of ethnography (Díaz de Rada, 2007; Dumont, 1987; Velasco and Díaz de Rada, 1997).

In Livia's scenario, the ethnographer must seek the subtleties of diversity by getting as close as possible to everyday action and de-centering, as much as possible, the school site. What she finds, then, are orders of diversity which, just like the ones produced by the children in the Almerian neighborhood, overflow or cross-cut the ethnic and ethnonational format of exclusive categories typical of school bureaucracy ("Moors,"

“gypsies”). She also finds that the orders of diversity encountered in scenarios such as Ángel’s – the differences nested in the occupational stratification – continue to operate in the new immigration scenario; that is, ethnic difference overlaps with occupational difference (among other things), rather than supplanting it (cf. Williams, 1989). The researcher finds, finally, that ethnic diversity is not really an object with comfortable perceptual borders. Rather, ethnic diversity comprises a complex cultural discourse steeped in nuance, and it is a discourse that is partial regarding its contextual uses and overlaps with other forms of discourse (Eriksen, 1991). Indeed, the monocultural project of state bureaucracy must surrender to its evidence (Dietz, 2009), at least by acknowledging that being a citizen in a nation-state involves, today more than ever, important problems of definition and inescapable processes of legitimation (Schiffauer *et al.*, 2004).

CORE IDEAS AND PROSPECTS

Over the last two decades, social and cultural anthropology has been acknowledged as an area of knowledge in Spain. In the 1980s, the first official two-year degree in the discipline was approved. In 2009, the first full four-year degree in social and cultural anthropology has been implanted. This will probably help to establish anthropologists professionally in the work of researching and advising in the school context, with the ensuing competition for resources. In a school context in which “intercultural education” is widely discussed, the school bureaucracies may increasingly resort to anthropologists as a “source of legitimacy and of concepts” for designing their own institutions (Franzé, 2008: 62). Similarly, the risk of a research agenda set by bureaucratic requirements may become even more salient. This risk, which can lead to the marginalization of ethnography as an extensive format of interpretive, critical research, has been widely demonstrated (Erickson and Gutiérrez, 2002; Feuer *et al.*, 2002; Shulman, 2002). Yet in order to keep our research “critical,” anthropologists will have to push past the simplistic notions of bureaucracies as well. The traditional problems of communication between anthropologists of education and the school’s bureaucratic agents who specialize in “pedagogizing cultural diversity” (Franzé, 2008: 62) will continue into the foreseeable future.

Research experience in recent decades in our country inspires us in this context to reflect upon some core anthropological ideas that have, in fact, already been amply demonstrated, both in our country and in the research produced in other surroundings (see, particularly, García Castaño and Pulido, 2008). By way of conclusion, we will discuss these ideas.

School and education are not co-extensive concepts

Although it might seem obvious, we must remember that we anthropologists are interested, above all, in educational processes: processes of social action in which various agents co-shape culture from their different positions as agents. School, as a modern bureaucracy, produced historically in Euro-American urban societies, is for us no more than one version of education, which is a universal process in our species. As we have shown elsewhere (Díaz de Rada, 2007), this approach is fundamental to

knowing how to detect, in the interior of school bureaucracy, educational dimensions that do not fit its (normally) rigid procedures of social categorization, such as “ethnic groups” as aggregates of “immigrant” populations. This approach is also fundamental to being able to perceive the specifically *political* work of school bureaucracy, because it leads us to understand that the pedagogical purpose that school bureaucracy proclaims about itself and expresses in its formal curricula must coexist with diverse ways of understanding the educational relationship, social life, and, ultimately, the concept of person. Faced with the evidence that often “educational ethnography ends up being school ethnography” (Jociles, 2008: 124), and faced with the evidence that school anthropology often ends up responding to an immediate urgency for school reform (Velasco, García Castaño, and Díaz de Rada, 1993), we anthropologists must research education (rather than school) more and more, and we must research it more and more ethnographically (rather than devoting ourselves to the task of social engineering (Velasco and Díaz de Rada, 1997)).

Integration and exclusion

As anthropologists with a long school trajectory ourselves, we must know how to overcome the ideological ethnocentrism that characterizes school bureaucracy, by means of a critical exercise regarding all of its self-proclaimed functions or idealizations. In the present context, perhaps the most important of these exercises should consist of assuming, right from the start, that “the integrating function of the school institution not only is not in contradiction with the reproduction of exclusion, but is part of the process [itself]” (Carrasco, 2008: 184). And, just as no one would require an anthropologist who studied the bureaucratic institutions of Christianity to believe himself in the virtues of the churches to lead us to the kingdom of Heaven, it does not seem sensible to assume that an anthropologist who studies the bureaucratic institutions of education (schools) must believe – as bureaucratic agents generally *must* – that school is the only way to achieve the kingdom of equal opportunity or perfect human development and co-existence. If the anthropology of education applied to the school is to mean anything, it will be because of its ability to create a crisis in the conventional assumptions at the foundations of the bureaucratic institution – because it can allow perspectives on the world that are regularly excluded (including children’s views, naturally) from actually participating in the bureaucratic institution’s discourses.

Culture and diversity

The perception of ethnonational diversity in the census – characteristic of school bureaucracy – fits in perfectly with the concept of national culture that is promoted by appropriating the worst of the concepts of culture in our anthropological tradition: *one* culture is meant to be one people residing in a bounded territory. This is not by chance. The development of this concept of national culture, in its most reifying and homogenizing versions, was historically concurrent, specifically, with the formation of a national *ethnos* to which all contemporary states had to subscribe (Dumont, 1987). No bureaucratic state can survive without promoting a feeling of national belonging. And the role of the school in forming these monocultural “national spirits” was, and

continues to be, an evident, planned project (Dietz, 2009). We anthropologists who work in contemporary educational contexts – above all, if we work in schools – must be very aware of these historical developments, insisting on a concept of culture that is disassociated, once and for all, from demographically and territorially defined subjects. This does not mean that we have to dismantle the anthropological concept of culture altogether. Rather, we must work out the concept conscientiously, based upon the following premises. Culture is not itself an agent, but the framework of conventions, generated in situations of social learning, that agents use to shape their action and their social life. Culture is not an attribute of demographically or territorially defined agents, but an affirmable quality of their social action (Díaz de Rada, 2010, 2011). An adequate development of this concept of culture also leads to discarding, critically, the reifying concept of identity that state ethnonational policies so desire (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000; Jiménez Sedano, 2007). Finally, defining culture as the conventional form of action by a complex agent allows us to establish once and for all something that Ward Goodenough clearly stated over three decades ago: the multicultural experience is constant in each and every one of our species (Goodenough, 1976). By questioning any crude identification between multiculturalism and immigrant populations defined ethnonationally, it is possible to develop a nuanced version of the concept of intercultural education.

With a concept of culture created on these bases, the anthropologist of education will immediately see that the idea of cultural diversity, incorporated with little problem into bureaucratic discourses, is not enough. The idea of cultural diversity is insufficient to perceive the concrete field of diversities (and of diverse relations with diversity) if the concept of culture itself has not previously been sufficiently developed.

Applied compromise and epistemological watchfulness

Most of us who are anthropologists and have worked in schools have had the same experiences as Livia. The more her theoretical interpretation advanced, the harder it was for her to communicate the object of her research to the school actors. The friction between a nuanced anthropology of education and the school, as characterized here, has been a constant. This is not surprising, because ethnographers and school agents often construct school reality in ways that are diametrically opposed to each other (Díaz de Rada, 2007).

The trap is obvious. If we anthropologists want to communicate fluently with school actors, we have to look at school reality through their eyes, and even through discourses that have been forged throughout centuries of political domination. However, as anthropologists of education, we must resolutely undertake a constant “conceptual, epistemological, and methodological watchfulness” (Jociles, 2008: 132) over our own discourse, in order to prevent it from turning into its own kind of bureaucratic discourse in the end.

NOTE

¹ The text has been translated into English by Nancy Konvalinka.

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CHAPTER 25

Toward an Anthropology of Teachers and Teaching

*Sarah Jewett
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Nearly 50 years ago, George and Louise Spindler imagined a cadre of thousands of anthropologists fanning across the United States to perform what they called “cultural therapy” with struggling teachers who sought to understand how to teach across racial and ethnic boundaries (e.g., Spindler, 1963). Drawing on their extensive classroom observations as cultural anthropologists, the Spindlers asserted that teachers wore “cultural blinders.” They concluded that students whose values were most closely aligned with those of their teachers were recognized more fully in classrooms. In contrast, students positioned outside of the teachers’ cultural field of vision, or students whose values differed from their teachers’, were marginalized. As a way to broaden teachers’ understandings of their cultural scapes – their limitations as well as their knowledge – the Spindlers and their teams engaged in “cultural therapy.” Teams of anthropologists visited classrooms to collect data on the social and cultural interactions between teachers and students. Subsequently, they would meet with the teacher to present the data, situating the findings within the broader cultural perspective they brought to the scene. In this way, anthropologists hoped to change teacher practices by providing them with new anthropologically informed insights. According to the Spindlers, this process of cultural therapy interrupted the cultural transmission of mainstream normative values to all students, which they claimed characterized American schooling.

During the same decade, Ruth Landes, a relatively unknown anthropologist who trained under Boas and Benedict, took a position as an instructor for prospective

teachers and social workers at the Claremont Graduate School (Landes, 1965). In contrast to the Spindlers' conception of anthropologists as observers and interpreters of classrooms *for* teachers, Landes drew on anthropological understandings to help prospective teachers develop a reflective lens on their work. Landes developed a series of interrelated projects based on anthropological field methods for her teacher education courses that required prospective teachers to examine their own beliefs and practices. One of these assignments included research on three generations of their family heritage. Rather than relying on outside anthropologists to make suggestions or conduct cultural therapy on the teachers, Landes' goal was for the teachers to explore and understand their students' cultural heritage in relation to their own cultures in order to challenge deeply held assumptions about their students and themselves (Handler, 2006; Landes, 1965). Later, she asked prospective teachers to take on the stance of an anthropologist by observing and taking field notes in classrooms as a way to further their understanding of students' actions and beliefs in relation to their own.

These two examples introduce early work that bridged the fields of anthropology and education in different ways and suggest a beginning place for building an anthropology of teachers that looks closely at how teachers' roles and practices have been documented, interpreted, and used to generate new understandings about teaching and learning in classrooms. In framing this inquiry, we look closely at the intersecting projects of both anthropologists of education and teachers to examine how each has contributed to deeper understandings in the field. Through their research inquiries and findings, anthropologists have used their theoretical and methodological expertise to help teach the educational community about the sociocultural significance of classroom practices and educational processes, the complex relationships between education and inequality, and the salience of learning in and out of schools, as well as the power of ethnographic documentation. Concurrently, teachers – teacher educators, classroom teachers, and prospective teachers, and educators who work with youth in non-traditional programs in and out of schools – have appropriated anthropological perspectives and tools to gather and interpret their own data, to inform and assess their own teaching practices, and to more fully understand their students and students' families and communities.

In this chapter, we sketch an anthropology of teachers beginning with these multiple and intersecting roles of anthropologist-teachers and teacher-anthropologists. We argue that working from each of these positions contributes to a deeper understanding of educational practices, and that taken together they provide a richer portrayal of the work of teachers and of the pedagogical and curricular practices that promote educational equity. In making this argument, we draw on the histories, intersections, and contributions of the fields of anthropology and education to assess anthropological understandings about, for, with, and by teachers (see Eisenhart, 2001; González, 2004; Levinson, 1999; Levinson and Holland, 1996; Pelissier, 1991). As we conceptualize an anthropology of teaching, we use the anthropological work situated in schools and classrooms as a starting point. Yet we recognize that teaching and learning take place across a range of formal and non-formal settings. These processes occur in multiple and diverse modalities, and include a wide variety of people (see Heath, 1994, 1996; Hull and Schultz, 2002; Lave, 1996; Levinson, Foley, and Holland, 1996).

ANTHROPOLOGISTS AS TEACHERS

Anthropologists have long been interested in education as a sociocultural process, providing a window into the range of teaching and learning that transpires in and across different contexts. For example, Margaret Mead's (1961 [1929]) initial research on adolescent development in the context of daily life led to one of the first monograph-length studies of teaching and learning as a process of socialization within a community (Pelissier, 1991). As McDermott (2001: 856) explains, "Where Americans focus on learning as hierarchically organized from teacher to student, Mead focused on learning as laterally connected among people doing things together." Situated outside of classrooms and schools, Mead created a framework for considering the broader context of teaching and learning.

Other anthropological research has also focused on how learning occurs through everyday activities (e.g., Lave, 1996). For instance, drawing on her anthropological research that documented the apprenticeships of Liberian tailors, Lave argues for a theory of learning as a socially situated practice. From this perspective, activities, such as tailoring, organize learning. It is useful to move away from a focus on individual cognition, Lave claims, in order to understand how people learn through changing their participation in communities of practice (see also Lave and Wenger, 1991). This has led Lave and others to argue for a focus on learning rather than teaching, warning of the dangers of equating these two processes.

While researchers have derived critical insights on learning from research outside of formal educational settings, since the emergence of social discourses about educational inequity and the founding of the Council of Anthropology and Education in 1968, many anthropologists have turned to classrooms and schools as sites of research. Often positioned as outside experts, anthropologists use a sociocultural lens to examine the work of "doing school," illustrating the power of the theoretical and methodological tools of anthropology for developing new understandings of the role of teachers and teaching. With their detailed ethnographic evidence and careful analysis, they inform practitioners and researchers about how to "unpack" culture, interpret classroom practices, and in some cases, reconceptualize teaching. Unlike teachers, however, they are rarely accountable to students, colleagues, principals, and parents, or to curricular and bureaucratic mandates in their assertions or findings. As a result, they do not necessarily have to account for the "gritty materialities" of classrooms (Apple, 2000: 229).

Making Culture Visible: Interpreting Teachers' Practices

One of the most significant, and yet controversial, concepts that anthropologists have offered to practitioners and researchers in the field of education is the notion of "culture." Erickson (2004: 31; cf. Erickson, Chapter 2, above) asserts, "everything in education relates to culture – to its acquisition, its transmission, and its invention." A dominant theoretical concept in anthropology since Boas (González, 2004), culture has become an important way to analyze and understand classrooms and schools and, in particular, the role of teachers. Despite its powerful contributions, culture has been simplified, codified, overused, and rendered static in its explanatory potential, as well as

critiqued for its inability to capture the complexity, instability, and fluidity of actual events and practices (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1991; Eisenhart, 2001; Erickson, 2004; González, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Levinson and Holland, 1996; Williams, 1985). In response to various critiques as well as theoretical developments, understandings and uses of the concept of culture have continued to change over time. Though in different ways, cultural analyses are central to theories of cultural transmission, cultural difference, cultural relevance, and cultural production. All of these theories still influence contemporary analysis, yet culture is now conceptualized less frequently as a static product and more often as a fluid practice (e.g., Gutiérrez and Rogoff, 2003).

Equipped with these various conceptions of culture, anthropologists have looked closely at classrooms to understand educational processes. Cultural transmission served as an early interpretive frame (e.g., Henry, 1963; Spindler, 1963). Spindler (1997: 10) understood schools as “culture-transmitting institutions” that strove to recruit children to cultural systems often different from their own. In his early fieldwork, Spindler (1997) analyzed the ways in which teachers, often unwittingly, selected normative values to pass on to their students through their practices in schools. In these analyses, teachers bore the brunt of the responsibility for the project of schooling and society, and were often framed as cogs in a process of cultural transmission, rather than as agents of their own practices. Yet this work also sparked a crucial awareness of the ways in which teachers, situated within larger systems of inequity, could undermine students’ social and educational development through their practices. It alerted practitioners and researchers to the ways they could inadvertently re-inscribe mainstream culture and prompted them to investigate understandings of larger cultural systems and practices.

It was this early attention to culture and a focus on educational inequities that led anthropologists to generate new explanations of the “success” and “failure” of students from varied racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. Rather than analyzing how culture was transmitted, they focused on the ways in which the various cultures of students aligned or diverged with the dominant culture of schools. For instance, researchers found that White English-speaking middle-class students were often advantaged in schools, while students from various other groups encountered a “cultural mismatch” with classroom practices. Through richly detailed microethnographic studies that examined communicative patterns and their potential differences across cultures, anthropologists explained how many teachers structured their classroom interactions in ways that seemed culturally incompatible with interactional patterns students knew from their home and community lives (see Cazden, John, and Hymes, 1972; Heath, 1983; Jacobs and Jordan, 1993; Michaels and Cazden, 1986; Philips, 1983).

For example, Philips (1983) found that children from the Warm Springs community were raised in a context where shared authority was the norm and individual participation was voluntary. Through extensive classroom observation, she discovered that the children responded to teacher-organized participation structures with reluctance and silence. Yet these same students were more vocal when they initiated the interactions with the teacher or worked on student-led projects.

The findings from Philips’ (1983) study, like many of this era, were meant to inform teachers, who were perceived as unaware of the ways that students’ communicative structures were integrally tied to larger cultural systems. Although these studies have been criticized for their failure to acknowledge within-group differences, as well as

broader structural inequities, they raised important pedagogical, curricular, and theoretical questions about the role of teachers and teaching, challenged the prevailing deficit theories that blamed low income and “minority” students and their families for poor performance in school, and suggested the importance of cultural and community knowledge for informing teacher practice.

These cultural mismatch studies also prompted new questions. If practices in classrooms could be culturally incompatible for many students, could they also be compatible? In response to the research on cultural differences, anthropologists began to investigate and describe the ways in which teachers demonstrated culturally relevant, culturally appropriate, and culturally responsive pedagogies and curricula in their classrooms. They also examined interactional styles, as well as the patterns of talk and silence, to understand the communicative strategies of “successful” teachers. Au and Jordan (1981) and Foster (1989), working with Hawaiian elementary students and African American community college students respectively, pointed out the cognitive and social benefits of teachers’ talk that incorporated their students’ patterns of discourse. Looking more broadly at classroom practices, Ladson-Billings (e.g., 1994) documented a repertoire of responsive pedagogical pedagogies used by “successful” teachers of African American students, while Lipka and McCarty (1994: 266) described how Navajo teachers at Rough Rock and Yup’ik teachers and elders in southwestern Alaska found “creative ways to use their culture, their knowledge, and their language in the construction of curriculum and pedagogy.”

More recently, conceptions of culture have shifted significantly, leading to changes in the ways that anthropologists describe teachers and interpret their practices. Cultural production theory, in particular, has destabilized the concept of “culture” by framing it as a set of multiple practices that are infinitely complex, often contradictory, and continually changing (Eisenhart, 2001; Gutiérrez and Rogoff, 2003; Levinson, Foley, and Holland, 1996). Set against the context of modernizing Bolivia, for example, Luykx (1996: 265) examines the work of prospective teachers as they create a professional role for themselves:

Utilizing the subversive strategies of satire, they deflate and de-naturalize official meanings around authority, class, and ethnicity, while *simultaneously* appropriating for themselves those empowering elements which can be found within the stereotype of “the Teacher.” (emphasis added)

Similarly, Niesz (2006: 341) describes the ideologies of a teacher who maintained “*both* [a] deficit view *and* a desire to engage students in powerfully transformative learning.” This kind of work has been significant in moving beyond essentialist and determinist perspectives to portray the complexity of teachers – their experiences, roles, and practices – and teaching.

Making Teachers Visible: Documenting Classroom Practices and Contexts

Early work in educational anthropology not only influenced the interpretation of teachers’ practices, it also contributed methodologies used to document and analyze work in classrooms and schools. Through careful and systematic ethnographic

methods, the anthropological lens has helped to illuminate a constellation of instructional, curricular, and ideological practices that both re-inscribe and challenge educational inequity, and foreground the ways these practices are always situated in particular social and political contexts. Ethnographic accounts provide entrée into the lives of teachers throughout the world, and help to explain and theorize teachers' actions and decisions. For instance, Valli and Chambliss (2007) illustrate teachers' vulnerability in their analysis of how the tension of high stakes testing can make even an experienced teacher susceptible to "interventions" that constrain child-centered opportunities for learning. Likewise, Mercado (1994) exemplifies the kinds of "saberes" or multiple and complex bodies of knowledge that teachers appropriate and generate through the everyday acts of teaching.

Ethnographic accounts that make comparative or thematic connections across sites provide additional insights into teaching and learning and the roles of teachers and students. Comparative ethnographic studies help to illustrate how teachers are differently enculturated into styles of teaching that are shaped by historical and contemporary, as well as local and national, expectations of education (Anderson-Levitt, 1996, 2002; Shimahara, 2002; Shimahara and Sakai, 1995). Shimahara and Sakai's (1995) three-year ethnographic account, for example, compares and contrasts seven beginning teachers in Japan and the United States. Thematically connected ethnographic studies help to demonstrate the variation of educational innovation and intractability (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Levinson, Foley, and Holland, 1996). In a wide range of transnational examples included in Anderson-Levitt's (2003: 3, 18) edited book, the authors illustrate how even common sets of reforms across the world play out differently "on the ground" as "teachers or even entire nations play with the common classroom repertoire."

Through this kind of research, ethnographic studies document and contextualize the work of teachers in a range of important ways. First, the depth and breadth of ethnographic data illustrate how teachers can miss opportunities to support and nurture students' academic and social development (Delpit, 1995; Foley, 1994; Rolón-Dow, 2007; Valenzuela, 1999), and yet also illuminates how teachers create multiple opportunities to develop personal relationships and powerful pedagogical practices based on knowledge of their students (Foster, 1989; Jewett, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995). For instance, in her three-year study of a high school, Valenzuela (1999) describes the data collection methods she used to develop a theoretical framework for the "politics of caring." She writes:

The qualitative component of my study of Mexican youth at Juan Sequín High School began in early fall of 1992. This involved informal, open-ended interviews with both individual students and groups of students, as well as with teachers, and observations at the school site. These encounters alerted me to the importance of human relations to students' motivation to achieve. Relations with school personnel, especially with teachers, play a decisive role in determining the extent to which youth find the school to be a welcoming or an alienating place. Youth, especially the US-born group, frequently expressed their affiliational needs in terms of caring. Each time I reviewed my field notes, I would be struck by how often the words "care," "caring," and "caring for" seemed to leap off the pages, demanding my attention. (p. 7)

Although the focus of Valenzuela's (1999: 5) work was on students, teachers play a significant role in her analysis, including the ways in which "teachers fail to forge meaningful connections with their students" and the ways that "students are alienated from their teachers." Her evidence helped her to document and analyze interactional and instructional patterns of "subtractive schooling" and to argue for "additive schooling" in which teachers could "embrace a more authentically caring ideology and practice" (p. 263).

A focus on the variation of data across different studies can add to a fuller and more nuanced perspective on educational practices. For example, in contrast to Valenzuela (1999), Jewett (2009) documented the ways in which teachers and administrators created "relational webs" or multiple connection points within and across an urban middle school. The strands of the web included discursive, pedagogical, and structural practices that helped to develop and sustain significant relationships among members of the school community. As these contrasting studies illustrate, convergent *and* divergent data sets help researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to understand more deeply how to support the work of teachers in schools.

Second, ethnographic studies can examine educational processes across multiple sites to help contextualize practices within classrooms and schools. As Eisenhart (2001: 221) explains, multisited ethnography is "an especially appropriate methodology for studying contemporary cultural productions" because of the ways these studies can "investigate the connections among sites that together make up arenas of social practice." In this way, "cultural forms taken up or produced in one locale would be followed and explored in other places, allowing a sense of connection to emerge by following paths of circulation." Ethnographers who study youth in classrooms and schools sometimes find themselves following these "connections" to students' homes and neighborhood hangouts, as well as to various social events (e.g., Gonick, 2003; Rolón-Dow, 2007).

Nespor's (1997) two-year ethnographic study of an elementary school, took him into the school and several of its classrooms to work with administrators, teachers, and students. Subsequently, he followed the research to various public arenas for city council meetings, school board meetings, and public radio programs, as well as to the homes of several school families where he conducted interviews with parents. Even when he did not actually visit particular sites, he recognized their significance. For example, he asked students to map their communities so that he could understand "kids' movements through neighborhood space" (p. 93).

More importantly, Nespor (1997: xiii) uses the multiple sites of his study to develop a deeper and more complex theoretical understanding of schools, and the broader contexts of teacher practices in classrooms. He explains:

Instead of looking at educational settings – schools, classrooms, and so forth – as having clear boundaries and identifiable contents, I look at them as extensive in space and time, fluid in form and content; as intersections of multiple networks shaping cities, communities, schools, pedagogies, and teacher and student practices.

Using this lens, he investigates the elementary school as "an intersection in social space, a knot in a web of practices that stretch into complex systems beginning and

ending outside the school.” He examines the ways that schools, cities, politics, neighborhoods, businesses, and popular culture are all “inextricably connected to one another” and how they “jointly produce educational effects” (p. xi). As an example of this kind of analysis, he looks closely at the whole language debate at the school, explaining (p. xvi):

Instead of just reporting this debate ... I treat it as an intersection, a knot to be unraveled. I construct a history of city and school system politics to show how it was possible for the school to innovate in the first place; then I look at how teachers were (or were not) enrolled in the innovative schemes. Finally, I describe how parents found the political will to publicly challenge those schemes, and I situate the roots of the conflict in the different logics parents and teachers used to explain and evaluate school practice.

Through this perspective, teachers’ practices are understood within local networks of influence and larger professional discourses, leading to a greater understanding of the complexity of what happens inside classrooms.

Third, ethnographic studies, particularly microethnographic research, often use a range of technologies to capture communicative and interactional styles. Although technological innovations continue to make this kind of documentation easier and less cumbersome, researchers such as Erickson and Mohatt (1982: 141) showed us almost three decades ago how and why microanalytic methods are useful for framing our understanding of teacher practices. In describing their research methodology, they wrote:

Videotaping was done continuously for the duration of each hour-long tape cassette. There was a minimum of “camera editing” by the camera operator (“zooming” in and out and “panning” around the room). This was to provide a record that was as comprehensive and undistorted as possible of the naturally occurring flow of interaction across sizeable “chunks” of the school day.

These videotapes, and the synoptic charts that indexed them, allowed the researchers to look closely for teachers’ “ways of leading” and to see what these practices looked like across the school year, including patterns of movement, durations of time, and types of interactions (p. 142). The tapes also made it possible for the researchers and teachers to view the classroom scenarios together, and for the teachers to share their perspectives on the data. Since these studies, videotaping has become a common tool of ethnographic documentation for researchers and also for experienced and prospective teachers who engage in self and peer assessments.

The field of visual ethnography has grown rapidly in recent years, offering new modalities and methodologies for collecting, analyzing, and even reconceptualizing what counts as data (Duncum, 2004; Pink, 2001). Pink (2001) explains:

Photography, video and electronic media are becoming increasingly incorporated into the work of ethnographers: as cultural texts; as representations of ethnographic knowledge; and as sites of cultural production, social interaction and individual experience that themselves form ethnographic fieldwork locales. (p. 1)

This work has been supported by new digital technologies and also “critical ‘post-modern’ theoretical approaches to subjectivity, experience, knowledge and representation, a reflexive approach to ethnographic fieldwork methodology, and an emphasis on interdisciplinarity” (Pink: 1–2). Visual ethnography, including innovative uses of multimodal representations, offers a growing range of possibilities for documenting and interpreting classroom practices, and for research collaborations among teachers and anthropologists.

TEACHERS AS ANTHROPOLOGISTS

In the early 1970s, in order to support himself as a doctoral student in anthropology, Gerry Rosenfeld became an elementary school teacher in Harlem, New York. Placed in a classroom with little or no preparation, Rosenfeld (1971) simultaneously learned to teach and studied anthropological concepts, bringing the two processes together in his analysis of the challenges faced by youth and their families in this high poverty neighborhood and school. His analysis of the problems encountered by teachers in his school was published in one of the first ethnographies of schooling written by a teacher entitled *Shut Those Thick Lips!* (Spindler, 1997). His study was grounded in his experience as a teacher and as a graduate student studying theories of cultural transmission, and it is an early example of “practitioner research” (see also Wolcott, 1974). Rosenfeld documented his experiences through the lens of a cultural anthropologist without making his data collection methods explicit. Since that time, anthropological methods have become more systematically taught to prospective and experienced teachers, and through the practitioner research movement teachers have begun to claim a role in generating knowledge about teaching (e.g., Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009; Erickson, 1986).

Anthropological Processes: Informing Teacher Practices

Erickson (1986) argues that interpretive methods, involving close observation and systemic reflection, are particularly useful for classroom teachers. As teachers assume the role of researchers, Erickson proposes that rather than becoming participant observers, they become particularly observant participants. Teachers have studied their own classrooms in a range of ways. They have collaborated with anthropologists in the collection and analysis of data, as well as on various pedagogical and curricular projects. For instance, drawing on her decade-long study of the linguistic practices of three contiguous communities in the southern United States, Heath (1983) introduced her ethnographic findings to teachers. She suggested that teachers ask their students to collect language data at home and school to inform their pedagogy and curricula in order to make it more responsive to students’ communicative patterns. Since this early study, educators have worked in a variety of ways to introduce anthropological tools not only to teachers but also to students, reframing teaching through an inquiry lens.

Researchers and educators have refined their use of anthropological tools to explore and articulate the contributions of youth, families, and communities, particularly in high poverty areas. For instance, González, Moll and their colleagues (e.g., González, Moll, and Amanti, 2005) developed an anthropological framework that teachers use

to build curricula based on the “funds of knowledge” youth bring to school through gathering knowledge from family and community members. In order to make connections and promote school learning, through ethnographic interviews, observations, and the collection of artifacts teachers learn about the everyday routines of family lives and the vast knowledge and experience children bring from home.

Working with supportive colleagues, teachers have also developed modes of inquiry that draw on the strengths of anthropological research processes, such as close observation and documentation. Patricia Carini and her colleagues from the Prospect Center for Education and Research have developed a set of structured oral inquiry processes to describe children, children’s work, classroom practices, and educational issues that grow out of the daily work of teaching (Himley and Carini, 2000). Although these protocols do not explicitly credit anthropological methods, teachers use anthropologically informed processes to examine systematically their practices and uncover patterns and meanings.

Schultz (2003) describes how a classroom teacher, Judy Buchanan, used the Descriptive Review process to draw on the collective wisdom of a group of colleagues to explore how to teach a child who was puzzling to her. In order to prepare for this process, the teacher collected systematic observations in a set of categories. She used these data to engage her colleagues in a discussion that included recommendations for practice. In communities across the United States, teachers use versions of this process to draw on the wisdom of their teacher colleagues and, along with observation and description, address questions that arise in their classroom practice.

Writing about practitioner research for over three decades, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (e.g., 1999, 2009) argue for the centrality of “inquiry as a stance,” which they explain is a “worldview, a critical habit of mind, a dynamic and fluid way of knowing and being in the world that carries across professional careers and educational settings” (2009: 120). This understanding of teaching and research draws from anthropological notions to raise fundamental and critical questions about practice from the standpoint of practitioners. For instance, in his ethnography of immigrant and migrant youth based on his research as a teacher, Campano (2007) introduced a recent Hmong immigrant student who initially struggled to succeed in school in traditional ways. In addition to her struggles to learn the cultural practices and norms of her new school, initially she had a difficult time expressing her ideas in a second language. Early in the year, Campano created a space he called a “second classroom” where, before and after school and during lunch, students joined him in informal conversations about issues important to their lives. In his analysis of how this student and her peers learned the language practices of his classroom, Campano uses ethnographic tools to document his classroom practices and anthropological understandings to develop a conceptual analysis of the practices of schooling.

Anthropological Lenses: Preparing Prospective Teachers

As Ruth Landes’ work illustrated early on, anthropological methods can be used with prospective teachers to gather and analyze data in their classrooms, schools, and communities as a way to reflect on and deepen their knowledge and inform their practices. Frank (1999) explains:

All teachers' classrooms are not the same, and differences depend on those tiny, invisible, everyday occurrences that happen in the daily life of classrooms. An ethnographic perspective helps us to see those differences and helps us to understand classrooms from multiple, overtime, and insider perspectives. If teachers, student teachers, cooperating teachers, and teacher educators know how to use the tools of ethnography to discover these implicit patterns, they can talk to all of their students about how to live and work in their classrooms, how to gain access in particular classrooms, how to act and talk appropriately in order to be included in the classroom community. (p. 50)

Several different teacher preparation and professional development programs have drawn on the anthropological conceptions of community funds of knowledge (e.g., González, Moll, and Amanti, 2005) to inform prospective teachers about the knowledge youth and families bring to schools.

For example, in the education program at the University of Pennsylvania, new teachers are introduced to these concepts and tools in their initial summer courses through neighborhood studies of the communities that surround the schools where the prospective teachers will work in the fall (Buck and Skilton-Sylvester, 2005). Drawing on knowledge gained through neighborhood tours, interviews, and observations in the community, new teachers identify funds of knowledge and patterns they later incorporate into a rationale for a social studies curriculum unit which uses "tools of inquiry" from the community (see Jewett, 2007). In this assignment and throughout the program, the prospective teachers are taught to listen deeply to their students (Schultz, 2003). Listening to and for a range of signs is often at the heart of anthropological inquiry. In the case of the teachers, listening provides a way for them to strive toward an "emic" or insider perspective that is never completely attainable, and to make analytic decisions about what is heard. Schultz (2003) explains:

The phrase "listening to teach" implies that the knowledge of who the learner is, and the understandings that both the teacher and learner bring to a situation constitute the starting place for teaching. Listening encompasses written words as well as those that are spoken, words that are whispered, those enacted in gesture, and those left unsaid. It is an active process that allows us to both maintain and cross boundaries. (p. 3)

Learning to teach is a complicated process. In the program at Penn, part of the task of teacher preparation is to help new teachers learn how to learn from their students so that their pedagogy and curriculum can incorporate and respond to the students' cultural knowledge and their academic and social strengths and needs (Ball and Cohen, 1999; Schultz, Jones-Walker, and Chikkatur, 2008).

Teacher educators also use anthropological methods to invite prospective teachers to reflect on their developing practices in the classroom as a way to explore the biases and assumptions they bring to the classroom. In contrast to Spindler's (e.g., 1963) early notions of cultural therapy, in which anthropologists studied classrooms and revealed patterns of behaviors to the teachers, this stance provides teachers with anthropological tools to discover and analyze these patterns themselves. For instance, Frank (1999: 2) introduces a set of tools to prospective teachers posing the following questions that echo those raised by Landes in the early 1960s: (1) how does gaining

an ethnographic perspective enable teachers to observe more effectively in classrooms?; (2) how does an ethnographic perspective change the consciousness and thinking of teachers to expand their cultural perspective?; and (3) how does ethnography enable teachers to critically reflect on their own practice? In addition, she provides an ethnographic framework for engaging prospective teachers in the work of writing field notes, making neighborhood maps, conducting interviews, and reflecting on practice in order to learn to teach.

In order to facilitate deeper understandings of themselves as “cultural beings” (Ladson-Billings, 2006), it has also become a common practice for teacher educators to ask students to write cultural autobiographies. Educators use personal narratives as the starting point for student teachers – especially new teachers from White middle-class backgrounds – to learn how to teach across lines of difference (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 1999, 2000). These assignments emphasize the importance of beginning with an understanding of oneself. Raising questions about this direction for teacher education programs, Sheets (2000) warns that a focus on white identity should not replace what she calls “equity pedagogy” (e.g., Hollins, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1994: 19). Sheets suggests that without knowledge of cultural groups from the perspectives of those groups themselves, autobiographical approaches “might encourage narcissistic educational philosophies rather than advanc[ing] inclusive multicultural positions.” She urges teacher educators who work with White middle-class student teachers – the predominant group in most teacher education programs – to focus on learning about students in their classrooms from the students’ own perspectives.

Concurring with this sentiment, Schultz (2003) writes about the importance of teachers listening to students across cultural divides from an ethnographic stance in order to develop pedagogical practices. She suggests that student teachers look outside of themselves at the same time that they use their own histories and knowledge of their cultural lenses to uncover blind spots and biases. When new teachers enter the classroom, they often focus on themselves as teachers (asking questions such as, “how did I do?”) or they focus on experienced teachers (asking, “how can I do what she does?”). While these are important questions, Schultz suggests that prospective teachers take an ethnographic stance and turn instead to the students themselves, to discover who the students are as learners and members of the class. In doing so they might replace questions about their own performance with ones such as the following: How can I draw on this student’s strengths to engage her in learning? Following the principles of anthropological methodologies, these practices de-center the outside researcher and teacher as the primary knower, looking to the participants themselves for their understandings.

Borrowing a term from Sanday (1976), Schultz and Ravitch (under review) describe the work of prospective teachers as “introspective ethnographers” who participated in a narrative writing group engaged in systematic, critical reflection on their classroom practices. They explain that in this writing group that met once a month, there was a constant interplay between individual and group writing and sense making that allowed teachers to reflect on their developing practices. Over time, through a process of structured and systematic introspection, sharing, and reflection, teachers incrementally built a critical understanding of their teaching, and of teaching more broadly.

The notion of teaching as introspective ethnography suggests an understanding of teaching, learning, and classroom life through the process of engaging in critical self, social, and societal reflection, as well as an exploration of the macro and micro socio-political contexts that shape teaching, learning, and classroom life (Hildago, 1993; Schultz and Ravitch, under review).

This kind of teacher preparation works toward countering the tendency of prospective teachers to use the term “culture” in a facile manner to explain a wide range of phenomena. Ladson-Billings (2006) offers several other ways to foster a deeper and more complex understanding of this term through providing new teachers with social and contextual understandings of students and their communities. She recommends setting up opportunities for prospective teachers to have immersion experiences to learn about the communities in which they teach; giving student teachers opportunities to examine their own cultures through journals and discussions; and teaching about global studies and globalization to broaden their knowledge and perspectives. Taken together, these practices allow teachers to act as anthropologists in their inquiry into their own classroom practices, their exploration of community contexts, and their investigation of their social and cultural identities across multiple sites. Study abroad programs, in particular, can facilitate these latter investigations. Jewett (2010) describes the ways that prospective teachers who participated in a short-term study abroad program continually produced *and* reproduced their ethnic and national identities at home and abroad. With multiple opportunities, prospective teachers can build a bank of experiences and knowledge that helps to prepare them for the classroom.

Anthropological Curricula: Engaging Students and Teachers

Classroom teachers bring anthropology into their curricula in a wide variety of ways. Especially at the secondary level, they explicitly teach it as a course, a content area, or a unit, in order to help students learn about a range of cultural histories, theories, tools, and practices, as well as to understand the various ways that branches of anthropology constitute bodies of knowledge. They also integrate anthropological concepts and ethnographic research processes into their curricula as a way for students to understand themselves and their wider communities. Based on her experiences with ninth grade student researchers, Merritt (2004: 407, 416) provides a compelling reason for bringing “ethnographic ways of thinking” into classrooms: “If I can equip students with the tools, frame of mind, and desire to understand complex situations, I am giving them a gift that they can transfer to many situations in school and in life.”

Elementary school teachers have initiated many innovative and anthropologically driven projects. For instance, building on his students’ developing skills in ethnography and collaborating with a local cultural anthropologist, a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher engaged in a yearlong community-based research project with his class (Pryor, 2004). The class visited, documented, and analyzed a range of sites from “spinach farmers in their hoop houses” to “gospel singers at a community church” (p. 403). Pryor argues that this kind of “deep ethnography results in impressive cultural understanding, language skills, research experience, and analytic ability” (p. 405). Another

teacher created “The Ethnography Book,” a log of field notes about their classroom to which each fifth grade student contributed throughout the year (Frank, Arroyo, and Land, 2004). The processes and the products of this research and documentation helped the students to learn about observation, interpretation, perspective, and analysis of classroom activities. Moreover, it helped the teacher to gain insight into the lives of her students.

Teachers across grade levels can also use anthropological perspectives to address social inequalities through their curricular and pedagogical initiatives. In her edited volume, *Everyday Antiracism*, Pollock (2008) brings together over 60 scholars, including anthropologists and former teachers, to write in a practical and succinct way about how classroom teachers can address social inequality and racism in school communities. Several of the chapters in this book translate anthropological concepts into suggestions based on the importance of responding to students as members of racially defined groups *and* as individuals whose experiences, practices, and beliefs vary widely within and across multiple sociocultural categories. For instance, Schultz (2008) asks whether a student’s classroom silence reflects her individual stance or whether it is a marker of racialized classroom dynamics. Other chapters encourage teachers to create a curriculum “that invites students to explore complex identities *and* consider racial group experiences” through reading, writing, film, critical analysis, and participatory inquiries (pp. vii–viii). These questions and discussions, Pollock and her colleagues argue, are critical to creating equitable educational opportunities and rest on teachers’ application of anthropological analyses and knowledge to their classroom practice.

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF TEACHERS AND TEACHING

Nearly 25 years ago, Frederick Erickson (1986) wrote about DISTAR as a culturally incongruent way of teaching poor students of color. DISTAR was a highly scripted program that relied on clapping and snapping fingers to teach through imitation and repetition. In recent years, under pressure to raise test scores, urban and rural districts in the United States and around the world have adopted scripted curriculum based on the same theories that guided the early DISTAR programs. In these current classrooms, teachers are handed scripts for teaching that have explicit guidelines, including when to snap their fingers to signal a response. These curricula render teachers invisible; teaching becomes script reading that fails to account for the sociocultural and political contexts that teachers, students, and communities inhabit and the knowledge teachers might generate through the use of anthropological tools.

The current push toward standardization means that teachers’ knowledge of the particularities of local contexts is superfluous rather than integral to their roles and responsibilities. In classrooms guided by scripts, there are fewer ways for teachers to draw on the social, cultural, linguistic, and political resources, and the technological savvy, knowledge, and experience that youth bring to school (e.g., Beavis, 2008; González, Moll, and Amanti, 2005; Nesper, 1997). Moreover, as mandates and scripts replace curriculum built from local knowledge, there is little room to draw on

new knowledge about teaching and learning generated by anthropologists, teachers, community members, and youth themselves.

We urge anthropologists and teachers alike to investigate the complexities of classrooms, schools, and communities as a way to understand more deeply the educational processes, and to challenge the increasingly limited and limiting conceptions of teachers and teaching. We suggest the following questions constitute a starting point for the elaboration of an anthropology of teachers: How can anthropologists and teachers work together to make teachers and teaching visible, while contextualizing teaching in the larger sociocultural, economic, political, and historical contexts in which it occurs? How can teachers and anthropologists work as collaborative partners to further educational equity? How might these roles, tools, and concepts continue to change in order to meet contemporary challenges, incorporate current technologies, and expand the possibilities of schooling? How might the boundaries of learning in and out of school be blurred in order to produce a broader understanding of who acts as teachers, where teaching and learning occur, and how anthropological knowledge is generated in order to re-imagine education, teaching, and learning?

These questions also set the stage for new configurations of power in the generation of knowledge about teachers and teaching. When Ruth Landes embarked on her groundbreaking work with teachers, giving them tools to become anthropologists rather than delivering that knowledge to them, her work was barely acknowledged and poorly received (see Spindler, 1967). After many years of working in part-time positions, she finally received a permanent appointment as an anthropologist in Canada. In this position, she did not return to her work with teachers but instead took up her more recognizably “anthropological” projects. Working against this history of education at the margins of anthropology, we join others (e.g., González, 2004) in urging anthropologists to work with and as teachers, and we urge teachers to work with and as anthropologists to generate new knowledge to inform their practice. At the same time, we urge anthropologists, educators, and policymakers to continue to expand notions of teaching and learning and the roles of teachers beyond classrooms in order to provide youth from around the world with a broad array of opportunities for education and engagement.

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CHAPTER 26

Cultural Anthropology Looks at Higher Education

Wesley Shumar and Shabana Mir

ANTHROPOLOGY COMES TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Cultural anthropology is not a well-known discipline outside of the academy, and maybe not even outside of Colleges of Arts and Sciences, but we do have some very successful export products. Two of our most successful export products are the concept of culture and the practice of ethnography. And it is interesting that many cultural anthropologists have problems with the way that our most famous export products are used. For many anthropologists, culture has become a site of contestation, a contradiction or a problem, rather than a fully formed object that the analyst can capture and use. And ethnography is, rather than a method, a form of what Michael Herzfeld (2001) has called, reframing the Althusserian notion, “theoretical practice.” For Herzfeld, anthropology, participant observation, and ethnography are rough synonyms, and what defines anthropology is the practice of theory – the making sense of lives encountered, through an effort to frame and interpret these lives in some form that makes their issues and problems sensible.

In the spirit, then, of the notion of “theoretical practice,” we would like to make sense of the history of the anthropology of higher education in the U.S. We prefer to describe this history by using the Althusserian concept of “theoretical moments” instead of providing an encyclopedic review of all the work in this subfield. (Today, Marxist and Althusserian influence marks the history of cultural anthropology, so we have fully incorporated concepts such as theoretical practice, contradiction, overdetermination, and others into our discourse. And while as a field we are more predisposed to draw

upon the unlikely theoretical trilogy of Foucault–Lacan–Derrida, or what Shumar (2008) has elsewhere called poststructuralism/2, we are still very much shaped by our encounter with Althusserian theory.) We suggest that there have been roughly four “theoretical moments” in the formation of an anthropology of higher education. These theoretical moments do have a relationship to the development of theory in the field of cultural anthropology in general, but since ours is a small subfield they have their own unique contours that are worth exploring in some small detail. And since our intention is to capture these moments, we will focus most on the key developments, with apologies to people we may have left out of the general discussion.

The notion of a “theoretical moment” also allows us to think about the objective structure or “field” of a social space, the “social physics” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) where the anthropology of higher education has developed. And like Bourdieu’s notion of field, theoretical moments are multidimensional. They define a point in space and time, but when looked at from other angles those moments may have points of overlap and intersection.

If we may draw on another Bourdieuan concept, we are also talking here about the transformation of anthropological consciousness and the rise of a kind of reflexive sociology within anthropology (Bourdieu, 1990b; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). That reflexivity about our own work sites (institutions of higher education), and how those sites influence the work that is produced, did not simply show up fully formed at one moment in time. Rather, it developed over the course of a history that begins outside anthropology proper and then moves into the discipline of anthropology. Key to the development of the anthropology of higher education was the founding of the Committee on Postsecondary Education, which became a committee of the Council on Anthropology and Education and was founded by Jane Jensen and Laura Montgomery. Those founders and a few others like them looked to theorists like Vincent Tinto and William Tierney for a starting point, because these social scientists were among the only ones who had talked about an anthropology of higher education. And so we see Tinto’s and Tierney’s work as the first two theoretical moments in our framing of the anthropology of higher education. While Tinto and Tierney are not anthropologists, *per se*, they do the important job of beginning to reflect upon institutions of higher education with an anthropological frame.

We see a real break between these first two moments and the later two moments, which we are calling “critical perspectives” and “postmodern perspectives.” These later moments can really be thought of as the beginning of the anthropology of higher education from within anthropology. And while the anthropologists defining these moments looked to Tinto and Tierney, they also formulated a critique of the ways Tinto and Tierney used ethnography and cultural concepts to talk about higher education. The participants in these later two moments are also highly aware of the irony of engaging with higher education ethnographically. If the engagement with the other, that form of theoretical practice where we attempt to make sense out of the problems of the other, is also an engagement with the self, where we become other to ourselves, then there are at times interesting moments when meaning gets overdetermined and we find ourselves in the midst of contradiction. As an example, one year Shumar spoke to the Program Chair for an anthropology meeting about how he was hoping to present a paper on part-time labor in the academy. On the phone, the Program Chair

said something like, "Gee, if you were only talking about grape pickers in California or some other form of part-time labor I could find a panel for you to be part of, but I just cannot figure out where to put you." He was sincere and earnest, and genuinely trying to find a place for a colleague's voice; but if the other is the self, then that sometimes means that anthropology as a field does not know what to do with that voice.

FUNCTIONALISM AND HIGHER EDUCATION

One of the earliest and most well-known individuals in higher education circles to use several key cultural theoretical concepts to bring anthropology to the study of higher education is Vincent Tinto. Tinto is a sociologist rather than an anthropologist of education, and the larger corpus of his work indeed reflects his sociological background, as he is interested in institutions, structures, and theoretically modeling how individuals move through institutions and institutional structures.

Tinto's earliest theoretical model drew upon Durkheim's (1966) ideas about social integration, developed in *Suicide*, and van Gennep's (1960) ideas about rituals of integration, developed in his book *Rites of Passage*. Tinto (1993) developed this model, and ways of coping with forms of anomie and dis-integration, in his classic work, *Leaving College*. While Tinto has continued to refine and develop this model, these elements are still very much at the core of his lifetime theoretical endeavor.

One could argue about how anthropological Tinto's use of Van Gennep was. Van Gennep himself is an ambiguous figure in the history of anthropology (Zumwalt, 1982). Van Gennep was very much in dialogue with Durkheim's sociological group through the journal Durkheim founded, *L'Année Sociologique*. He certainly had a working relationship with some of its members, but he and Durkheim were very much at odds with each other, and it appears Durkheim kept him marginalized (Zumwalt, 1982). The Durkheimian school developed at a time when there was not a clear distinction between sociology and anthropology in France, and van Gennep himself got the title of ethnographer and founder of the field of folklore in France. Certainly the process-oriented emphasis of *Rites of Passage* is very anthropological.

Van Gennep's work was re-introduced into the core of anthropological thinking by the anthropologist Victor Turner. At a time when anthropologists in Britain were very dissatisfied with the static nature of anthropological modeling, Turner took van Gennep's focus on process in ritual, and particularly the idea of liminality, to shift the focus in British social anthropology in the 1950 and 1960s. British social anthropology had been heavily dominated by the structural-functionalism of Radcliffe-Brown, and to a lesser extent the bio-functionalism of Malinowski. Much of the work during the early twentieth century was focused on kinship systems, and explaining how social structures were organized and how they functioned to produce order and harmony. Beginning around the 1950s, many social anthropologists in Britain sought to understand social processes (including revolution and social upheaval). One of those individuals was Max Gluckman, who was Turner's teacher and who supported Turner's exploration of van Gennep and the ideas of ritual process, as well as Turner's later notion of social dramas (Turner, 1974, 1977). For Turner and Gluckman, ideas about ritual

served to help anthropology move away from a functionalist and static approach and create a more dynamic and processual anthropology.

Tinto is certainly an inheritor of the Turnerian tradition of thinking about van Gennep. For Tinto, the undergraduate freshman is a rather liminal figure who moves from one social world to another through transfer of status. But Tinto also employs van Gennep for a very sociological purpose: to explore and explain the integration of the individual into the group, and the levels of alienation and anomie that might exist. This more functionalist and instrumental focus is a rather different emphasis from Turner's. Tinto comes from a perspective in which the anthropological concern for social process, identity, and symbolic transformation is important only in that it contributes to our understanding of what keeps students from dropping out of college. Understanding the dropout is good for the student, good for the society, and good for the university. So his concern is really more classically Durkheimian, and the debate between Durkheim and van Gennep, which kept van Gennep so marginalized from academia in his era (Zumwalt, 1982), is completely missing in Tinto's synthesis of the two scholars.

If Tinto made sociological and functionalist use of these concepts in his work, he nevertheless inspired attention to anthropology and an anthropological critique within the field of higher education. In response to Tinto, William Tierney (1992) wrote an important article taking issue with the way he used van Gennep's ideas on rites of passage, liminality, and social integration. In this piece, Tierney argues that Tinto fails to understand a core set of assumptions underlying these anthropological concepts, and that this failure has significant implications for students of color. Tierney has a fourfold critique of Tinto, but at its core he argues that American universities are not monocultures or small-scale tribal societies of the sort that van Gennep and his followers like Victor Turner were studying. And further, universities exist within societies where belonging is a matter of individual choice, and that is very different from typical tribal societies. In tribal societies, people cannot just refuse to participate in rituals the way that college students can today. Rituals are demanded of everyone and they integrate individuals into a more singular culture and society. But Tierney points out that today, we live in a very plural society that does not share a singular set of traditions and values.

A nice example of the kind of re-invented ritual that developed in the 1980s thanks to ideas like Tinto's is the ritual of convocation. Meant to inspire students into a sense of belonging to an academic culture, the ritual smacks of a "high culture" past and seeks to fill participants with a sense of belonging, as if we were all members of an Oxford college. In fact the ritual is quite alienating for students (and many faculty), and from some studies we know that students often think of Convocation as an opportunity to sleep in (Moffatt, 1989; Shumar, 1997). Indeed, at Shumar's own institution there is not enough seating for more than a handful of students, so it really is not expected that students will take the ritual seriously.

Further, universities tend to be very "white" institutions, dominated by white students and faculties and having historically developed from an Anglo-American tradition. For many students of color this is already an alien culture, and to be pressed to integrate into this alien culture surely can further alienate and distance students of color from the institution. This is Tierney's worry: that there is an implied racial alienation in Tinto's ideas of social integration.

Tierney began to work on the culture of higher education in the 1980s. He and Ellen Chaffee, a commissioner of higher education at the time, published *Collegiate Culture and Leadership Strategies* in 1988. Although Tierney is second author on this work, one can see an anthropological orientation in it. There are citations and invocations from some classic works in cultural anthropology: Clifford Geertz, Margaret Mead, and Bronislaw Malinowski. And in many ways the work is very conventional from an anthropological standpoint. It offers a pretty traditional (circa 1960s) view of culture and the relationship of structure to culture.

But in other ways the book was quite groundbreaking, especially for higher education. First, the book attempted to make a sophisticated argument for the importance of ethnographic or qualitative case studies to the field of higher education, at a time when qualitative work was certainly not the norm. Drawing on Denzin's (1978) early work on the notion of triangulation, the authors suggested that qualitative research can be very important for understanding what is going on in institutions of higher education. Second, Chaffee and Tierney offered a more contemporary view of culture alongside their more traditional view, in that they saw different institutions having different institutional cultures. One cannot understand the "culture" of higher education by looking at one institution alone, nor by blending facts from different institutions. In fact, one has to do case studies of several institutions to get a sense of the range of cultures of higher education out there. Further, the authors talk about some institutions that are themselves multicultural and made up of several distinct cultures.

These themes continue to show up in Tierney's later work as he explores the voices of different groups, especially those who are traditionally less powerful (Tierney, 1997, 2006). While Tierney's work is markedly influenced by anthropology, he himself is not much part of the anthropological community. He is more clearly a part of the higher education scholarly community, and as a member of that community he is recognized as the voice of anthropology. Thus, Tierney has done a lot to bring anthropological ideas to the higher education research community, but it was not until the emergence of some of the scholars we discuss in the next section that the anthropological community itself began to think about higher education. And when the first group of anthropologists began to engage seriously with the field of higher education as a research field, they were originally drawn into thinking about Tinto and Tierney while formulating their own approach to the study of higher education.

One of the first genuinely anthropological studies of higher education was Michael Moffat's *Coming of Age in New Jersey*. Moffat (1989) engaged in an interesting ruse and, taking advantage of his youthful looks, checked himself into a Rutgers University dorm and tried to pass as an incoming student (he was a faculty member at Rutgers). The ruse essentially worked, and when he later came clean with the dorm residents, they allowed him to stay on in the dorm and do research with them. Moffat got a very interesting close look at college dorm life, and his case study was illuminating, especially around issues of popular culture, race, and sexuality. However, Moffat is not an educational anthropologist, and he tended not to connect his ethnography to the broader themes in education research nor the anthropology of higher education. As such, his work tended not to be taken up much by the later generation of anthropologists of higher education. That later generation felt it needed to engage with and critique Tinto and Tierney more than it felt it needed to address Moffat.

HIGHER EDUCATION AS THE OTHER

The anthropology of education as a specific subfield was linked initially to the culture and personality school of Boasian anthropology, primarily through George and Louise Spindler. Unlike most of the rest of cultural anthropology (except for maybe psychological anthropology), for a long time the subfield remained attached to this paradigm. Further, because educational anthropology caught on in schools of education, it was taught from one generation to the next by educational anthropologists, who thought of themselves as anthropologists but were not in departments of anthropology and were again at some distance from the mainstream of cultural anthropology. This led some educational anthropologists, like Douglas Foley, to see the field as relatively bereft of those theories being engaged and developed in other parts of the discipline. Foley (2010), the author of *Learning Capitalist Culture* (originally published in 1990), says of his time with George Spindler:

I did, however, have the good fortune to study with George Spindler, who arguably invented educational anthropology. After two seminars with the silver-tongued Spindler, I realized, however, that his vision of the field was rooted in psychological anthropology (Spindler, 2000). He was preoccupied with studying whether schools transmitted values and attitudes that created cultural continuities/discontinuities between the home and school. To my dismay, his concept of culture lacked any notion of power or class struggle. This blind spot became most apparent when “Spin” reviewed my South Texas study for publication. He told me that I was doing political science, not cultural anthropology!

Ironically, of course, what Foley was developing was a theory of class power (see Foley, Chapter 6, above) that was, by 1990, much in the mainstream of cultural anthropology; it was Spindler who seemed to be doing something different. Today, educational anthropology has developed more theoretical frameworks shared with the rest of the field of anthropology, but these older notions of cultural transmission and culture and personality are still part of our field.

One important voice that changed educational anthropology dramatically, and the anthropology of higher education specifically, was that of the French sociologist-cum-anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu’s theoretical work has had a big impact on all of cultural anthropology in the United States, especially through books like *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977), *Distinction* (1984), and *The Logic of Practice* (1990a). Further, Bourdieu put education at the center of cultural theory (Robbins, 2004). His work on higher education, specifically *Homo Academicus* (1988) and *The State Nobility* (Bourdieu and Clough, 1996), posited that research in higher education is an important part of “theoretical practice.” Bourdieu suggested that researchers need to *reflexively specify the position from which their own voices are articulated* in order to understand how social knowledge is situated in the social field and how it is used by participants in the academic field (Bourdieu, 1988; Calhoun, 1990).

There are many ways in which Bourdieu influenced educational anthropology and the anthropology of higher education, but we would like to focus on three here. First, Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus* was extremely important for thinking about the relationship between the larger structural elements of society and the more subjective experience of social actors as they produce and reproduce the social order through the

practices in which they engage. This is what Wacquant has referred to as the uniting of “social physics” and “social phenomenology” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu’s concept of habitus allowed him to move dialectically between a focus on what he liked to call the rules of the game, which are set out by such theories as Levi-Straussian structuralism or any number of other theoretical frames, and a focus on the subjective practices and experiences of social actors that sociologists like Goffman or the ethnomethodologists liked to talk about. This was very important in educational anthropology for bridging the culture and personality tradition of the field with the larger theoretical focus of the rest of the field. (Two wonderful examples of this bridging are Douglas Foley’s *Learning Capitalist Culture* (2010), and Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s *Situated Learning* (1991). Dorothy Holland *et al.*’s *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds* (1998) and Bradley Levinson *et al.*’s *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person* (1996) are later examples of this kind of work.)

Second, and very specifically, Bourdieu did major research on higher education in France. This research fit within his theoretical framework – that habitus *produces individuals’ strategies within their material circumstances* – that is to say, disposition follows social position. Specifically, in higher education individuals with different habitus and different concentrations of cultural capital take up different positions within the academic field. Third, the study of higher education is particularly important because the positions that academics take up are themselves produced within their social fields and are, in Habermas’ sense, interested. So for Bourdieu it is no accident that historians and political scientists tend to be more politically conservative and from a higher social class background than sociologists and anthropologists. This claim illustrates Bourdieu’s emphasis on reflexivity and a reflexive sociology, which we’ll take up in the next two sections of the chapter. Bourdieu’s effort to bridge objective structures and subjective practices – or social physics and social phenomenology – is also a bridge between macrostructure and microculture. This work has had a big impact on anthropology in general. At the same time, his emphasis on reflexivity and on higher education research has had a big impact on the anthropology of higher education.

Perhaps the first major study in the United States to illustrate Bourdieu’s impact was Holland and Eisenhart’s (1990) *Educated in Romance*. For an anthropological study of higher education, *Educated in Romance* was innovative in a number of ways. First, it was methodologically innovative. Holland and Eisenhart were funded to look into why women students tended not to stay in math and science programs and were likely to switch to less demanding majors or even more likely to not finish their degrees. In an ethnographic spirit, as well as in order to get close to college women, they created a unique nested design. First, they surveyed women at two large universities, a predominantly white school and a predominantly African American school. They then used the survey results to select a representative sample of twelve women to follow on each campus. Their graduate assistants met with the women weekly to hang out with them and catch up on their activities. In this way, they got a naturalistic look at the lives of these college women and the challenges they faced.

The second innovative aspect of Holland and Eisenhart’s work was their theoretical innovation. They drew upon Bourdieu’s fieldwork in Kabylia and his thinking about honor and status to understand women at these two universities. In *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977), Bourdieu talks about how honor is discursively constructed

through the trading of barbs and insults. Men of status compete with each other through a kind of political oration, which is both poetic and charged. In their discourse, political enemies are insulted. The rival then has to decide how to respond to his attacker. And that decision depends on the relative status of the two men. To go after a rival of much lower station is bad form. Likewise, attacking someone of much higher status comes with risks. The political calculus and the discursive skill of social actors lead to their being seen as men of “honor,” which also contributes to future status. For Bourdieu, analyzing this political “game” in Kabylia is a perfect example of his concern to unite “social physics” with “social phenomenology.” In order to play the game, social actors need to know the rules of the game, but also be able to reflect upon their own social position within the field of interaction and have a strategy for moving forward.

Drawing upon this theoretically innovative set of ideas from Bourdieu, Holland and Eisenhart realized that unlike college men, women’s status was highly negotiable and linked to a concept of beauty. Their argument was that men’s status was linked to their institutional position, so being on the football team or being a class officer was the way that a male achieved high status. But for women, their status was linked to their ability to attract high status males as boyfriends or to attract men to work for them in some way, such as doing a community service activity for a sorority. As women’s status was linked to their ability to attract men, it was then also based upon their beauty, and beauty was rather like honor in Kabylia. One was only beautiful if one played the game of negotiation well, which required all the requisite skills of a political actor in Kabylia. This difference in status for men and women led to very different outcomes for men and women in college. For men, since status was linked to institutional position, maintaining that position was paramount, which meant that the man had to do at least adequately in his schoolwork. For women, if schoolwork interfered with the negotiation work of attracting high status males, then women’s status required that they reduce the load of schoolwork somehow in order to maintain their negotiation efforts. This often led to trading down on academic choices such as majors.

Holland and Eisenhart’s work was a huge step for the anthropology of higher education. Unlike Tinto, who used anthropological concepts to try and advance a very functionalist and mainstream agenda, Holland and Eisenhart engaged in “theoretical practice.” In a classic anthropological move, they struggled to make sense of the experience of their informants, not accepting cultural assumptions about the “normality” of the informants’ outcomes. And their effort paid off in a major way, advancing our thinking about college women, gender relations on campus, and theory itself.

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Beginning in the late 1990s, a group of educational anthropologists began to use neomaxist, poststructuralist, and critical theories to think about the place of higher education in primarily the G8 postindustrial nations. Perhaps in part they were responding to Laura Nader’s call to “study up,” which she had issued 30 years before. This group began to produce a flurry of analyses that, in our

minds, really form the bulk of the work that can be thought of as the contemporary anthropology of higher education.

There were two special issues of *Qualitative Studies in Education* (QSE) that grew out of panels that were convened at the American Anthropological Association (AAA) annual meeting. The first issue was published in 1999 and the second issue, which was edited by Laura Montgomery and Joyce Canaan, in 2004. Both issues attempted to deal with the impact of a globalizing consumer capitalist society on institutions of higher education, and the experiences of students and faculty engaged in the process of knowledge production.

Wesley Shumar's (1997) *College for Sale: A Critique of the Commodification of Higher Education* was an effort to understand the experience of faculty and students in higher education, especially in the humanities and social sciences, through a neomarxist and poststructuralist lens. (Quite similar to this book, *Academic Capitalism* by Sheila Slaughter and Larry Leslie, also published in 1997, focused on the shifts in the ways in which research was funded and the close connection between government research and capitalist enterprise. *College for Sale*, on the other hand, examined how liberal arts education was being marketed to a buying public. Together the two books are an important indictment of the capitalist transformation of higher education at the end of the twentieth century.) Drawing on the work of David Noble (1977) and Clyde Barrow (1990), who each explained the transformation of higher education in earlier moments of the development of American capitalism, *College for Sale* took up the rise of consumer capitalism and the economic ups and downs of the last 40 years to look at how the movement away from a welfare state model and toward a neoliberal state model led to the commodification of public institutions that in the past had depended on state funding for their survival.

Specifically, institutions of higher education during the stagflation of the 1970s also experienced declining enrollments as well as declining public revenues, and were forced to reinvent themselves as consumer businesses marketing a product to a buying public. This process led to the more consumer-oriented institutions we now have, where marketing to students is a huge consumer industry. *College for Sale* not only traced this transformation, but also asked the question of what happens to the products of knowledge as well as the producers and consumers of knowledge through this process. And so the work attempted to understand the political and economic transformations of higher education, and how those changes were related to changes in culture and social organization in higher education and, ultimately, the identities of participants in the system.

Shortly after *College for Sale* came out, and in a completely unrelated move, Jane Jensen and Laura Montgomery petitioned to have one of the defunct committees in the Council on Anthropology and Education turned into a committee for the academic study of postsecondary education. At this moment, there seemed to be some momentum behind the anthropological study of higher education. The new postsecondary education committee began to pull together a number of the people who had published in the two QSE special issues, which themselves grew out of AAA sessions. Jensen also put together an AAA session in 1999 focusing on the "Politics of Academic Credentialism." This session, along with a number of other sessions, galvanized a group of people in the United States. Joyce Canaan, a member of this group

and an anthropologically trained sociologist in the United Kingdom, also began to pull some of the AAA people into a number of panels and sessions in the United Kingdom. These panels broadened the anthropological study of higher education to include research on higher education in a number of different nations in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.

There were a number of products to come out of this work, but two important books were Jane Jensen's *Post-secondary Education on the Edge* (2002) and Joyce Canaan and Wesley Shumar's edited volume, *Structure and Agency in the Neoliberal University* (2008). Jensen's book focuses on her concerns with credentialism and the potential legitimization crises created by a "credential society." *Post-Secondary Education on the Edge* is a monograph about a Canadian working-class community in which traditional working-class routes to jobs and adult life have been reduced due to de-industrialization. In that context, higher education promises a different route to economic security, but it is one that goes against many community values and also tends not to deliver on its promise. Jensen's work, like Shumar's work in *College for Sale*, began to ask questions about what was happening in the larger political economy and how that was having an impact on the lives of people in more local contexts.

Structure and Agency in the Neoliberal University is an edited volume that grew out of a number of panels presented at conferences in the United Kingdom and the United States. If Shumar and Jensen began to ask questions about the impact of the larger political economy on local universities and local communities, and if they were aware of the early impact of the de-industrialization of cities and the commodification of culture, *Structure and Agency* more thoroughly examined the full blown neoliberal movement and the near 30-year impact that it has had on higher education. The commodification of higher education in the United States has long been a part of the process of producing a private higher education. But the pressures of the 1970s kicked that process into high gear and turned even public higher education into a consumer industry. In the United Kingdom, Europe, and other parts of the world, the neoliberal economic movement that grew out of the Reagan and Thatcher revolutions produced a rapid and startling "marketization" of higher education. *Structure and Agency in the Neoliberal University* attempted to chart some of these global changes in the structure and delivery of postsecondary education. It also attempted to document some of the cultural changes, and the ways in which teachers and students were responding to these forces. Among these changes are the rise of administrative power and the decline of professorial power. Increasingly, faculty have been disciplined to produce an educational product for students to consume. That disciplining comes in various forms: workshops on how to give lectures and how to create a syllabus, edicts about how the course must be structured, encouragement to create on-line courses, etc. A further trend here is the development of audit and accountability in higher education (Strathern, 2000). These are a set of disciplinary apparatuses that are linked to neoliberal economic ideology. While this trend has advanced more quickly in Europe, it is also beginning to take hold in the United States. Ironically, as Jonathan Church (2008) has suggested, the pressures to restructure what intellectual property is, in order to fit with a vision of an online curriculum, has also shaped how all teaching is seen, making courses even more of a reified piece of property.

POSTMODERN PERSPECTIVES ON HIGHER EDUCATION

The distinction we are making between “critical” and “postmodern” perspectives is a subtle and overlapping one. Most of the work in the previous section takes into account a political–economic perspective and looks at the relationship between macrostructure and local cultures and identities. The work we are calling postmodern is certainly looking at contemporary cultural and identity issues, too. But this work does not always have the political–economic frame, and in some instances it even rejects that framing.

In a recent article in *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, Greg Tanaka (2009) frames some of the “post” issues with a provocative question – has the concept of culture outlived its usefulness for anthropology? Echoing an essay that Renato Rosaldo published in 1989, Tanaka suggests that white university students are without culture. That is to say, in the folk culture of everyday university life, students of color had a sense of ethnic identity, and thus a “culture,” but white students lacked this ethnic sense of who they were. Tanaka suggests that in the complex, plural, hybrid world we inhabit, that clear sense of ethnic self may be dwindling for other students as well. For very different reasons, Rosaldo had earlier raised the culture question, suggesting that the anthropological folk-typology posits precultural societies like hunter-gatherers and tribes, and then the postcultural modern societies like the United States. He further suggested that while no one would publicly admit to this classification system, in informal settings (like the bar at an academic conference) students were told they needed to do research in “cultural” societies for career advancement. For Rosaldo, there was a unique form of power in the modern Western society that saw itself as “beyond culture.” To be “beyond culture” is in some sense to claim a rationality which is beyond the limitations of a particular cultural ideology. While Tanaka does not specifically contend that this inability of white students to make a connection with their ethnic identity is a form of power, he agrees with Rosaldo that power is involved here. In this way, Tanaka’s article reflects the larger field of cultural anthropology, where the concept of culture has been problematized as part of a discursive apparatus of power. An internally homogeneous entity that could be bounded and defined as “a culture” in Boasian fashion is now seen more as a reification that disguises complex lines of force, identity, and conflict than as a “reality.”

Brayboy critiques how “predominantly White institutions of higher education often view diversity as a free-standing policy,” as if “diversity is something that can be implemented without necessarily changing the underlying structure of the institution and its day-to-day operations” (Brayboy, 2003: 73). Drawing data from a number of interviews with junior faculty of color, Brayboy (2003) argues that piecemeal approaches to diversity which fail to address the structural bases of institutions stall the processes of cultural change by giving the impression that all is well as long as we see a few professors of color in the institution. Meanwhile, those professors alone are burdened with diversity policy implementation. An influential figure in the anthropology of higher education, Bryan Brayboy has also shown how American Indian students use strategies of “(in)visibility” to navigate oppressive structures, even while this “(in)visibility” is imposed or inscribed upon them by others (2004). They use various student behaviors, such as using and avoiding campus spaces and office hours to

counter marginalization, to serve their communities, and to preserve personal and cultural integrity, often successfully. Yet despite their efforts, and in different ways, they risk marginalization, surveillance, and ostracism. He is not Pollyannish about transformational resistance, and poignantly depicts the consequences and costs to these students of such resistance, both at elite universities and in the communities that they struggle to remain connected to while they are at college.

Zooming in on the risks to American Indian students' cultural integrity in academic settings, Brayboy and Maughn (2009) examine the historically assimilative and often rigid practices in teacher education programs. In these programs, Indigenous Knowledge Systems are endangered and unacknowledged, as teacher educators fail to recognize that knowledge is socially constructed and is not neutral. Diversity in teacher education programs becomes mere window dressing (Brayboy, 2003), similar to that in the implementation of diversity programs in higher education, where faculty rarely recognize indigenous knowledge and indigenous pedagogies.

Brayboy and Deyhle urge researchers with American Indians – especially Whites – to aspire to meta-awareness about the political dimensions of their research in order to protect their participants and exercise cultural sensitivity (2000). Though the historical and demographic background of American Indian students is unique in the United States, this theme of the hyper-visibility of difference and the invisibility of true identities is echoed in Shabana Mir's later work on American Muslim women college students. Mir (2009a, 2009b) is another researcher who looks at issues of essentialism and cultural production, examining the cultural world of undergraduate social life through the eyes of an under-researched population, American Muslims. Mir criticizes anthropology for its excessive focus on race, class, and gender to the exclusion of religion, but trains a keen eye on all these dimensions of identity. Her work brings together a range of theoretical approaches from anthropology, social psychology, gender studies, and cultural studies. Goffman's performance of identity, Bourdieu's symbolic violence, DuBois' double consciousness, and Foucault's panopticon are brought to the study of American Muslim undergraduate women's encounters with campus leisure culture.

As with much contemporary anthropology, Mir seeks to disrupt essentialist notions of Muslims and Muslim women, drawing out, through "insider" ethnography, the great variety of identity construction among American Muslims. She explores this variety to expose in university cultures, as in US culture at large, the Orientalist gaze which stereotypes, exoticizes, and homogenizes Muslims and Middle Easterners. At the same time, however, from a Muslim feminist perspective, she scrutinizes gender inequity in Muslim subcultures. In her ethnographic work, leisure activities such as alcohol consumption, dating, and fashion are both central to undergraduate culture and problematic for many Muslim members of campus communities. In America in general, and campus cultures in particular, visibly Muslim identities and behaviors (such as the wearing of modest clothing, not being sexually active, and teetotalism) are a source of stigma. Ethnographic insights from Mir's work expose the fragility of the pluralistic project in university cultures, where identity and religiosity still construct marginality for Muslim women.

Finally, in this section we can also return to the work of William Tierney, who after his early work bringing anthropology to higher education has continued to focus on issues

of diversity, multiculturalism, and sexual orientation. In fact, Tierney's later work is quintessentially postmodern, in that he suggests that the normative culture of institutions of higher education is not just a collection of meaning symbols à la Geertz, but rather a system of signification that privileges some forms of identity while marginalizing others. His 1997 book *Academic Outlaws* is about resistance from within – not just resistance according to the gay–straight binary, but to normalizing forms of discourse in general.

Tierney also opens the black box of students applying to college, disrupting essentialist assumptions about the uniformity of minority student identity, and showing instead the variety of experiences that even roughly similar students have. He examines the particular circumstances of three Latino males, all potential college applicants, highlighting the complexity and class-specific nature of college applications, and the sundry obstacles that different students face during the process. Cultural, social, and economic capital, as well as a degree of middle-class order and stability in the applicant's life, seems required for the process of applying to college. Tierney deliberately diverges from the conventional literature-review-then-data approach, in favor of an emergent narrative that places the research participants at its center and permits the reader to “make sense of the text much as if it were a short story, rather than an empirical argument” (p. 95). Going to college is “a cultural interpretation circumscribed by constantly shifting forces and events” (Tierney, 2009: 94). His fieldwork, too, avoids conventional strategies and brings participant and researcher closer together. Perhaps not as provocative as Tanaka, Tierney continues to be attentive to multiplicity amongst the underserved and under-represented. He certainly reminds those in higher education that there is not one culture in the university, and that university cultures are framed by discourses of power.

CONCLUSION

The growth of the anthropology of higher education in the United States is an exciting development within educational anthropology. It has been, as Bourdieu would say, a form of reflexive practice that has contributed to anthropology and all of the social sciences, in that it positions the knowledge we produce within a system that is becoming increasingly complex. As anthropologists from what we are calling a “critical” and “postmodern” perspective turn the anthropological lens on the production and organization of knowledge in complex societies, they begin to shed new light on how knowledge is produced and how cultural capital gets distributed in complex societies. This reflexive shift is especially important as we are at a critical juncture in history for education in general. Around the world, states and universities are calling for an increased “marketization” of knowledge production and dissemination, and for increased “accountability” in terms of the research, teaching, and learning processes. These calls stand to dramatically transform what higher education is, and most certainly not for the better. It is not only a critical moment for us to understand how these processes occur, and whom they advantage and disadvantage; there also needs to be a voice that asks what the purpose of university-based knowledge production and dissemination is. That voice would ask what kind of society we want to live in, and how we produce the knowledge that would get us there.

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CHAPTER 27

What Makes the Anthropology of Educational Policy Implementation ‘Anthropological’?

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and Lisa Rosen*

The study of policy, therefore, leads straight into issues at the heart of anthropology: norms and institutions; ideology and consciousness; knowledge and power; rhetoric and discourse; meaning and interpretations; the global and the local – to mention but a few. (Shore and Wright, 1997: 4)

As sociocultural theorists (e.g., Gutiérrez and Rogoff, 2003; Orellana, 2009) have recently asserted, “culture” is something one *does*, rather than something one *has*. That is, human beings produce, perform, and reproduce culture every day. Policy implementation – or what Milbrey McLaughlin (1987: 175) has called “muddling through” – is deeply implicated in these processes of cultural production and thus invites anthropological inquiry. Indeed, it is possible to link the study of policy implementation to some of the foundational efforts of anthropology, particularly cultural anthropology (Wedel *et al.*, 2005). Our discussion in this chapter thus borrows explicitly and centrally from an early, classic cultural anthropology work (Malinowski, 1922), while also drawing on more recent research, to explain the distinctive characteristics of the anthropological study of policy implementation and its foundational analytic categories and concerns.

In 1984, Frederick Erickson updated and republished an essay titled, “What Makes School Ethnography ‘Ethnographic’?” which was initially published in

1973. Both versions built centrally from Malinowski. Although “anthropological” and “ethnographic” are overlapping rather than synonymous terms, as are “school” and “educational policy implementation,” Erickson’s (1984) essay provides a highly useful template for our current endeavor. Its usefulness derives not only from his demonstration of how classical anthropological concepts can be applied to the study of education, but also because its very structure can be imitated here with the same questions posed about educational policy implementation that Erickson posed about the ethnography of schools. Erickson’s chapter, however, is not as explicit about another concern – validity – so for consideration of that we also turn later in the paper to other sources, particularly Maxwell (1992).

Like Erickson (1984), we are writing at a time when the subfield we are describing – in our case, educational policy implementation studies – is becoming increasingly well-established (see Datnow and Park, 2009; Honig, 2006; McLaughlin, 1987) and drawing many of its core methods and assumptions from anthropology, but not always acknowledging those roots explicitly (e.g., Stein, 2004). Whether its anthropological components are overtly recognized or not, the subfield of educational policy implementation studies differs from the traditionally dominant field of educational policy studies. Thus, a modest purpose of this chapter is to clarify the anthropological components of educational policy implementation studies, but a larger one is to clarify how such inquiry differs more substantially from the dominant strains of educational policy research. Recently, Erickson and Gutiérrez wrote, “A logically and empirically prior question to ‘Did it work?’ is ‘What was the “it”?’ – ‘What was the “treatment” as actually delivered?’” (2002: 21). Studying the “it” as well as the outcomes (instead of outcomes only) is not the only distinction between anthropological education policy implementation studies and traditional educational policy studies, but it is an important one, and one that we return to throughout this chapter.

Like Erickson (1984), we face the task of adapting the original impulses of our discipline – to document cultures – for different purposes. However, unlike that historic (and subsequently critiqued) impulse of documenting a people who supposedly existed in a bounded, coherent, and relatively homogeneous collective, anthropological studies of education policy implementation cannot presume a single people or type as their target. Instead, they necessarily include explaining the heterogeneous bases for the interaction of diverse peoples through policy implementation. Policy implementation links people who often are obviously quite different from each other in terms of age, formal preparation, expected agency (as subject or object of implementation), location, and formal position, but who nonetheless are connected to one another as part of a web or network of social activity focused on: (1) defining (or contesting others’ definitions of) what is problematic in education; (2) promoting or resisting particular strategies for responding to such purported problems; and (3) determining to what vision of the future change efforts should be directed.

As with the 1970s and 1980s (the two dates of Erickson’s publication), ours is also a time when anthropologists of education are far more likely to be housed in faculties of education than in anthropology. Peripheral then to its disciplinary home in anthropology (although consistent with the anthropology of policy more generally (e.g., Shore and Wright, 1997; Wedel *et al.*, 2005)), the anthropology of educational policy implementation must compete with the dominant paradigm for policy research in

education. As Levinson and Sutton assert (2001), this dominant paradigm, which we refer to as the “technical-rational approach,” takes a narrower, more formal, and primarily instrumental view of policy; it assumes a neat distinction between policy and practice and often a linear, unidirectional relationship between them; it attempts to apply positivistic principles and methods from the natural sciences to explain and predict educational policy processes; it takes for granted received categories (such as “academic achievement” or “English language learner”); and it seeks certain actionable truths embodied in purportedly value-free scientific studies.

As we shall see, anthropological studies of educational policy implementation, by contrast, define policy itself much more broadly, and consequently include a broader range of social actors in their analyses; they problematize clean distinctions between policy formation and implementation, or appropriation; they aim for interpretation rather than explanation and prediction; they question received categories; and they attempt to persuade with clear and compelling arguments while critiquing other fields’ promises to deliver “objective” truths (for further discussion of this contrast, see Rosen, 2009). Erickson’s central argument is “that ethnography should be considered a deliberate inquiry process guided by a point of view, rather than a reporting process guided by a standard technique or set of techniques, or a totally intuitive process that does not involve reflection” (1984: 51). Likewise, there is no single way to conduct the anthropology of educational policy implementation, but such work does entail a particular lens or perspective on policy processes. As we elaborate below, this starts with questioning the conventional definitions of both policy and practice and broadening the unit of analysis for policy implementation studies.

DEFINING THE SOCIAL UNIT FOR ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDIES OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Using Bronislaw Malinowski’s (1922) classic ethnography of a Trobriand Islands village as the exemplar, Erickson’s (1984) essay considers how the ethnography of schooling is and is not like classic ethnography. He concludes that many general principles of classic ethnography apply readily to the ethnography of schooling, but that the specific methods must differ because the units of analysis for the two enterprises differ in fundamental ways:

An American school is not a Trobriand village. There may be points of analogy between the two, but there are many points at which the analogy breaks down. For example, the village involves the life of its members 24 hours a day over many generations; the school does not ... But we can identify the general principles for doing the ethnography of a primitive village [and] we can try to identify which of these general principles still apply when one turns to the ethnography of a school – a partial community whose members (ideally) hold achieved statuses, in which rights and obligations are not reciprocal, in which the goods and services exchanged differ markedly in kind, and in which knowledge is nontraditional and rapidly changing. (1984: 53–54)

The anthropology of educational policy implementation is built around analysis of a social unit even more amorphous than a school (schools are at least bounded

geographically). What is this unit of analysis? To answer this question, we first consider how mainstream (technical-rational) policy research defines the unit of analysis for education policy research, and then contrast this with how anthropological studies approach this same task.

Technical-rational studies of educational policy use an input–output model where the “treatment,” or policy, is presumed to be known, and the main subject of concern is outcomes (e.g., test scores). Per this framing, what the policy *is* is not so much in question as what the policy *does* (and here too analysis is often limited to indicators related to what the policy is *supposed* to do). This way of defining the unit of analysis relies upon and takes for granted conventional definitions of both policy and practice. According to these received notions, policies are formal institutional products (the plans formulated by officially recognized policymakers such as school board members, commissioners of education, and political leaders), while implementation, or practice, is the activity of those charged with putting these plans into action (such as teachers and principals). For example, elected officials make policy, while teachers and principals engage in practice. This presumption of a clean divide between policy and practice – and likewise between policy creators and policy enactors – naturally leads conventional policy implementation scholars to exclude the former half of each pair from the unit of analysis for their studies, while the latter are often scrutinized for the fidelity of their implementation in relation to the original design.

This way of defining the unit of analysis for educational policy studies may appear to be commonsensical and, as such, unproblematic. However, from an anthropological perspective, it is its commonsensical nature that is precisely the problem, because the dependency on everyday understandings of both policy and practice causes conventional studies to miss (or misconstrue) important aspects of the policy implementation process and exclude or misrepresent key actors and phenomena from their analyses. Anthropological studies of policy implementation challenge the neat, common-sense distinction between policy and practice, or between policy formation and policy implementation, even while they cannot fully escape these terms and the conventional understandings they embed. It is not that these traditional definitions are necessarily or entirely wrong – who can argue that elected officials make policy? – but rather that they are conceptually inadequate or incomplete. As sociocultural theorists remind us, planning, or policy-making, necessarily includes doing (i.e., what is conventionally considered practice), while implementing necessarily involves planning as well as creating, adapting, and/or (re)ordering strategies for solving problems (i.e., what is conventionally considered policy). Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead (2009) emphasize “appropriation,” the idea that implementers can take over the determination of what gets implemented and thus that policy as practiced cannot be understood absent this consideration. Phrased another way, leading is not restricted to the leaders and doing is not exclusively the province of implementers; although they do not all have the same degree of formal authority, they are all involved in a web of interconnected social activity.

However, while anthropologists of educational policy implementation challenge these conventional definitions, the subfield has not as yet invented any new or more precise vocabulary. Consequently, anthropologically oriented policy researchers employ conventional terminology, sometimes with qualifying adjectives like “*authorized*

policy” and “state policy” (e.g., Levinson and Sutton, 2001: 4, emphasis added). Indeed, anthropologists often use conventional definitions as a point of departure (see Anderson, 2009; Kendall, in press; Koyama, 2010), but also embrace an alternative, more democratic understanding of policy that blurs the neat distinction between policy and practice characteristic of conventional studies (see Levinson and Sutton, 2001, and Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead, 2009). According to this alternative anthropological definition, educational *policy is a form of sociocultural practice* that involves efforts by a range of actors with varying degrees of formal role authority to: (1) define what is problematic in education; (2) shape interpretations and means of how problems should be resolved; and (3) determine to what vision of the future change efforts should be directed. This broader conception of policy directs attention to the social and cultural processes of interpretation, contestation, adaptation, compromise, and sometimes resistance that shape all points on what would be conventionally understood as the continuum between policy and practice. It also directs attention to the diversity and inter-connectedness of actors involved in these processes. This anthropological understanding of policy finds echo in Erickson’s (1984) original piece, as Erickson acknowledges that not all members of the partial community of school will bring the same understanding to an issue, nor will members of the social unit share in the ways they use and relate to the physical space in question (i.e., for Erickson, the school).

Anthropological studies of policy implementation illuminate the socially constructed nature of each of the above interrelated dimensions of policy (problem definition, strategies of problem resolution, and larger moral worldview). For example, such studies examine the social and cultural processes that frame why an extant reality is viewed as problematic by those being studied (the problem diagnosis), what strategies of action those being studied understand as available for response (i.e., the tools, vehicles, and means of social action), and what they think a “better” outcome would look like and entail. This perspective asserts that not only policy solutions but also the purported “problems” to which policies are ostensibly addressed are the product of social and cultural processes rather than natural or objective “facts” (see Rosen, 2009: 276). Juxtaposing the emic and the etic, the anthropologist endeavors to describe the various stances of actors involved in the policy implementation, but also reserves an external analytic voice. For example, Rosen (2001) shows how, as a consequence of social processes that gave meaning to intrinsically ambiguous conditions, a local school board in the midst of California’s “math wars” constructed the problem of mathematics achievement in the district as one of curriculum rather than of teacher training or expertise. This construction of the problem suited school board members’ need for a relatively simple explanation that avoided nettlesome questions of teacher capacity, reduced the complexity of the situation, and was amenable to a relatively simple, technical, and cost-effective response (regardless of whether those external to the situation would understand the response as a solution or as something else). Differentiating her own understanding from those she studied, Rosen explains how those engaged in math reform pursued their task and according to what logics, but she also adds her own interpretation.

Given their broader definition of policy as a form of sociocultural practice, the unit of analysis for anthropological studies of policy implementation is considerably broader than in conventional research and varies from study to study, depending on the

question a particular project aims to answer or explore. This means that anthropologists often include more diverse kinds of actors in their studies of policy implementation (e.g., not only formally recognized policymakers and implementers, but also students, parents, and entities such as professional school reform or advocacy organizations who shape the implementation process), conceptualizing these diverse actors as part of a larger network of interconnected activity. The determination of whom or what should be studied is a function of the anthropologist's analytic judgment: does considering this person help us better understand the research question at hand and the problem diagnoses, strategies, and senses of "what should be" that inform the policy implementation under study? From an anthropological perspective, anyone who significantly shapes one or more of the above three dimensions of policy can be considered a "policy actor," even if they are not an "authorized" policymaker or implementer. Moreover, adherence to the anthropological principle of holism (the commitment to considering phenomena in relation to their social context) further requires that anthropological studies examine the social and cultural context (i.e., the systems of social relations, practices, ideas, beliefs, narratives, values, and understandings) that shapes and is shaped by the implementation activity under study. For example, in Rosen's study of the "math wars" described above, *the unit of analysis was the people, ideas, and actions* that together entailed the math reform effort; this was bigger than just the analysis of the perspective of one or several implementers. The idea was to position readers not just in the shoes of the actors involved in the math wars, but also to have a more *holistic* understanding about those wars, one that was more expansive than the perspective of any particular actor and which showed the relationship between this particular policy debate and the contexts that both provoked and enfolded it.

Consequently, in anthropological studies of educational policy implementation, geographic coherence is often not a central consideration when drawing the analytic parameters for a study. Indeed, relevant members of the social unit of analysis may live and work in different places, may never come in direct physical contact, and may not even overlap chronologically in terms of when they are involved in the policy implementation being considered. For example, in Hamann's (2003) study of an unlikely partnership between a private Mexican university and two Georgia school districts, "field" research was conducted in Monterrey, Mexico and Atlanta, as well as in the two districts 90 miles from Atlanta. Policy actors included educational consultants based in Washington, DC and Mexico, Georgia-based business and school leaders, a superintendent's secretary, several newspaper reporters, two graduate students at the University of Massachusetts, and more than 40 teachers, about half from Georgia and half from Mexico. All of these actors were connected in a novel effort formally intended to improve school outcomes for a rapidly growing Latino enrollment, but only some would have been traditionally characterized as "official educational policymakers."

Capturing this situated complexity of both understanding and action means the methods of anthropological policy studies may well need to be multiple, various, and not as dependent on direct observation as most anthropological inquiry. The increasingly common multi-site anthropological studies of globalization and population mobility (e.g., Guerra, 1998; Ong, 1999) provide examples of how anthropologists in other subfields have dealt with this challenge. This decoupling of geographic and analytic boundaries also makes possible new insights as a consequence of examining the

exchange of ideas across time and space. For example, Reed-Danahy's (2003) research shows how educational ideas and strategies are transformed as they become "supranational." Anderson-Levitt's (2003) book, *Local Meanings, Global Schooling*, offers a number of strong chapters on how educational ideas imported from elsewhere are transformed in their conversion to local practice. So too, does Sutton and Levinson's book (2001). Likewise, in a discussion of civic education in Mexican *secundarias* (middle schools), Levinson (2005) notes historic French, German, and American influences that shape such a curriculum, as well as contemporary national influences as diverse as Switzerland, Argentina, and Japan (see also Dietz and Mateos Cortés, Chapter 29, below).

MALINOWSKI'S (AND ERICKSON'S) CATEGORIES OF ANALYSIS

With the unit of analysis for anthropological policy implementation studies defined, we return to Erickson (1984), using his essay to elaborate the conceptual basis for the broader understanding of policy we have articulated. Erickson directs much of his essay to considering the applicability of Malinowski's various categories of analysis – social organization, exchange, belief systems, myth, folk philosophy, and ritual – to the ethnography of schooling. Here we do the same, applying Malinowski's categories to the context of educational policy implementation. Our purpose is to illustrate what an anthropological perspective offers to this domain. Malinowski's categories may at first seem anachronistic and to have been supplanted in contemporary studies by the questions of power, ideology, identity, discourse, and so forth to which Shore and Wright (1997) refer in the epigraph that starts this chapter. For example, a chief concern of contemporary anthropological studies of educational policy implementation is how policy activity (i.e., the actions of the full range of actors described previously) both shapes and is shaped by systemic inequalities related to gender, social class, and race: such as how educational policy in the United States reflects and reinforces belief in meritocracy and individual effort as the route to social mobility and how this helps reproduce such systemic inequalities. However, the distance between these older and newer sets of analytic categories may not be as vast as it first appears. Underlying each is an enduring concern with the problem of social order, especially the construction, maintenance, and function of systems of social relations, thought, and belief. Consequently, while the study of power has become more overt and purposeful (Nader, 1972) and there have been other important theoretical developments since Malinowski, his categories suit our purpose because they represent the conceptual building blocks and long-standing concerns of the field.

The first category Erickson considers, *social organization*, may fit the anthropology of educational policy implementation even better than the ethnography of schooling. Erickson writes, "As a way of thinking about the school as a small community, we could apply to it the fundamental terms of discourse about social organization – person, status, role, rights, obligations – taking very little for granted initially" (1984: 54). Processes of educational policy implementation also link people, invoking statuses and roles with attendant rights and obligations. For example, a study by Hamann and Lane (2004) focused on state department of education employees in Puerto Rico and Maine, who were intermediaries in the process of converting the federal Comprehensive School

Reform Demonstration (CSR D) process into actual school practice. In this instance, the people being studied were defined by their status in the hierarchy between federal resources and local practice and their roles as professional educational bureaucrats (as opposed to other roles these people no doubt played in other facets of their lives, like spouse, parent, sports fan, etc.). They “performed” their status in part by direct and indirect interaction with those of other statuses (e.g., organizing professional development workshops for funded schools, or attending US Department of Education workshops) and through this performance helped reshape what the policy was “as delivered” – making CSR D a “high school-only” initiative in Maine, for example, or supporting the inclusion of the Puerto Rico State Systemic Initiative (PRSSI) as an authorized whole-school change model, even though until that point it was mainly a science education reform strategy. By paying attention to the social organization of policy implementation, the researchers found and studied a source of policy development that would have been neither identified nor analyzed in a traditional study because the individuals in question were not official policymakers. However, their roles as intermediaries gave them substantial influence over the implementation of federal policy.

Erickson next recounts Malinowski’s analysis of social behavior as a form of *exchange*, in which individuals trade unlike goods (emphasis in Erickson, 1984: 54). To illustrate such relations and practices at school, Erickson describes students exchanging deference to their teachers for kind treatment. In educational policy implementation, we might identify the exchange of extra attention and resources from a curriculum developer with a site willing to pilot its curriculum. For example, the developers of the AVID high school reform model exchange high levels of their own professional assistance to pilot school sites that are willing to implement their school improvement model, but also be extensively documented (Datnow, Hubbard, and Mehan, 2002; Mehan *et al.*, 1996). In the study of educational policy implementation, the anthropologist needs to explain the diverse motivations and interests driving different categories of actors (such as designers of a school reform model as compared with educators at prospective implementation sites) to participate in policy implementation. AVID designers needed pilot sites to test and refine their ideas about how to improve high schools for a broader range of students. For personnel at prospective pilot sites, external scrutiny (which could reveal that not all students are being well served) might be a turn off to participation. However, the prospect of extra resources, expert guidance, and “help” entailed in AVID’s offer to support a reform effort might be enough to overcome scrutiny-related reluctance. Model developers and site personnel do not need to fully agree on the problem to be solved, nor on the strategies of implementation, to cooperate on implementation. Exchange then explains a reason for the collaboration across difference that is intrinsic to policy implementation.

Malinowski and Erickson’s third category is *belief systems*, which Erickson subtitles “Religion, Folk Philosophy, and Ritual.” Erickson explains: “The school can be seen as having a worldview or ideology ... grounded in folk philosophy whose elements are: terms of definition, principles of valuation, rules of logic, methods of explanation for cause, and forms of predictive statements” (1984: 55). It is not difficult to identify such elements in educational policy implementation as well. Labels that describe various kinds of students – for example, the racial/ethnic, language status, socioeconomic, and special education labels formalized as data categories in the United States’

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and elsewhere – clearly act as terms of definition with clear implications for placement, assessment, and other interaction. NCLB and the recent standards movement can readily be understood as embedding principles of valuation (what knowledge matters in each of the disciplines, which disciplines should be covered in “high stakes testing,” etc.) and reflecting key articles of cultural faith, especially belief in the possibility – via science and evidence-based practice – of obtaining unambiguous knowledge about educational processes and controlling educational outcomes via technical-rational policy activity. Indeed, the latter is a fundamental belief underlying nearly all formal educational policy activity (see Rosen, 2009).

The policy implementation process also embeds various rules of logic – for example, that textbooks should be a source of curriculum content, that classrooms should be led by a single educator instead of teacher teams, or that school funding should be supported by a hybrid of local, state, and federal revenues (the norm in the United States) or just by the federal government (as is common in Mexico and many other countries). Heath (1983) writes memorably about the language development “logic” of early elementary education in the late 1970s US South, where the reading curriculum was ordered from phonetics, to grammar, to creative composition (and thus failed to be immediately responsive to the working-class African American children of the neighborhood of Trackton, who had been socialized in an environment that prized creative exaggeration). In other words, the logic of curriculum policy implementation in that instance seemed so “logical” and unexceptional that its poor fit for a whole segment of students was unrecognized. Rules of logic impede other ways of thinking about how policy should be implemented; they define a normal way of operating. Finally, it is easy to identify predictive premises in policy implementation efforts. Indeed, that is the point of formal policy implementation: The belief is if x strategies are pursued, y new social reality will ensue.

While one could argue that *myth* – Malinowski’s fourth category – is a kind of belief system (his third category), to stay true to Malinowski and Erickson’s taxonomy, we consider myth as a fourth category here. Erickson offers examples of myths that are common in American curricular content (e.g., “Creation Myths: The Coming of the Pilgrims, The Revolutionary War, The Opening of the West, The Civil War, The Rise in the Standard of Living” (1984: 55, capitalizations original)). Anthropologists use the concept of myth to indicate socially constructed narratives that give meaning and order to human experience by providing relatively simple and reassuring explanations for ambiguous, complex, and/or troubling circumstances. These stories often reflect, validate, and reinforce a society’s “sacred beliefs”: those cherished ideals and values that are accepted without question and taken on faith, such as the American achievement ideology and the faith in science and rational policy activity previously noted. Although in popular usage myth implies falsehood, the central consideration in the anthropological analysis of myth is not a question of empirical accuracy per se, but rather how such stories function to help individuals make sense of social conditions and justify particular actions. As such, the concept of myth reflects a particular stance on reality itself: the premise that reality is intrinsically ambiguous and all explanations of it are necessarily selective and incomplete (see Rosen, 2001, 2009).

In our work with schools, we have both encountered the myth, or story, of the old man on the morning beach who was methodically throwing one starfish after the next

back into the surf, lest they be stranded above the tide line and die of dehydration. Confronted by a younger person who tells the old man that what he is doing does not matter, that he cannot possibly save all the stranded starfish, the old man looks at the starfish in his hand (about to be rescued) and says, "It matters to this one." A version of this story was repeated on a poster that hung in the Center for Urban Ethnography at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education in the mid-1990s. Nebraska's long-time Commissioner of Education, Doug Christiansen, who retired in 2008, used to wear a gold starfish on his lapel and distribute similar starfish pins to educators across the state with the purpose of invoking this story. In both settings, the message and analogy to education was overt: our efforts matter to *this one*. It is easy to see this as a "feel-good" myth, one that recommits us to making sure schooling matters for one child, if only that one. But it is also useful to see how this myth steers thought patterns and conceptualizations of what is possible. Subtly, this myth challenges another – that all students can reasonably be expected to achieve to high standards – as it concedes that most starfish will not make it. As such, it expresses the tacit acceptance of inequality that is a fundamental element of capitalist societies. It frames starfish, and students, as without agency (they need to be rescued). And, reflecting the atomistic view of social order that goes along with US individualism, it celebrates individual quixotic effort (the old man's efforts are better than doing nothing), but in so doing steers away from a more systemic critique or solution: why are so many starfish imperiled?; what systemic solution could improve the fates of more of them? Returning overtly to the elements of policy and policy implementation, this myth defines the problem (vulnerable starfish), celebrates a strategy of response (the heroic rescue of at least a few starfish by a single old man), and defines a "better" social reality (in which not quite so many vulnerable starfish perish).

Of course, myths are not policies by either the conventional understanding of policy or the adapted one that emerges from the anthropology of educational policy implementation. But there is a structural parallel and an intertwining between myth (as anthropologically understood) and both what comes to pass educationally and how it is understood by those linked across a hierarchical policy implementation process. Myth may provide a key "glue" that aligns both efforts and rationales of those who are differently situated in relation to implementation. When the Commissioner repeats the starfish rescue story at a state conference and an attending principal and teacher both nod in assent, that solidarity informs how more concrete suggestions for practice are heard and responded to. It may suggest that Commissioner and school-based practitioner alike see extra individual effort by educators (akin to the old man) and exceptional successful outcomes for at least a few (akin to the rescued starfish) as at least part of what successful implementation should look like. In that sense, myth gets inexorably incorporated into policy as practice.

Erickson returns to *folk philosophy* as the fifth of Malinowski's categories that he considers. He writes, "The varying folk philosophies (metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics) inherent in teacher culture, administrator culture, and student culture may provide cultural lenses through which the same events look different" (1984: 55). He then goes on to suggest that folk philosophic systems are composed of three elements: basic terms, relations between basic terms (which he calls "basic premises"), and relations between terms and premises that are manifest in statements of correlation/

probability, causal explanation, and prediction. The anthropology of educational policy implementation could readily use the same taxonomy, identifying teachers' and administrators' use of basic terms, like "adolescent literacy," "grade-level," and "reader" to build a basic premise such as: secondary school students who are behind grade level need intentional educational interventions that are describable within a category called adolescent literacy. In turn, the belief systems of implementers of such a program could be examined to see if they concurred with the causal explanation of literacy as a missing educational component or the prediction that overtly attending to it would remedy the identified problem. In this example, the folk philosophies of various kinds of stakeholders could be juxtaposed. Presumably, secondary-school students targeted by such an initiative might dislike the premise that they needed a literacy program since, to them, that basic term would invite a range of unpalatable connotations about academic weaknesses. Similarly, private schools with partially public enrollments (common in parts of New England) might resist offering adolescent literacy initiatives, fearing that literacy education at the secondary level would suggest that they have academically weak students rather than strong ones. Yet certain teachers might gravitate to this premise, finding it an apt explanation for a range of students' struggles that they have witnessed and tried to attend to in their careers (Hamann and Meltzer, 2005).

As with myth, folk philosophy can become implicated in policy implementation through purposeful application. Folk philosophies (which can vary widely and change over time) are in Erickson's rendering variable yet enduring characteristics of educational systems. As such, folk philosophies become building blocks not only for educational policy implementation (informing problem diagnoses, strategies, and the sense of "what should be"), but also for routine practice. So it is the task of the anthropologist of educational policy implementation to determine whether examining educators' invocation of folk philosophies is helpful for understanding the process of implementation in a particular case. As Erickson notes, part of the anthropologist's work is to interpret – to reduce complex intertwining practices and imperatives into an intelligible and, ideally, illuminating account. Often, identifying the folk philosophies that inform implementation serves as a useful interpretive move.

The sixth Malinowskian category Erickson directs us to is *ritual*. Rituals generally consist of stylized or formalized activity that, by means of predictable scripts for behavior, help produce and maintain social order, conveying symbolic messages that reinforce sacred beliefs, legitimate existing social arrangements, and help manufacture or elicit feelings of social solidarity and individual belonging to a larger collective. Erickson offers recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and the awarding of varsity athletic letters as examples of rituals. Policy implementation can also be viewed through this lens. Symbolic activities such as myth and ritual often involve a degree of what critical theorists call mystification: symbolic representation of the social order in ways that differ systematically from the reality on the ground. For example, at their most fundamental level, many of the activities that comprise formal policy-making can be understood as symbolic reassurances that our idealized beliefs about how government works (e.g., government *of*, *by*, and *for* the people) are actually true. Thus, even when policy events serve little instrumental function (such as when public hearings on this or that issue have little actual bearing on policy decisions), they nonetheless perform the important expressive function of validating this core belief (see Rosen, 2001, 2009).

ENSURING THE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL POLICY STUDIES

Of course, schools are more than the sum of social organization, quasi-economic exchanges, belief systems, myths, folk philosophies, and rituals. Moreover, as Erickson notes, by calling outsize attention to facets of the quotidian, anthropologists invariably distort social realities (1984: 58). Details are left out, so that readers can concentrate on the ones the anthropologist hopes to draw attention to. Invariably, these decisions, however expert and defensible, represent a point of view. The anthropologist chooses to offer *this* depiction of the social reality that he or she recorded, instead of the myriad other depictions that would have been possible. So too does the anthropological analysis of educational policy reflect the point of view of the anthropologist, drawing attention to certain facets of the policy implementation under study and thereby steering attention away from other aspects. As critical realists would note, all research arguably involves such processes of selection, representation, and thus inevitable distortion, but anthropological studies – whether school ethnographies or policy analyses – are particularly vulnerable to charges of bias because of their reliance on the individual anthropologist’s powers of interpretation and, in Erickson’s view, the lack of explicit “rules of evidence” for evaluating their validity. To protect against such charges, Erickson suggests six questions that he argues should be asked of every ethnography:

- How did you arrive at your overall point of view?
- What did you leave out and what did you leave in?
- What was your rationale for selection?
- From the universe of behavior available to you, how much did you monitor?
- Why did you monitor behavior in some situations and not in others?
- What grounds do you have for determining meaning from the actors’ point of view? (1984: 58–59)

These same questions suggest a framework for evaluating and strengthening the validity of anthropologically oriented policy studies as well. They ask the researcher to make his or her point of view overt, present the evidence grounding assertions of emic (and etic) viewpoints, and reflect explicitly on the processes of selection and interpretation that inevitably shaped the study:

I believe that a good ethnography should not only be able to answer those questions, but should provide data to illustrate the decisions made during the research process ... In other words, the ethnographer should provide readers with guidelines for the falsification of the analysis, should a reader decide to replicate the study ... The positivists have a point. Although I may object to their particular rules of evidence, I am forced to admit that some systematic rules of evidence are necessary. (1984: 59)

Erickson then offers some rules of evidence for school ethnography, several of which would clearly also apply to the anthropology of educational policy implementation. For example, he notes that schools are embedded in larger social systems (just as educational policy implementation is embedded in larger social and policy universes), and invariably that means that more data could hypothetically be collected than is realistic

or feasible. This requires explicit strategies for “eliminating some of the welter of information” (1984: 60). These include explaining how the social unit of analysis came to be defined and bounded, how the sample was selected, how researchable questions were identified and operationalized, and how holism (the anthropological commitment to considering phenomena in relation to their social context), though necessarily checked, was not abandoned.

As part of this consideration of rules of evidence, Erickson takes on the core tool of anthropological analysis – the anthropologist – and emphasizes that tool’s invariable subjectivity. In so doing, he also suggests a key criterion for evaluating the quality of ethnographic or anthropological studies: the researcher’s clarity in communicating his or her particular point of view as a subject.

It was *I* who was *there* doing the fieldwork, not somebody else. My fundamental assumptions and prejudices are part of my *me*. I cannot leave them at home when I enter a site. I must study a place as *me* ... The desirable goal is not the impossible one of my disembodied objectivity (I am a subject, not an object) but of clarity in communicating my point of view as a subject, both to myself and to my audience. In addition to being *me* to my audience, as an ethnographer I have an obligation to have *been there*. Really *being there* means experiencing strong relationships with whomever else is there (one’s informants). Some of these relationships may feel good and others may hurt ... [I]t is not involvement at arm’s length.” (1984: 60–61, emphasis original)

It follows that in an anthropology of educational policy implementation, the anthropologist needs to name who he or she was in relation to the policy implementation under examination. In Hamann’s (2003) work in Georgia, that includes documenting a role of exchanging successful Title VII grant-writing (for US\$500,000, for Systemwide Bilingual Education) for access to a demographically fast-changing school district that was partnering with a Mexican university to negotiate that change, and for which the US\$500,000 grant was one of several important funding sources. That grant-writing role was informed by a sense of what should be (which was proposed in the grant), and meant access to certain individuals (the leaders of the binational partnership) more than others (e.g., the newcomer immigrant students for whom the partnership was ostensibly created). The reason this account of a multifaceted partnership could be shared was because the researcher was there, and the way it was shared, in turn, reflects who that researcher was (subjectively) as well as what he saw and paid attention to or may have missed.

Yet that account of educational policy creation and implementation in Georgia required not just documenting who the anthropologist was in relation to the data collection and analysis task (as important as those are). As Erickson consistently implies, there is a *there* that the anthropologist is trying to chronicle and the anthropologist’s account is not just a product of point of view, but also of what was there to be seen. Complementing Erickson’s recommendations related to anthropological evidence, we thus also think it important that anthropological renderings of educational policy implementation account for what Maxwell (1992) has characterized as the validity of qualitative data. Acknowledging that educational research, including anthropological research, is intrinsically interested should not stop anthropologists from trying to make accurate accounts of what transpired and how what transpired is/was understood.

As with the terms “policy” and “practice,” anthropologists face dilemmas when using a term like validity, which has such ingrained and common usage in more positivistic domains of educational research. Yet Maxwell (1992) asserts that this term can be used to consider data like that which anthropologists of education and educational policy implementation would normally collect, because we can ask about the correspondence between what was collected/measured and what *could* have been collected/measured. In Maxwell’s rendering, there are five levels of validity that can be considered in qualitative research: descriptive, interpretive, theoretical, generalizability, and evaluative. These five offer an additional taxonomy that can both guide anthropologists of educational policy implementation as well as those who read such anthropologists’ accounts.

Descriptive validity refers to factual assertions made by the researcher. If a researcher records that Malawi received money to expand primary education (Kendall, in press), then a descriptive validity check would ask, “Did it?” What’s the proof of such a transfer? Interpretive validity refers to the accurate portrayal of the interpretations of those under study. As an interpretive validity check, if an anthropologist asserted that most teachers in a site expressed skepticism of No Child Left Behind, then the checker can examine the evidence for such a claim (e.g., recorded frequent complaints about this act in faculty lounge teacher conversations).

The remaining three types of validity differ from the first two in that they are not “experience near” (Maxwell, citing Geertz [1974], 1992: 291), but rather characterize the researcher’s assertions. As an example of theoretical assertion, Maxwell suggests a researcher understanding a student’s throwing of an eraser as an act of resistance. In turn, the validity check for such an assertion would be an examination of the supporting evidence for that claim: Did the student have reason to resist?; Is it a reasonable understanding of the classroom environment to assert that eraser throwing would not be welcome?; and so on. Generalizability refers to “the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times, or settings, than those directly studied” (1992: 293). Anderson (2009) tries to expand the generalizability of her account by comparing her fieldwork on the politics of language education in California in the mid-1990s to her view on the politics of language education in Georgia where she has lived and worked subsequently. Her claim for the broader relevance, or generalizability, of her studies in California to other sites is advanced by her invoking the different case of Georgia. If readers agree that lessons from California are relevant to Georgia (and/or vice versa), then Anderson’s quest for generalizability is advanced. Indeed, per the logic of maximum variation sampling (Patton, 1990), if Anderson can highlight both how different California and Georgia are and, yet, how the case of one is still relevant to the other, then her quest for generalizability is advanced even further.

Evaluative validity measures the aptness of applications of evaluative frameworks. Evaluative frameworks in this instance refer to overtly subjective judgments on the part of the researcher. So if a researcher claims that a policy was unjust or mean, the validity check would examine the evidence in relation to a broader understanding of what constitutes injustice or meanness. Given contemporary interest on the part of many anthropologists of education to question the justice of educational policy implementation (e.g., Abu el-Haj, 2006; Gilmore, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lomawaima and McCarty, 2006), successful assertion of evaluative validity becomes an important concern.

A HEURISTIC FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Using and adapting Erickson (1984) and adding Maxwell (1992), we have attempted not simply to define the anthropology of educational policy implementation, but also to offer a heuristic that can guide novice or aspiring contributors to the field. Specifically, we propose that anthropological studies of educational policy implementation should aim to accomplish particular analytic ends. First, they should make explicit the social unit of analysis and the rationale for how the anthropologist has drawn its boundaries: what is/are the educational policy(ies) whose implementation is being investigated?; what are the constituent pieces in terms of problem diagnosis, strategies of resolution, and sense of what should be that are embedded in that policy?; who are the actors the anthropologist has chosen to include in the analysis and why? Second, they should overtly address the tension in how they understand policy versus how it is conventionally understood (a step that will likely be necessary until anthropology has a larger, better recognized role in educational policy implementation studies, and/or it has invented new technical terms to distinguish its conception of policy from the conventional definition). Third, they should illuminate, from both emic and etic perspectives, the chain of human relationships that is created through the implementation of a formal or informal educational policy. This includes shedding light on the social and cultural processes in which policies are implicated—an analytic task for which Malinowski's categories of social organization, exchange, belief systems, myth, folk philosophy, and ritual can provide a useful rubric or frame. In so doing, they should examine the prevailing understandings and intentions informing policy activity. Finally, anthropologists should explicitly acknowledge the intrinsic distortion that is the inevitable product of their research write-up and their stance (what Erickson refers to as "point of view"), and still provide readers grounds for evaluating the validity of their account (per Maxwell).

Traditional educational policy studies too readily ignore important dynamics that can broadly explain both how educational systems operate and why they yield the outcomes they do. By contrast, sociocultural approaches capture and highlight important data that these traditional studies miss. Fortunately, it is steadily becoming more widely recognized that anthropological approaches have a keen role to play in the study of educational policy implementation (whether the anthropological approach is overtly noted or not). And only through more nuanced and thorough understandings of what is happening can we make informed choices about how to generate more favorable practices and outcomes.

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PART V

Interventions

CHAPTER 28

The Past, Present, and Future of “Funds of Knowledge”

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Everything is simpler than you think and at the same time more complex than you imagine.
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

“Funds of Knowledge” refers to a body of scholarship and practice in the anthropology of education that for two decades has engaged with the knowledge and skill sets available in the households of students. This chapter revisits the construct of Funds of Knowledge almost 20 years after it was first formulated. The confluence of factors that gave rise to the Funds of Knowledge perspective have been described elsewhere (González, Moll, and Amanti, 2005); still, we begin here by discussing what the approach was meant to accomplish. From its inception, the concept has been used by researchers to attempt to theorize practices in households, communities, and classrooms, instead of simply applying theory to practice. The theorizing of practices allows us to excavate the richly layered knowledge bases that inform the everyday ways of being of students, families, and communities. It also allows us to acknowledge the remapping of social analysis that stems not from academic imposition of theory, but that emerges organically from the lives, routines, and practices of students and communities.

Funds of Knowledge (hereafter, FofK) began as a multi-layered counterdiscourse to hurtful conceptualizations about minoritized children and their families, notions that still inflict toxic wounds on families struggling to buffer their children against insensitive ways of framing their practices and their households. FofK was a strategy for researchers and

educators to explore the homes, and therefore the hearts and minds, of families, however they might be constituted. It was a way to make transparent the historically constructed knowledges that resided in households and within and between their members.

FofK was also a theoretical validation of the social and cultural capital of communities that had been viewed without resources or capital of any kind. The approach reconceptualized communities from a strength-based perspective, seeing a richness of history within economic marginality and the contours of a fertile cultural landscape along streets marked by perceived scarcity.

FofK additionally strove to reinvigorate K-12 and teacher education curriculum with a place-based excitement; educators coming to know the local ecologies of place, literacies, and learning could construct curriculum around what they found. By concretizing community knowledge as academically valuable, FofK endowed people's everyday labor and activity with academic legitimacy.

It also sought to move teachers from their ascribed roles as implementers and consumers of others' theoretical musings and prescriptive practices to new roles as researchers of their own communities, and producers and constructors of their own knowledge. FofK work showed how interpersonal relationships and community and family connections could be leveraged to foster new relationships between teachers and the academic knowledge of their profession.

The work began with a simple premise: learning about students and their communities is as important as learning about subject matter and content. Further, these two sets of goals should not be seen as opposing demands on teachers, but can work in concert with one another, as teacher-ethnographers gain a more profound understanding of how community cultural knowledge can be a valuable academic resource for teachers and students. The methods for doing this have been described in depth (González, Moll, and Amanti, 2005) and involve the ethnographic exploration of communities through household visits by teachers, as well as their reflexive practice based on community strengths and resources.

Within many critical ethnographies at the time of the original FofK research, researchers had documented the ways in which schools maintained and reproduced inequalities. FofK research turned the resulting deficit discourses of cultural deprivation on their heads: minoritized students are not "poor" in cultural capital because of their cultural inheritance; rather, views of culture have traditionally been impoverished. Further, by ignoring the education in everyday family practices, many researchers have embraced an impoverished view of educational processes as well. FofK work showed the fragility of some seemingly entrenched ways of "doing school," by demonstrating how, when teachers developed anthropological reflexivity, classrooms and relationships could be transformed.

One aspect of the FofK perspective that teachers reported as transformative was the shift of emphasis from "culture" to "practice" in conversations about students, households, and communities. This cultural work was situated at a historical moment when anthropologists as a whole were abandoning the idea of culture as a unifying paradigm. The work also contested the generalizations and assumptions that were smuggled in with the culture concept. Teachers in FofK study groups read Renato Rosaldo's *Culture and Truth* (1989) in order to understand communities more deeply, rather than relying on static typologies. The intent was to combat uninformed and stereotypical

“cultural” explanations for behaviors that seeped into discourses around parents’ involvement, valuing of education, and investment in academic achievement (cf. Hurtig and Dyrness, Chapter 31, below). FofK praxis also promoted a deep engagement with the historical locations of communities, in an effort to move beyond “shallow cultural analyses” that failed to examine actual practices in specific contexts (Pollock, 2008a).

The hope of FofK work was always that recognition of students’ multi-stranded relationships within their families and communities could contribute to a deep transformation of the relationships between schools and communities, and that these transformations might begin with respectful dialogical interactions. At heart, FofK affirmed that relationships matter: relationships between parents and teachers, between teachers and students, and between schools and communities. The work showed that relationships are not only formed person to person, but are also contextualized within particular social positions and assumptions about knowledge that need to be unpacked and interrogated. The work also demonstrated how, with the right kinds of support, educators could counteract the tendencies of school systems to produce narrow, unproductive, and damaging relationships between teachers and students, schools and families, and students and curriculum. By transforming those relationships, teachers could improve academic outcomes for students. Researchers “putting anthropology to work” (Field and Fox, 2007) through the exploration and use of FofK were firmly grounded in the sociocultural principle that knowledge and learning are embedded in social relationships, and that transforming those relationships would enhance learning and the co-construction of knowledge. This simple premise led to exploring the unceasing complexities and nuances in family life and family-school interaction as it is lived.

Unfortunately, however, even as the FofK approach emphasizes the complexity of students’ home lives, it has at times been misappropriated in oversimplistic analysis of home life, particularly in curricular attempts to quickly bring in “home culture.” Token efforts in acknowledging students’ “cultural worlds” in schooling have at times merely reproduced stereotypes, and asymmetrical relationships of power, in new, more subtle forms (Ladson-Billings, 2006). FofK did not advocate supplanting curricular standards and requirements with knowledge that merely reproduced that which students already knew. More importantly, it was not meant to aid in re-inscribing fallacious cultural deficit discourses about minoritized publics. These various misappropriations and misunderstandings of FofK demonstrate a tension still deep in the core of the anthropology of education: balancing complex claims about patterns in human behavior with simplified claims about the shared behavior of “groups,” without misrepresenting the realities of everyday life.

ENGAGING WITH COMPLEXITY

Anthropologists of education committed to meaningful understandings of families, homes, schools, and community knowledge systems call for a deeper analytical engagement with all these as complex systems (Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005; Pollock, 2008a; McCarty *et al.*, 2008). Anthropology – in education or otherwise – is concerned with understanding how people relate to one another in particular social contexts, and with what these relationships mean to the participants. Rather than removing as many variables

as possible from the analysis, we delight in pointing out variables of whose existence teachers (and others) were unaware, and bringing home the irreducible complexity of *all* contexts for teaching and learning (Smith, 1992). However, there is an inherent tension in this formulation. For example, as we argue against static typifications and cultural representations, we may find that the argument moves dangerously close to erasing all claims for cultural identities (such that any household would be imagined as containing only individualized “funds” of knowledge, not community funds). By deconstructing culture too much, and by overemphasizing the fluidity of intercultural flows of knowledge and information, we can unintentionally expunge the historicized struggles of a people, as well as the power of earlier social movements, from our analysis of people’s experience, knowledge, and practices.

For example, an administrator at the University of Arizona recently justified the closing of the university’s minority student advocacy centers by commenting that, according to demographic information, fewer incoming students perceived themselves in simple terms as members of one racial/ethnic group or another. In this line of reasoning, the multiple or hybrid forms of personal identity that we anthropologists have so often observed in practice are taken as evidence that concepts like “culture” (and “race”) no longer have any power to affect students’ educational outcomes; viewers assert that there are no “funds” of community experience at all.

Since the FofK work is motivated not only by a spirit of anthropological inquiry, but by the desire to promote educational equity and to redress inequality of educational opportunity, we can find ourselves in a double bind. When we present complexity as an analytic endpoint, without providing accompanying forums or strategic suggestions for working through complexity, detailed explications of complexity can be counterproductive. A mere awareness of students’ complex everyday identity performances, combined with the fear of perpetuating damaging stereotypes and frustration over seemingly permanent achievement gaps, may lead teachers simply to retreat towards “universalizing discourses” that in their oversimplification are of little help in targeting the needs of specific young people in schools (Pollock, 2004).

And so, like others in anthropology of education, we have on the one hand noted with alarm how one of the foundational notions of our field – the idea that understanding students’ home worlds offers the potential to transform students’ experiences with schooling – is regularly taken up in simplistic ways to invoke quick “cultural” or “class” explanations for students’ behavior, thereby perpetuating deep-seated racial biases in teachers, schools, and processes of schooling, in spite of our careful documentation of complexity in diverse settings (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lomawaima and McCarty, 2006). Relatedly, along with many educational researchers, teachers considering “different cultures” in “different homes” may come to the conclusion that the best they can do is to “encourage the cultural practices that make a substantial difference – even at the political risk of saying that some practices are ‘better’ than others” (Kingston, 2001: 97). This is the very response our work has attempted to prevent: the idea that family and community funds of knowledge cannot “make a substantial difference” in terms of academic achievement, and should therefore be de-emphasized at school. At the same time, efforts to overemphasize the endless complexity of home practices can result in “complexity fatigue,” or teachers’ feelings of being overwhelmed with issues that are beyond their comprehension and control.

The original FofK research differed crucially from other approaches to so-called “parent/family involvement” in that it aimed at mutual transformation: not only of students’ and families’ relationships with the school, but also of teachers’ relationships with students and families, and of teachers’ understanding of how community funds of knowledge might inform academic knowledge. While socialization into an identity as practicing teacher-ethnographers was transformative for many of our participants, such experiences remain sadly far from the norm for pre-service or practicing teachers in US schools. Teachers (and administrators, and policymakers) continue to invoke essentializing “cultural” explanations for student behavior and patterns of low achievement, instead of “analyzing the actual interactions among actual people in shared opportunity contexts that contribute to children’s school achievement over time” (Pollock, 2008a: 376). As we describe next, 20 years after FofK was conceptualized, it seems rarer than ever for teachers actually to get to know real households in any ethnographic manner.

THE CHANGING POLITICAL CONTEXT FOR ETHNOGRAPHIC TEACHER RESEARCH

In the last decade, two political tides have negatively affected schools’ capability to sustain the types of engaged, ethnographic, collaborative, and reflexive teacher-inquiry initiatives represented by the FofK approach: the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and anti-immigrant discourses. On the first: NCLB, the 2001 renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, has become best known for its mandate that states hold schools and districts accountable for increasing student achievement (particularly for minoritized students) by administering standardized forms of assessment that are “high stakes” in the sense that they determine whether students are promoted or graduate, whether teachers keep their jobs, and whether schools are able to remain open. The ostensible goal of the legislation is to close the persistent racial/ethnic achievement gap; schools are required to document that students from particular demographic categories are improving their test scores in order for the school to make “adequate yearly progress,” according to the state’s interpretation of the federal mandate.

Thus, even as some in education deny the continuing relevance of “static” racial or cultural categories, NCLB’s focus on disaggregating student achievement data by racial/ethnic group has arguably had the effect of reifying those categories as well as injecting them into discussions of achievement. Simultaneously (and ironically), mainstream educational policy discussions in this environment have tended to view education as a process that is “beyond culture,” or in which culture ought not to matter. While a highly racialized discourse of achievement prompts private “cultural” explanations of academic success or failure (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Pollock, 2008a), a sense that “culture” is irrelevant to getting students to pass tests leads many to dismiss the need for attending to “culture” in schools.

A new-found obsession with “skilling” students, or with inculcating them with certain discrete, measurable abilities, as outlined in state curriculum standards, is fundamentally at odds with the anthropological or sociocultural view of education as a

holistic process of human development where learning takes place in constant interaction and negotiation with whole people (cf. Urciuoli, 2008). The approach is perhaps just as harmful to teachers, who have only extremely limited opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with their students, and may feel like professional failures as a result. It is no accident that the turn toward “skilling” of students has coincided with what Smith (1992) recognized as a persistent “deskilling” of teachers: as education becomes increasingly centralized and standardized, in an attempt to dispense with the cultural “background noise” – the variables that interfere with schools’ production of measurable outcomes – teachers are reduced to mere technicians, workers who “deliver instruction” and not much more.

In our research and teaching over the last decade, in settings ranging from urban Tucson to rural Alaska, we have seen experienced teachers confidently take on the challenge of meeting state standards while continuing to organize classrooms around deeply meaningful activities with students. However, we have also seen experienced teachers lose confidence and abandon place- and community-based curriculum wholesale, simply because they did not have the time and support needed to think about how they might integrate new curricular demands and community knowledge. All forms of teacher-research take time (McCarty, 1997), and the original FofK work acknowledged that one of the greatest challenges facing teacher-researchers was finding the time to build the necessary methodological skills, theoretical stances, and relationships of trust for community-based inquiry. What had been a difficult, though doable task – visiting households – became out of the question for many teachers in the NLCB-mandated quest for “adequate yearly progress.”

Additionally, in recent years ethnographic research with immigrant households has been complicated by anti-immigrant discourses that have created a climate of alarm among many communities, making household visits more challenging. Changing demographic realities, the September 11 attacks, and economic hard times in the United States, among other factors, have led to a severe backlash against recent immigrants, particularly those from Latin American countries. At the state level, for example in California and Arizona, this backlash has been institutionalized through ballot initiatives that have sought to limit services for undocumented immigrants and to constrain educational options for bilingual and “English language learner” students. More dramatically, Arizona’s Senate Bill 1070, passed in 2010, authorized local police to determine the immigration status of anyone who might be “reasonably suspected” of being in the country illegally. Critics of the bill around the country expressed strong concern that this would amount to legalized racial profiling, and at the time of this writing a federal judge has blocked the implementation of the most controversial parts of the bill, at least temporarily. Nevertheless, it has been profoundly unsettling, especially for those of us committed to the education of Latino and immigrant students, in particular, and minority students more generally, to hear that a significant majority of Americans supported the measure, according to polling data. Meanwhile, at the federal level, immigrant families have been forced to deal with the militarization of the US–Mexico border and a draconian system of indefinite detention without hearings.

All of this suggests a nationwide climate of fear and intolerance that can only have a chilling effect on immigrant students and families. In such a climate, the task of gaining families’ trust, and of promoting open communication among teacher-ethnographers,

students, families, and schools, which was never easy, has become increasingly difficult. Anthropologists of education (e.g., Lavadenz, 2005) have documented how the harsh realities of immigrant life in the United States make it necessary for families to “fly under the radar,” so to speak, as a matter of survival; they are effectively silenced because their voices may identify them as candidates for deportation, even in school settings.

We received a sobering reminder of this not long ago when personnel at a Tucson-area high school contacted a student’s family because of a minor drug violation. The family was subsequently deported to Mexico when it was discovered that they did not have legal permission to remain in the country. Thus, even before the passing of Arizona’s SB 1070, an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust had come to permeate even routine interactions among families and representatives of schools. In Arizona, immigrant families are now more likely to resist the inquiries of the teacher-ethnographer, who appears as one more “relentless visitor” and a potential agent of state surveillance (cf. Jones, 2007).

Our jobs, as anthropologists of education who wish to effect change and not just to characterize a desperate situation, have become even more difficult since the original FofK research appeared. Once again, it is much easier for policymakers, teachers, and community members alike, as consumers of research, to rest satisfied with a few points about student “cultures” that appeal to “commonsensical” notions than to seek to understand students’ actual lifeworlds.

Herein lies the challenge for those of us whose research is seen as rooted in a particular context and therefore not transportable, nor generalizable. As David Smith (1992) suggested some years ago, many of the tensions above may be endemic to our field: educational research, Smith argued, is characterized fundamentally by a “technicist” emphasis on improving productivity and efficiency; its guiding questions have to do with how processes can be streamlined in order to ensure desired outcomes. The pressure to fulfill “technicist imperatives” is stronger now than ever, and anthropology of education researchers who wish to work with teachers must be careful not merely to carry out these imperatives in our work (Smith, 1992). Recently, however, we have seen a push from within our field to develop forms of collaborative anthropology that address, rather than simply document, inequities in schooling in new and innovative ways.

The FofK work has always challenged, on epistemological grounds, the artificial distinction between basic and applied research in academia. Currently, the FofK framework faces new demands to show the “methodological and epistemological advantages of collaborative and activist research” (Hale, 2007: 104) between teachers and community members.

MOVING FORWARD

As we consider, along with others, how to put anthropology to work in new contexts, there are key points that we, as educational anthropologists, will need to bring forward. We must hang onto the concepts within our discipline that have always had the potential to point out “the human dynamic behind” schooling “and hence, the human possibilities within it” (Smith, 1992: 190). We can also possibly re-frame some of these concepts from within the FofK paradigm, in concert with diverse groups of educators, communities, and students.

(1) Relationships matter

As we have recognized and emphasized in our work, social relationships of reciprocity and mutual trust with families (*confianza*) facilitate the development and exchange of historically accumulated sets of resources, strategies, and ideas (González *et al.*, 1995). FofK work underscores how human-to-human interactions can transform students, teachers, and parents, and their relationships, and can provide intellectually challenging alternatives to the “skill and drill” pedagogies that have always been meted out to minority children in poverty, and even today are trumpeted as solutions for erasing achievement gaps. Responses to educational inequity that do not keep relationships at their very center “fail to pinpoint how ordinary people contribute to producing patterns of opportunity denial” (Pollock, 2008b: 154), or conversely, how they might contribute to providing expanded opportunity to marginalized students. Developing relationships in the context of reflexive inquiry is an investment in human capital that goes beyond policy based on a reductive notion of human capital as mere skills and knowledge.

Teacher–student, teacher–teacher, teacher–family, and school–community relationships are nested within dynamics of trust and/or distrust that are shaped, and can only be strategically reshaped, over time (see also Cammarota and Romero, 2006; Wyman and Kashatok, 2008). Elsewhere we provide concrete suggestions for ways in which teachers can counter historical dynamics of distrust by developing a “triangulating stance” in following multiple lines of inquiry into students’ lives and their own practice (Wyman and Kashatok, 2008).

Recognizing how current educational conditions are linked to equity outcomes, another avenue that may prove useful is aligning explorations into community funds of knowledge with the growing body of research that demonstrates how teachers act as situated policymakers. Recent ethnographic work details how constraints imposed on teachers from above reorganize the work of schooling in patterned ways, but also demonstrates unevenness within those patterns, as teachers continuously exercise their agency, navigating and pushing back against these constraints.

Ethnographic research on policy constraints on teachers (Menken, 2008; Porter, 2001; Sutton and Levinson, 2001; Wyman *et al.*, 2010) provides new insights into the challenges of “scaling up” FofK research as part of meaningful educational reform on a broad scale. However, these studies also reinforce that local relationships in schools continue to matter, and invite educators and researchers to seek out windows of opportunity for transformative work through teacher inquiry into community funds of knowledge in challenging times.

(2) Understanding complexity – of communities, activities, identities, learning processes, knowledges, and contexts – is important

Every day in schools in the United States, teachers encounter students who act in seemingly contradictory ways, who sometimes embrace and at other times reject racialized identities (Pollock, 2004); who may appear to be assimilating in the US context while maintaining ties to home countries (Levitt and Glick-Schiller, 2004; Warriner, 2007); who evidence individualized forms of bilingualism related to a

variety of contingencies and life experiences (Hornberger, 2002; Valdés, 2005); and who can be motivated by notions of authentic ties to community struggles and histories, even as they understandably reject notions of authenticity that essentialize and damage their communities (McCarty and Wyman, 2009). When teachers witness complexity, but do not have opportunities to learn to theorize and explore such complexity productively, this can lead to easy dismissals of students' and communities' knowledge claims as inconsequential or contradictory, thereby opening up spaces ripe for deficit discourses.

The FofK approach gave teacher-researchers a forum to acknowledge complexity without invoking deficit or culture-based discourses; as a result, they were able to arrive at deeper understandings of communities' cultural capital and its potential to transform instruction as well as relationships. Through respectful inquiry into the relationships that generate, distribute, and sustain community knowledge, including student learning, outside school walls, FofK practitioners showed that teachers can also interrogate the relationships of power that render community knowledge invisible within schools, and simultaneously find new avenues for addressing existing curricular demands.

Even as we reject research that analyzes schooling outcomes in light of a reduced set of actors and processes, we must be careful that our work is not content with the identification or celebration of complexity for its own sake. Families and communities may be legitimately concerned that their own funds of knowledge are often ignored in schools, and they may also want to ensure that their children's education will afford them access to the “culture of power” (Delpit, 1988). We must establish a reflexive inquiry that does not reject out of hand calls for educational equity underpinning popular support for new systems of educational accountability. We must also continue to take the full complexity of relationships, people, and contexts seriously, without losing our ability to make strong statements across cases that differ.

Not all knowledge that is useful to local actors is of interest across settings, and vice versa. Collaborative researchers must be prepared to use their limited time to document and share knowledge that may be of little interest to outside researchers, but highly important to local actors (Foley, 2007). The need to reform academia to reflect emerging expectations for collaborative research, and related risks for untenured faculty and students in various anthropological fields are discussed at length elsewhere (Foley, 2007; Hale, 2007; Hill, 2002; Weis and Fine, 2000).

Still, we must, in good faith, be ready to “pack and unpack” our ideas and claims about communities in order to have an impact on educational systems and the communities they serve. We must maintain, whenever possible, ongoing reflexive conversations with community members about our claims (Smith, 1999). We must pay attention to the ways our ideas may become folk-theorized and applied within mainstream teacher-preparation and professional development efforts, and be ready to find new language for sharing anthropological insights, if necessary, when we are misinterpreted. In our attempts to develop an engaged anthropology of education, we must also be ready to lay out how we made choices in working alongside teachers and community members, and how we navigated the multiple forms of local activism that may exist, compete, or even run counter to one another in schools and communities (Warren, 2001).

(3) Teachers using the FofK approach need space, time, and supportive networks for engaging with community knowledge, working through complexity, and putting their new understandings into action with communities and students

As we think about taking FofK into the future, we must support forums for teachers and community members to co-construct knowledge in and out of school, working across lines of perceived cultural difference, and taking advantage of windows of opportunity. To give an example of one such endeavor, Yup'ik administrators, educators, and non-Yup'ik allies, including researchers from two universities, built on anthropological research in policy-making and language socialization to investigate the effects of NCLB on schools and community language practices in 22 Yup'ik villages in southwestern Alaska. The group grounded its research questions in a regional debate about test scores, bilingual education programs, and the future of Yup'ik. The project also engaged longstanding Yup'ik elementary educators to document school language program histories, dynamics of community meetings, changes in children's language use, and NCLB's effects on village schools through interviews, local observations, and extended focus group sessions. The study documented how most schools that were achieving NCLB-related goals in the district had used Yup'ik language instruction for a decade or more. However, the project also demonstrated how high stakes testing practices were raising the level of anxiety about local language program choices in communities, creating community divides and weakening support for bilingual programs in villages that were struggling with emerging signs of a language shift to English (Wyman *et al.*, 2010, in press).

Importantly, the project also provided a venue within which Yup'ik educators could share with one another how they were working through the complexities of community bilingualism and educational policy-making to validate Indigenous knowledge and address pressing issues of language endangerment and reclamation in contested school spaces. In response to the project, district administrators changed their language program selection process to provide more sustained opportunities for community members and local educators to (1) integrate local observations, as well as emic and academic understandings of language development, and (2) engage in language planning within and across village sites. Taken together, the findings and outcomes of the project underscored the aforementioned "urgent need for, but also the promise within, spaces for locally directed ... investigation" into the intersection of policy-making and community funds of knowledge within a national context of educational standardization and high stakes testing regimes (Wyman *et al.*, 2010, in press).

FofK work always intended to examine the full complexity of a community's struggles and shared community experience. In spite of the challenges discussed above, collaborative work involving researchers, educators, community members, and youth continues to open "implementational and ideological spaces" (Hornberger, 2008) for questioning, reclaiming, and creatively employing community funds of knowledge (Cammarota and Romero, 2006; Lipka *et al.*, 1998; McCarty, 2002). Through this work, new generations of teachers and researchers can develop a critical understanding of themselves as situated social actors in enduring, complex struggles over the schooling of minoritized and otherwise marginalized children (Holland and Lave, 2001).

CONCLUSION

To re-direct ourselves toward an engaged anthropology of education, we must learn to make strategic choices about framing complexity and to notice when, and whether, certain dimensions of complexity are useful across fields of policy and practice. Work that ignores or, on the other hand, simply presents layers of complexity, must be replaced with a "comparative perspective, based on social practices and beliefs, where context is acknowledged but not taken to the point of invalidating comparison" (Field and Fox, 2007: 16).

This chapter is not an attempt to move once and for all beyond the embedded tension between ethnographic complexity and the search for an effective prescription for education reform. Rather, we dwell on this tension so that we can continue to think, along with our collaborators – teachers, youth, community members, and even policymakers – about the benefits of "bracketing, compressing and simplifying" information at times in order to speak to specific audiences, even as we highlight how consequent "probing and unpacking" (Woodson, 2007; see also Field and Fox, 2007) of the effects of any resulting essentialisms will also be necessary (Weis and Fine, 2000).

Overall, we re-assert that efforts to engage teachers in students' worlds outside of schools by using anthropological theoretical stances and methods of inquiry serve as a necessary counterbalance to deficit discourses. Likewise, we maintain that engaging teachers in conscious, sustained attempts to find and incorporate community strengths into classrooms is an essential means of countering dehumanizing policy reforms. We encourage anthropologists of education to continue to document how co-constructing knowledge beyond local classrooms, for local purposes, can both bring theoretical insights and foster a profoundly reflexive practice for teachers, community members, and students.

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CHAPTER 29

Multiculturalism and Intercultural Education Facing the Anthropology of Education

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Multicultural and intercultural education have arisen in the last two decades as intersectional fields of academic knowledge and professional development, located in the confluence of the multicultural paradigm in the social sciences, the anthropology of education, and other interdisciplinary subfields commonly known as Intercultural Studies. As will be discussed throughout this chapter, the thematic range represented by the broad *topos* of interculturality-in-education is not limited to questions about minority groups, but is closely linked to core issues of national identity and broad societal identification processes. Therefore, in order to be able to critically engage in a fruitful, truly “intercultural” dialogue between multicultural theorists and activists, on the one hand, and between academic and practitioners’ knowledge on diversity, on the other, we need a particularly, and constantly, self-reflexive hermeneutical approach. In this way, we can avoid the traps and bridge the biases of the underlying, but omnipresent, self-fulfilling, and self-essentializing identity discourses in broader national society as a whole.

This need for critical reflexivity is even more urgent when comparing multiculturalism internationally. When multiculturalist discourses migrate from one society to another – and particularly from originally Anglo-Saxon to other diversity contexts – these different diversity contexts and their underlying identity domains (their structures

of identifying “us” and “them” in each society) tend to be biased by supposedly neutral and technical arguments. These take the form of pedagogical debates on appropriate models and “solutions” for dealing with diversity, and they are imported and exported as such, without regard to differing societal contexts and identity constellations in the sending and the receiving societies.

In order to analyze the scope of these underlying processes of identity formation and of perceptions of diversity, anthropology must provide both its conceptual framework – above all, its particular concept of culture and the interrelation between culture and the key concepts of identity and ethnicity – and its empirical approach, ethnography. Only in this way will it be possible to study critically both the discourses about multiculturalism, interculturality, and diversity, and the relationship that exists between these discourses and their associated practices as they contextually materialize in programs of so-called intercultural education. We must avoid the trap of “methodological nationalism” – the false, but throughout social science research designs still predominant, “assumption that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world” (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002: 302) – and also avoid unconsciously reproducing national idiosyncrasies and their underlying identity frames. In order to do this, the comparative lens of anthropology will be necessary to identify the institutional frames as well as the contextual factors which shape the national and regional “dialects” of multicultural and/or intercultural education as they get implemented:

Anthropological theory needs to take account of no less than a range of contextual constraints (including socioeconomic conditions, state policies and public discourse), historical trajectories, group variables, institutionalized practices and possible paths of individual or collective action and how these mutually frame each other. (Vertovec, 2007: 969)

Bearing in mind these conceptual and contextual factors, it is from a broader anthropological educational perspective that we here propose to present and analyze multicultural and/or intercultural education. Our approach will outline basic conceptual criteria and methodological guidelines for examining ethnographically the intergroup and intercultural structures and processes by which contemporary societies are constituted, differentiated, and integrated (Dietz, 2009; Dietz and Mateos Cortés, 2009).

In the following, multiculturalism is briefly presented in its context of origin and its process of academic institutionalization and “pedagogization.” We focus on the impact that this has had in shaping new disciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches in the anthropology of education that study interculturality and diversity. Nurtured by these disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives, we then analyze the distinctive conceptual and theoretical “corpus” that anthropology contributes to the study of intercultural-educational phenomena. Finally, the anthropological concepts developed here are integrated into a proposed model of how to ethnographically, hermeneutically, and reflexively study intercultural education.

PROVINCIALIZING MULTICULTURALISM IN EDUCATION

Multicultural discourse, which had originally emerged in societies self-defined as countries of immigration located mostly in North America and Oceania (Kymlicka, 1995), has since become the principal ideological basis of multicultural and/or

intercultural education, conceived as a differential approach toward the education of allochthonous, foreign, non-native, immigrated minorities (Dietz, 2009). As the longstanding tradition of *indigenismo* illustrates, however, in the Latin American context, and under nationalist, homogenizing, and assuredly *non*-multiculturalist premises, very similar policies of differential education have historically targeted autochthonous, indigenous minorities, not only immigrated ones (Mateos Cortés, 2009; Schmelkes, 2009).

Therefore, when multiculturalist discourses start migrating from one context to another, their original points of departure – a particular matrix of identity politics and their underlying institutional frames – often end up being blended, confused, and supposedly neutralized in their power to shape educational “solutions” in the new context. A critical anthropological deconstruction of these migrating models must start by examining their rather different origins and contexts, which in both North American and British Commonwealth societies are related to new collective actors questioning mainstream society’s false and often racist promises of a “color blind” “melting pot,” and striving therefore to distinctively empower minority students in often severely racialized postsegregation and/or postcolonial school environments (Banks, 1986; Nieto, 1992; Pollock, 2004a). Multicultural education in such societies is accordingly formulated as a program of both political recognition and differential treatment for these “minoritized” groups.

By contrast, in continental European countries intercultural, not multicultural, education has been developed, and it is conceived not as a minority claim targeting collective actors, but as an individualized “integration” of immigrated minority students in postwar Fordist labor environments. These integration measures slowly evolved from assimilationist and compensatory approaches towards interaction-oriented “solutions” which cross-cut minority–majority divisions through an emphasis on developing individual intercultural competencies (Aguado Odina, 2003; Gogolin, 2002; Gogolin and Krüger-Potratz, 2006; Krüger-Potratz, 2005). And in Latin America, finally, intercultural education emerges as a post-*indigenismo* discourse and as a means of redefining the relationship between postcolonial nation-states and indigenous peoples by supplementary, or even exclusively “indigenous” educational programs. Here, “intercultural and bilingual education” (EIB) (Bertely, Gasché, and Podestá, 2008; Schmelkes, 2009) shifts between collective-oriented community empowerment, on the one hand, and school-access provision for individual students, on the other hand (Dietz, 2004a; Mateos Cortés, 2011; Pérez Ruiz, 2009).

The paradoxical similarity of educational solutions offered by these rather different approaches reflects the need to critically study the varied intercultural, multicultural, bilingual, and/or indigenist educational approaches from a viewpoint that goes beyond the mere pedagogical search for solutions. Although in both the European and American contexts multicultural and/or intercultural education has mainly become a privileged field for pedagogical research and teaching, the actual application of nominally multicultural/intercultural programs in diverse school and community contexts is an area that can and should be studied in the anthropology of education as well (see García, 2005; McCarty and Warhol, Chapter 11, above).

Accordingly, a step toward comparing and thus “provincializing” (Chakrabarty, 2000) dominant multicultural discourses and models as they migrate from one

societal context to another is needed in order to perceive the particular national and regional identity dimensions hidden behind educational models. For this purpose, anthropological key concepts and ethnographic core methods are essential. When in the postcolonial period anthropology hones in, turning toward the study of nearby contexts and so-called complex societies, it is no longer defined by its object – “primitive,” “exotic,” and “distant” – but rather by its particular outlook: a holistic approach towards any type of human subject, characterized by a dialectical move between an inward, actor-oriented, emic perspective and an outward, interaction-oriented, etic perspective (Díaz de Rada, 2010; see also Miñana and Arango, Chapter 22, above). In this approach, cultural and/or subcultural practices, as well as their relation to the processes of identity formation that occur at the heart of contemporary society, take shape as one of the recurring nuclei of anthropological concern in general (Kuper, 2000), and of the anthropology of education in particular (Levinson, 2000; Spindler, 1997).

In order to embark on this endeavor of comparing, contextualizing, and provincializing multiculturalism, the main emphasis cannot be limited to ethnographically studying educational institutions as such. Rather, we must study the often conflictual intertwining of multicultural discourses and their institutional enactments; in the contradictions between these, we can see the relation between *the identity claims and the underlying models* that lead to those particular identity politics. Such identity claims characterize the collective actors who make up our supposedly postnational (Habermas, 2001) societies and states, as well as their respective educational systems. And in recent years, the different models have been migrating cross-nationally and have hybridized each other.

In this sense, it is striking that in the continental European context the presence of native minorities and their claims for recognition in the educational arena have not triggered any interculturalization efforts; instead, either openly assimilatory or explicitly segregatory efforts have been the programmatic answer to ethnic claims from Norway (toward the Sami) and Denmark (the ethnic Groenlaenders), through Germany (the Sorbs) and France (the Normans, Occitans, and Corses), down to Italy (the southern Tiroles), Greece (the Pontians and Macedonians), and several Eastern European countries (Hettlage, 1996; Keating, 1996). In all of these countries, intercultural solutions to school problems have been implemented only once immigrated minorities (Turks, Arabs, Eastern European Roma, etc.) have been made “visible” and problematized at school (García-Cano Torrico and Márquez Lepe, 2006; Glenn and de Jong, 1996; Sayad, 1999).

The Spanish case is particularly illustrative for this national bias in multiculturalism. For decades, collective rights for autochthonous groups have been strongly and polemically discussed under nationalist, not multiculturalist premises, whereas multicultural/intercultural solutions are sought for with regard to Maghrebian and Latin American immigrated minorities (Gil Araujo, 2010). Up to the present day, Catalan, Basque, Galician, and even Andalusian nationalisms have employed ethnicizing, self-assimilatory discourses for their own nationalist claims, while resorting to sometimes multiculturalist, sometimes segregatory discourses for the treatment of newly immigrated communities. Throughout these dividing lines, historically rooted and dichotomously defined identities of “the other” – stigmatized as the historically

external “enemy,” the Moor, or the historically internal “enemy,” the gypsy or Roma (Dietz, 2004b) – re-emerge when multicultural models and discourses are imported and adopted by contemporary mainstream society and policy-making.

Thus, originally in the Anglo-Saxon debate, but also now in Latin American postindigenism and recent European migrant integration programs, a pressing need for “multiculturalizing” the educational systems has been argued through mechanisms of recognition and affirmative action, which would allow for an “empowerment” not of all, but of certain – native or immigrated – ethnic minorities in the course of their process of self-identification, ethnogenesis, and “emancipation” (Giroux, 1994; McLaren, 1997). Similarly, the ultimate need for the new European “interculturality” in education is not claimed merely on the ground of the minorities’ identity needs; rather, the struggle for multicultural and/or intercultural education is increasingly justified by the apparent inability of the majority society to meet the new challenges created by the heterogeneity of the pupils, by the growing sociocultural complexity of majority–minority relations, and, in general, by diversity as a key feature of the future European societies (Aguado Odina, 2003; Verlot, 2001). In this sense, in different contexts educational authorities seek minority empowerment measures to complement an education which mainstreams the promotion of intercultural competencies amongst both the marginalized minorities and the marginalizing majorities (Dietz, 2009).

DIVIDING LINES: ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE MULTICULTURALIZATION OF ACADEMIA

The confluence of multicultural and/or intercultural education with the anthropology of education originally and historically stems from multiculturalism’s turn from being a social movement to presenting itself as an institutional program. For eminently strategic and practical reasons, the first steps towards implanting measures destined to multiculturalize contemporary societies are focused on two areas of action – the public school and the university (Banks, 1986). In the United States, the academic sphere tends to absorb a great deal not only of the discussion about multiculturalism (Schlesinger, 1998), but also of the practical experiments and pilot projects for applying the multicultural program. As part of a slow, but effective process of transforming US society, multiculturalism combined street-level with institutional, school based strategies, in order to broaden its influence and assure its survival and permanence as a dissident movement. The transformations that were happening simultaneously in the interior of the higher education system favored the rapid academic integration of multiculturalism in public education more generally.

Two contemporary factors, above all, have been decisive for this integration: on the one hand, there has been growing zeal in the universities for transcending the rigid disciplinary structure. When new interdisciplinary studies were established, such as first-generation geographical and/or cultural area studies, several academic institutions were also ready to admit new hybrid, potentially transdisciplinary branches, such as Ethnic Studies (Gutiérrez, 1994). On the other hand, the progressive entry of the feminist movements into the social sciences and humanities not only allowed a novel field of specifically feminist research to open up, but has, at the same time, facilitated

the institutionalization of early multiculturalism under the label of Ethnic Studies. The aforementioned affirmative action policy is what, more than anything, cleared the way for opening up US academia for the previous protagonists of the new social movements (Jolly, 1999).

Methodologically, since Ethnic Studies then emphasized the inclusion of the personality and “positionality” (Torres, 1998) of the investigating subject in the research process itself, it succeeded in generating self-studies of ethnic minorities carried out by academic representatives of these very minorities. The purpose was to decolonize the humanities and the social sciences from their traditionally hierarchizing, colonial point of view with respect to the “other” (Gordon, 1991). The *de facto* multiculturalization of the composition of the teaching staff and the student body would be the first palpable result of this turn towards ethnic self-study, on the one hand, and culturally sensitive teacher-training, on the other hand (Foley, Levinson, and Hurtig, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Torres, 1998).

Despite these results, both the anthropology of education and the new interdisciplinary field of Cultural Studies have remained skeptical and critical with regard to multiculturalism and Ethnic Studies, particularly due to multiculturalism’s conceptual simplicity during this initial phase. Instead of achieving a cross-cutting multiculturalization of the academic disciplines, due to the institutional success of Ethnic Studies, the ethnic groups each obtained their own niche from which they could theorize about identity politics and difference, often deploying a strongly particularist “ethnic absolutism” (Gilroy, 1992). The resulting, inherent marginality was ironically reinforced by affirmative action policy, which ended up imposing on the candidates for the positions in question identities that were ever more compartmentalized and essentialized. The preferential treatment quotas, frequently based on a rigid and artificial combination of demographic characteristics – sex, age, place of origin – with identity attributions – ethnicity, “race,” sexual orientation – were often ambiguous in their concrete effects: on the one hand, they succeed in visualizing and recognizing otherwise hidden or silenced actors, while on the other hand, they “minoritized” the teaching staff as well as the student body involved in multiculturalist movements (Reyes, 1997).

This is the context in which the postcolonial criticism of essentialism (DuBose Brunner, 1998) was transferred from the analysis of global relations between the metropolis and the colonial periphery to the interior of Western societies. In contrast to anthropological theorization on identities (Dietz, 2009; Eriksen, 1993; Gingrich, 2004), the new field of Cultural Studies, which throughout the 1990s was strongly shaped by postcolonial proposals such as Bhabha’s (1994) and Hall’s (1996), vindicated identity as the social actor’s subjective and changing *identification* with different groups and discourses (du Gay *et al.*, 1997; Gilroy, 1992).

MEETING POINTS: THE PEDAGOGY AND THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF “THE INTERCULTURAL”

The academic debate between an empowerment and recognition oriented Ethnic Studies and a hybridity celebrating and positionality conscious Cultural Studies occurred simultaneously with multiculturalism’s turn towards schools as privileged

sites of struggle. Echoing anthropology's longstanding interest in school environments, minority actors and movements inspired by multiculturalism – indigenous, Chicano, and African American – chose the public school as a starting point and strategic “ally” for impacting other institutions. This turn toward the school and the resulting “pedagogization” of multicultural discourse and practice, that is, the translation of a collective claims program into a minority-sensitive curriculum, were due to two circumstances. On the one hand, by choosing academia as the platform for the common claims of the diverse ethnic, cultural, gender and sexual orientation-based actors from the 1980s onward, the protagonists of these movements opted for a methodical approach of sociological intervention (Touraine, 1981). As a kind of academic consultancy for the new social movements, these very protagonists tended to perceive their own role as one of theoretical instigators and practical companions for their old social bases – a pedagogical role *par excellence*. The strategy chosen turned the movement leaders into “movement teachers” and consciousness-raisers in the original Freirian sense, but their new educational role reached far beyond their original constituents: as part of a mainstream societal institution, the leaders-cum-teachers accordingly had to adapt minority-oriented, particularist claims to the majority-related, universalist tendencies inherent in any western school system (Werbner, 1997).

On the other hand, the pedagogization of multiculturalism reflected a pragmatic attitude with respect to the real possibility of having an impact on the whole of society (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1997). Throughout the debates about multicultural citizenship and the possible reconciliation between minority rights and majority culture inside school (Rex, 1997), multicultural activists chose the public educational system in different countries – Chicanos and African Americans in the United States, indigenous leaders in Latin America, gypsy or Roma and Muslim communities in Europe – because the discussions that had existed for decades with regard to the differential school performance and success of children from varying types of minorities provided suitable points of departure for collective claims making. However, the way many of the majority society educators, pedagogues, and politicians in charge of school institutions saw it, these students' failure in school reflected a distinctive “impediment” or “deficit” (Gundara, 1982), which they often tended to identify with “ethnic membership or the immigrant condition” (Franzé Mudano, 1998: 47; see also Gibson and Koyama, Chapter 23 and González, Wyman, and O'Connor, Chapter 28, above). In this still dominant, mainstream form of evaluation, and contradicting the original aims of multicultural activists and their agenda, often the simplest monocausal explanations are used, which only resort to pseudodemographic variables such as “minority” or “immigrant.” Such variables are rarely contrasted or inter-related with other kinds of influences, such as social class of origin, labor and residential contexts, or the composition of the family unit. For example, empirical studies carried out in different European countries – Jungbluth (1994) for Holland and Nauck (2001) for Germany, Fase (1994) with a contrastive study for the Belgian, British, German, French, and Dutch cases, as well as Schiffauer *et al.* (2004) with a comparison of the Dutch, British, German, and French cases – have shown the simplifying and reductionist character of this type of reasoning. Such reasoning cannot explain through these demographic variables alone the failure or success of certain minority students with regard to

others (e.g., Spanish versus Italian students in German schools, Pakistani versus Bangladeshi students in British schools, postcolonial Asian versus non-colonial Asian students in Dutch schools), but it remains popular in majority discourses on cultural diversity (Dietz, 2009).

To face this simplifying criticism, proponents of multiculturalism took advantage of the tendency in mainstream public opinion to identify the presence of children from certain minorities in the public school with a specific pedagogical problem, and the corresponding tendency towards an ethnicization of social conflicts. In this way, they managed to use the school as a platform to gain access to the debate about necessary educational reforms. As a consequence, a great part of the literature has continued, into the present, to identify the school integration of minority groups in a specific society as a “challenge” that requires compensatory adaptations in the prevailing educational system (Radtke, 1996). As a result of these majority society stigmatizations of minority problems at school, in Latin American countries – and to a lesser extent the North American ones – public opinion has turned the native populations into a problem as such, whereas in the European context it is the migrant populations and their descendants who are supposed to be intrinsically problematic for majority educational policies (Glenn and de Jong, 1996; Ramakers, 1996).

Thus, in each of these different contexts multiculturalism and its pedagogical defenders inside public schools had to react both to majority society’s ongoing stigmatizations and to minority leaders’ efforts to use the school as a battleground for identity politics. In this situation, the historical distinctions between “what is different” and “what is shared,” between what is “ours” and what is “theirs,” were particularly powerful and critical (cf. Dietz, 2009). Throughout debates on shared values, on a shared core curriculum, on a common citizenship education, etc., in different nation-states multicultural and/or intercultural education have each faced the challenge to widen the inclusive character of these dichotomies and to simultaneously avoid the excluding, marginalizing consequences of the “us versus them” as well as “good versus bad” delimitations (Radtke, 1996).

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION RE-ENCOUNTERING THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

The normative charge that has characterized multiculturalism ever since it turned into a pedagogical program has increased throughout its step-by-step institutionalization as a particular kind of intercultural and/or multicultural branch of the educational sciences. It is shaped by a marked didacticism, which in certain projects and programs is combined with a predilection for a positivist kind of technocratic, social engineering approach (Juliano, 1993; Roth, 2002). Particularly in those contexts and countries in which multiculturalism did not start as a grounded social movement, but as an imported model of dealing with diversity, the minority protagonists have been mostly absent from the pedagogical debate. Accordingly, in these contexts it is majority policymaking and academia which shapes the resulting intercultural education and which tends to perceive it as a universal pedagogical tool for mainstreaming diversity competencies into the whole of society (Dietz, 2009).

It is in reaction to these trends that an anthropology of education has rediscovered intercultural and multicultural educational issues. Independently, but almost simultaneously to the pedagogical institutionalization of multiculturalism, the systematic study of the processes of “transmission–acquisition of culture” (García Castaño and Pulido Moyano, 1994: 89), as developed in anthropological theory and practiced in the Culture and Personality school, had been constituted as a subdiscipline within anthropology (see McDermott and Raley, Chapter 3 and Wolcott, Chapter 7, above). Since the creation of the Council on Anthropology and Education in 1968, at least, this anthropology of education has been characterized by its integration of ethnographic and comparative research about the intergenerational transmission and acquisition of culturally specific mechanisms of interaction (through “socialization”) and knowledge (through “enculturation,” in the terminology used by Porter Poole, 1999), with general theorization about the concepts of culture and identity. Recent panoramic visions of this anthropological field are offered in García Castaño and Pulido Moyano (1994), Levinson, Foley, and Holland (1996), Spindler (1997), Fine *et al.* (2000), Levinson (2000), Roth (2002), Foley, Levinson, and Hurtig (2001), and Wulf (2002). Moreover, and particularly in relation to multicultural and/or intercultural education in Anglo-Saxon, Latin American, and European contexts, the anthropology of education has constantly accompanied multiculturalism through conceptual debates as well as school and neighborhood ethnographic and sociolinguistic case studies (Bertely, Gasché, and Podestá, 2008; Carrasco Pons, 2004; Gogolin, 1997; Heath, 1983, 1995; Paradise and de Haan, 2009; Philips, 1972, 1976; Pollock, 2004a; Rockwell and González Apodaca, in press).

Even though anthropology and education share an evident common legacy of epistemological positions and paradigms in the social sciences (Tremblay, 1992), there is a tension between both disciplines, particularly due to “anthropology’s rejection of an excess of praxis” (Stummann, 1992: 208). This rejection often stems from the anthropological claim that complex contexts should be micro-ethnographically studied before jumping toward all too applied, practical conclusions for pedagogical praxis. Accordingly, anthropologists often criticize the pedagogical tendency to instrumentally (ab)use anthropological tools and methods, thereby making ethnography a mere auxiliary source of comparative data; in this case, pedagogy is supposed to not be interested in the theoretical analysis of processes of cultural transmission and acquisition, but only in the task of providing raw material – monographic data about educational processes in specific ethnic groups, if possible from the “native point of view” (Erny and Rothe, 1992; Díaz de Rada, 2010; Velasco and Díaz de Rada, 1997).

In the context of the emerging intercultural pedagogy, this predominantly auxiliary interpretation of anthropological knowledge has generated terminological-conceptual reductionism. Such reductions and simplifications have had a negative impact on the very strategy of multiculturalizing the educational sphere: by simplistically confusing ethnographic analyses with evaluator research designs, complex interpretations by anthropologists run the risk of being translated into overly simple solutions for particular school problems (Carrasco Pons, 2004; Juliano, 1993).

Reflecting the previously analyzed tendency of majority society educational actors to problematize the existence of cultural diversity in the classroom, basic concepts

from anthropology such as race, culture, ethnic group, and ethnicity have unfortunately been applied and operationalized by resorting to nineteenth-century definitions, in the best of cases. For example, in an effort to simplify complex and nuanced identities, teacher training courses throughout the world tend to take up uncritically emic, self-ascribed notions of identity as the only perspective for dealing with diversity; good-will empowerment attitudes thus are turned into the simplest arguments when dealing with ethnic markers inside classrooms (Álvarez Veinguer and Béraud, 2008; Álvarez Veinguer, Rosón Lorente, and Dietz, forthcoming; Bourne, 2003; Dietz, 1999; Want, Baker, and Avest, 2009).

Apart from the frequent use of racialized categories, majority educational actors who are not experienced in intercultural contexts may also “ethnicize” cultural differences by reifying the cultural characteristics of their students. There are case studies from European as well as from Latin American contexts that demonstrate that throughout superficial and all too quick teacher training and professional development sessions intergroup difference is often essentialized (Aguado Odina, Gil Jaurena, and Mata Benito, 2005; Gogolin, 1997; Jiménez Naranjo, 2009). At the same time individual and group phenomena are conflated, emic and etic perspectives are indiscriminately mixed, such dissimilar notions as culture, ethnicity, phenotypic difference, and demographic situation (i.e., being a numerical “minority”) are confused, and finally, the great historical stereotypes of the Western other, that is, the *topoi* of the “gypsy,” “the Muslim,” etc. are bandied about (Bertely and González Apodaca, 2003; Carrasco Pons, 2004; Dietz, 2009). As an example, this problem has been studied in detail for the case of Belgium by Verlot (2001), who ethnographically illustrates how the divergent underlying national identities of the Flemish and Walloon communities reproduce opposed discourses of dealing with diversity at school: while the southern Belgian, French-speaking Walloon community, which has lost its importance and prevalence inside contemporary Belgium, perceives itself as a homogeneous mainstream society that has to assimilate immigrant pupils through French-only and color-blind strategies (copied from its dominant point of reference, republican France), the Dutch-speaking, economically and politically dominant Flemish community insists on presenting itself as a minority society with a threatened language, which actively tries to integrate other, immigrated minorities through multilingual and multicultural school strategies (Verlot, 2001).

The resulting anthropological research task consists of de-coding this kind of culturalist pedagogical discourse, and of distinguishing in each of these discourses what is actually “cultural” and what is not, that is, which of the allegedly underlying cultural traits include non-cultural motives and reasons (Roth, 2002; Wulf, 2002). One example is the aforementioned analysis of school performance by students from migratory and/or minority contexts. When the school successes and failures of immigrant students are contrasted to the school performance of native students, there are certain aspects of the so-called pedagogical problem created by the presence of children from migratory and/or minority contexts which classical migration theory explains monocausally in terms of social stratification (Esser, 1980, 2006; Jungbluth, 1994; Schiffauer *et al.*, 2004). Yet making migration and/or cultural diversity in the classroom equivalent to school problems, as often done by performance evaluators as well as by teacher-trainers, is just simplistic and erroneous (Fase, 1994). See further examples of critical analyses of such

culturalizations in pedagogy in Radtke (1996), Gogolin (2002) and Gogolin and Krüger-Potratz (2006) for Germany, García Castaño and Granados Martínez (1999) and Aguado Odina, Gil Jaurena, and Mata Benito (2005) for Spain, Bourne (2001, 2003) for Britain, and Dietz and Mateos Cortés (in press) for Mexico.

Furthermore, non-class factors are not to be automatically confused with “cultural” factors, but are often the result of basically intercultural, that is, intergroup phenomena. For example, external ethnicization, the tendency to ascribe ethnocultural traits to certain groups by non-group members, has been analyzed for students of Turkish and Moroccan origin in Dutch primary schools; in this case, this external ethnicization reinforces the perception of cultural distance, especially between the students of immigrant origin and the teaching staff, which is already distanced from its students thanks to the public school’s persistently “stratified character” (Jungbluth, 1994: 122). Therefore, a more complex and multilayered, ethnographically informed approach to how diversity, ethnicity, and racialization are perceived not only by policymakers and curriculum designers, but by teachers and students inside classroom interaction, is necessary in anthropological dialogues with educational actors (Pollock, 2004a, 2004b).

Apart from Ethnic Studies and Cultural Studies, a third field of analysis has emerged in recent years around so-called Intercultural Studies. The term Intercultural Studies was coined to designate an emerging field of transdisciplinary concern regarding the contacts and relations that, on both the individual and the collective levels, are articulated in contexts of cultural diversity and heterogeneity (Hart, 1999; Dietz and Mateos Cortés, 2009). This cultural diversity, conceived of as the product of the presence of ethnic and/or cultural minorities, or of the establishment of new migrant communities in the heart of contemporary societies, is studied in school and extra-school contexts, especially in situations of discrimination that reflect xenophobia and racism in the different spheres of multiculturalized societies (Barañano *et al.*, 2007; Gomolla and Radtke, 2002).

These nascent Intercultural Studies reflect the success achieved by multiculturalism in its strategy of visualizing and recognizing cultural diversity in all spheres of contemporary society; although school and academia had been points of departure for these strategies of recognition, it is the whole of society in its complex diversity which is ultimately to be targeted (Dietz, 2007; Radtke, 1996). The polyphonic and manifold character of contemporary diversity in society makes any attempt to cover these diverse features from a monodisciplinary perspective impossible. This affects, first of all, the anthropological perspective and its definitive loss of the monopoly on the concept of culture (Hannerz, 1996). While in its first clashes with Cultural Studies anthropology was deeply concerned with other disciplines’ often vague, uncritical, and/or all too metaphorical use of the concept of culture (Kuper, 2000), nowadays new points of positive encounter are found, particularly between the anthropology of education and other subfields of the so-called “new humanities” (Gandhi, 1998). Philosophical, and above all hermeneutical, approaches to interculturality offer a potential convergence with contemporary anthropological and ethnographic concepts and procedures.

In particular, a new so-called “intercultural hermeneutics” (Stagl, 1993: 34) conceives itself to be an extension and systematization of the classic transcendental

hermeneutics that – with evident Kantian as well as Gadamerian echoes – reflects on the conditions that make *Verstehen* and communication between human beings possible. Within this paradigm, all acts of *Verstehen* are understood to be tentative, border-crossing, and necessarily circular procedures of a “fusion of horizons” (Gadamer, 1975: 289). The goal of this operation of intercultural and intergroup comprehension is to generate an intersubjective meaning, defined as “the comprehensible meaning of expressions and actions, as well as of cultural forms of life specific to a certain group” (Braun, 1994: 20).

Both in an anthropology of education that is dedicated to “what is intercultural” (Masson, 1995), and in the nascent field of “intercultural philologies” (Schmidt, 1995), this hermeneutic notion is broadened by resorting as well to the original phenomenological concept of the “life world” (Schütz, 1967). The plurality of “life worlds,” shaped as dynamic and adaptable cultural resources that provide meaning to their members, requires the pluralization of interpretative models as well. Thus, the possibilities of intercultural comprehension, which seek to “translate” between these life worlds, depends not only on linguistic competence and skills, as the subfield of intercultural communication suggests, but also on the development of “reflexive dialogues” with the “other’s” horizon of comprehension (Braun, 1994).

CONCLUSIONS: TOWARDS A DOUBLY REFLEXIVE ETHNOGRAPHY

If this dialogic reflexivity is established between subjects coming from different “horizons of meaning,” then comprehension of the other will lay the foundation for “modifying attitudes towards determining one’s own meaning based on the other’s meaning” (Schmied-Kowarzik, 1993: 73). Thus, it inaugurates a process of interculturalization and a reflexive intertwining of what is “mine” and what belongs to “others.” This is the genuinely anthropological contribution, and its empirical procedure, ethnography, systematizes the interpretive challenge of translating between different life worlds (Stagl, 1993); ethnography would accomplish the analytic systematization which provides paths for a normatively guided translation as well.

In this sense, in an ongoing reflexive-ethnographic project, we are currently analyzing the “grammar of diversity” underlying the creation of so-called intercultural universities in Mexico. These higher education institutions have been created since the 1994 Zapatista uprising in different indigenous regions throughout Mexico in order to meet claims for indigenous access to university education, as well as to provide culturally pertinent educational alternatives for young indigenous people not willing to emigrate from their communities. Through a case study in four indigenous regions of the southeastern state of Veracruz, our project has critically accompanied the innovative, community-based teaching developed inside these universities. Through our constant ethnographic shifting between interviewing of all participant activist groups, participant observation of the college and of the community interaction arenas, and joint academic-activist workshops where we discuss our findings with the participating teachers, students, and community authorities, our ethnography directly nourishes teacher-training. The main focus of these discussion and mutual training workshops is the search for both a pedagogically and politically adequate manner of

dealing with different sources of diversity – not only ethnic and cultural, but also gender-based, sexual-orientation related, and religious ones. Students train and practice these diversity approaches throughout small, but locally relevant joined community action research projects (Dietz and Mateos Cortés, forthcoming; Mateos Cortés 2009, 2011).

To ensure a dialogue between such a reflexive ethnography and intercultural pedagogy, it is necessary to redirect the classic legacy of hermeneutics in anthropology and ethnography, until now confined to the semantic and conceptual dimension (i.e., the discourses and models of multicultural/intercultural education), towards cultural praxis, that is, towards daily interaction (Fornet-Betancourt, 2002). This requires a “pragmatic hermeneutics” (Braun, 1994) that analyzes the conditions and possibilities for validating meaning practically, within its social contexts. From an intercultural perspective, this hermeneutic–pragmatic approach allows us to distinguish between the mere translation of a culturally specific meaning (i.e., the level of semantics, of competence), on the one hand, and the analysis of the performance of this meaning that different groups in contact use while interacting, on the other hand (i.e., the level of pragmatics, of performance; cf. Braun, 1994; Wortham and Reyes, Chapter 9, above). In our Veracruz example, the semantic level of competence includes the varying notions and perceptions of kinds and hierarchies of diversity, as expressed by our informants–collaborators–activists through ethnographic interviews and group discussions, while the pragmatic level of performance resides in the detailed, participant observation of practiced, lived diversity in daily school and community interaction.

Accordingly, for an empirical study of multiculturalism in practice and its link to educational policies, the reflexivity of the social and educational actors must be taken seriously and faced by a committed, engaged, and thus doubly reflexive anthropology. Since this commitment to the particular school actors studied does not imply full *identification* with their objectives, the task of a “double hermeneutics” (Giddens, 1984) is to broaden the study of the educational actors to include the uses that these actors make of academic knowledge, for example, how they appropriate academic diversity discourses in their daily school and classroom routines. The resulting ethnographic praxis that is proposed here is not limited to either aesthetic introspection, as suggested by postmodern tendencies, or mobilizing externalization, as practiced by former activist approaches. Through the reciprocal negotiation of academic and pedagogical-cum-political interests, it is possible to generate a “novel mixture of theory and practice” (Escobar, 1993: 386), which consists of phases of empirical research, of academic theorization, and of transference to political and/or educational praxis. Again, in our example on intercultural universities in Mexico, the ethnographic fieldwork with the educational community *in situ* elucidates local and contextual logics of negotiating over different kinds and sources of diversity: on how to articulate inside and outside the classroom gender and generational diversity with ethnic dichotomies and religious differences; on how to diversify accordingly the BA curriculum without ethnicizing and essentializing such differences; on how to articulate legitimate ethnocultural and ethnopolitical claims-making with the pedagogical need for “metacultural” (Jiménez Naranjo, 2009), interaction-centered competences. This kind of dialogic and reflexive

fieldwork prompts programmatic conclusions and alternative curricular propositions, for example, on classroom interaction and group composition criteria, on student project priorities, on the constitution and composition of alumni and professional networks, all of which are then negotiated – locally as well as on the state level – with the directing boards of these institutions. And again, the ethnographic accompaniment of these negotiations provides new insights into the underlying and emerging local “grammars of diversity” (Dietz and Mateos Cortés, forthcoming; Mateos Cortés, 2009, 2011).

As may be seen from this case study, this transfer is not reduced to an act of “consciousness raising,” as conceived by classical Freirian pedagogy, but constitutes rather an exchange between the two kinds of knowledge mentioned: between the knowledge generated in the “first order” by the “experts” of their own life world, on the one hand, and the anthropological knowledge generated in the “second order” by the academic “expert,” on the other. The possible contradiction that arises from the exchange of both perspectives has to be integrated by the ethnographer in the research process itself, which will oscillate dialectically between identification and dis-engagement, between phases of full commitment and phases of analytic reflection (Dietz, 2009). The intersubjective, dialectic relationship that thus arises between the researching subject and the actor–subject that is being researched (Kleining, 1982) generates a continuous and reciprocal process of criticism and self-criticism between both parties. Understood in this way, research on social reality is, simultaneously, its own critique (Kleining, 1988), so that the ethnographic relationship itself becomes political–pedagogical praxis.

In order to illustrate the empirical possibilities of this conceptual approach, we finish with a brief presentation of a conceptual–methodological grid. As we show, the main contribution that anthropology can and should offer to the contemporary debate on diversity, interculturality, and education resides in its ethnographic potential – our ability to study these very debates in real places in real time. Nevertheless, in order to take advantage of this potential, it is indispensable, in the first place, to rethink and reiterate the close relationship that must exist between theoretical conceptualization and empirical realization. Therefore, we hold that ethnography cannot be reduced either to a merely interchangeable instrument in the range of social science methods and techniques, or to a simple weapon to “liberate” the “oppressed.” Going beyond the alternative between academicism – whether of a positivist or postmodern origin – and transformationism, our proposal is to re-conceive ethnography as a reflexive task that recovers, from within, the discourse of the social actor being studied, while simultaneously contrasting this discourse, from outside, with the actor’s habitualized praxis (Gobbo, 2002; Díaz de Rada, 2010).

This oscillation and contrast between an emic, semantic, and discursive axis and an etic, praxis, and interaction driven axis has to be finally integrated into an ethnographic study of the institutional structurations in which multicultural and/or intercultural education develops. In linking these different research perspectives, a three-dimensional ethnographic model emerges, which combines (Dietz, 2009; cf. Table 29.1, below):

Table 29.1 Dimensions of a Comparative Ethnographic Methodology

<i>Semantic dimension</i>	<i>Pragmatic dimension</i>	<i>Syntactic dimension</i>
actor-centered identity and/or ethnicity = discourse ethnographic interviews = <i>emic</i>	interaction-centered praxis, culture (intra-culture/inter-culture) = practice participant observations = <i>etic</i>	institution-centered institutional entities(territorialized) = societal structure intercultural workshops = <i>emic/etic</i> ("epistemological windows")

- a “semantic” dimension, centered on the actor, whose identity discourse is studied – basically through ethnographic interviews – from an emic perspective and is analyzed in relation to his/her strategies of cultural and/or ethnic identity;
- a “pragmatic” dimension, focused on the cultural praxis, that is, on the particular “modes of interaction” (Soenen, 1998), each defined by specific logics, that constantly overlap in school praxis and that do not stem from a specific culture, but are the result of the dynamic hierarchization that is part of the school institution;
- and a “syntactic” dimension, centered on the institutions inside of which these identity discourses and interaction practices are developed; these institutional settings are analyzed and “condensed” starting from the classical “epistemological windows” (Werner and Schoepfle, 1987) of fieldwork, that is, the systematic contradictions that emerge when contrasting emic versus etic types of ethnographic data, and which have to be interpreted not as mere data incongruities, but as those “coherent inconsistencies” (Verlot, 2001) which reveal the underlying particular logic of the analyzed institutions and their respective nation-state in question.

Far from establishing new empirical fields and/or new academic subdisciplines in a context that is already excessively specialized and compartmentalized, the distinctively anthropological contribution to the study of intercultural and/or multicultural education lies in its particular theoretical–empirical binomial. This dual emphasis on a theorization of diversity, and an ethnography of the intercultural and intracultural phenomena in actual schools, generates an integral vision, both emic and etic, of the object–subject of study.

This methodology allows us, on the one hand, to de-construct and challenge the discursive and practical “comings-and-goings” of a broad range of cultural essentialisms, racializations, ethnicisms, and nationalisms. On the other hand, its semantic and pragmatic analyses complement each other and complete an ethnographic vision of the institutions which, like an omnipresent but underlying syntax, tend to structurally influence the identity discourses of each of the actors studied, as well as their respective life-world practices. By doing this, by turning our eyes from the problem to the problematizer, from the individual to the sedentary institutions, from the subordinate minority or the “beneficiary” client to the hegemonic “benefactor” nation-state, the anthropological endeavor aims at disturbing, questioning, and de-coding settled, fixed, and often deeply internalized classifications and identifications.

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CHAPTER 30

A Sociohistorical Perspective for Participatory Action Research and Youth Ethnography in Social Justice Education

Julio Cammarota

INTRODUCTION

When George Spindler (1959) introduced his concept of cultural therapy, educational ethnography established an affirmative link with applied research. He and Louise Spindler developed the concept with the intention of emphasizing how school ethnography can consciously reveal to teachers and administrators the illusions they hold, which in turn mask the social realities of students (Spindler, 2002). After educators see their work anew through the eyes of careful ethnographers, they can seek application of these insights in school dialogue and instructional activities. This effort to render ethnography as a therapeutic endeavor is an attempt to fold theory into practice and implement an applied approach to research. Through ethnographic observation, the researcher garners critical insights about the research site and then can collaborate with those researched to apply this knowledge to change institutional practices and policies.

Participatory action research (PAR) is a dominant application of an applied approach to educational ethnography. PAR maintains deep roots in popular education and critical pedagogy. A sociohistorical perspective also informs PAR with an emphasis on

understanding the social relationships in learning. The sociohistorical perspective frames the idea that learning is best understood far beyond schools, in the interactions that occur in places, situations, and practices considered “everyday” or “common” (Lave, 1996). PAR assumes that everyday knowledge provides the intellectual foundation to develop action-based methods and strategies for producing social change, particularly within marginalized communities. PAR closes the “gap” between the “learned” and the “learner” so that the knowledge of common people accrues capital in ways that bring about greater recognition for them and thus justice in their struggle for self-determination (Fals Borda, 2008).

This chapter discusses how the sociohistorical perspective informs PAR to engender autonomous, agentive processes among stakeholders in education (particularly, students), while aiming to secure greater equity and justice among marginalized and often disenfranchised populations. The following discussion divides into three sections: theory, practice, and outcomes. The first section discusses the connections between the sociohistorical perspective on learning and participatory action research. I present the work of Henry Trueba (1993) and Concha Gaitan-Delgado (1991, 1993) as representative of how the sociohistorical perspective informs PAR. The second section presents data from a school-based organization in Tucson called the Social Justice Education Project (SJEP). The SJEP also represents how a sociohistorical perspective informs participatory action research. The last, concluding section discusses the implications and potential outcomes of a sociohistorical, applied approach to learning and social change.

THE SOCIOHISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PAR

The sociohistorical perspective conceives of “communities of practice” (Lave and Wenger, 1991) in which individuals develop the skills necessary for learning. The basic principles derive from social psychological theories that posit learning as a social practice (Holland, 1998; Moll, 1990). The sociohistorical perspective asserts that people develop intellectual capacities or skills with assistance from those who hold expert knowledge in communities of practice. The amount of knowledge attained by an individual depends on his or her social and historical proximity to the source of this knowledge within a particular community of practice. Lave and Wenger (1991: 29) highlight the concept of “legitimate peripheral participation” as a way to delineate a process by which “newcomers become a part of a community of practice. A person’s intention to learn is engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a sociocultural practice.” The key variable determining distance is social power; an individual lacking social power or status may fall to the margins and therefore far from the knowledge required for apposite development. In contrast, high social status tends to steer an individual closer to the resources to develop efficiently.

With the advent of Birmingham’s Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), the sociohistorical perspective valued non-institutional sites for their potential to demonstrate the knowledge-laden, productive, or creative aspects of everyday culture (Lave *et al.*, 1992; Willis, 1977). Thus, the “everyday,” whether we observe the classroom,

street corner, or playground, became ethnographic sites rife with the potential to understand how people make meaning around them. Although anthropology has been interested in everyday settings from its beginnings, the CCCS focused on how culture can be a form of praxis (Carspecken, 2002). Thus, people reflect on their social circumstances and then take critical actions through their cultural practices.

Participatory action research asserts that everyday people not only engage in sophisticated self-reflection, but also learn how to change their communities and the institutions within them (Cammarota and Fine, 2008; Fals-Borda, 1986; Selener, 1997). The emphasis is on “learning,” but through a more formalized and pedagogical approach that elevates the potential of using knowledge to attain social justice. The sociohistorical perspective assumes that formalized, institutional pedagogies perpetuate only marginalization, since access to knowledge is unequal. PAR purposefully formalizes pedagogy so that marginalized individuals can access the institutions that maintain the power to effect change. The focus on power and how traditional schooling may knowingly or unwittingly generate disparities is how the sociohistorical perspective informs PAR. From a sociohistorical perspective, change happens informally in places beyond dominant institutions, where people cultivate their own cultural agency. PAR considers change emerging when common people access formal pedagogies of scientific research, even drawing from standard disciplinary methods, such as ethnographic observation, case-study approach, and survey techniques.

Participatory action research assumes that the “everyday” and everyday people are central for the development and application of scientific products (i.e., knowledge). Scientific inquiry must become democratically accessible or else PAR runs the risk of becoming more authoritative than participatory. Within a community hoping to experience change, the scientist or scientific researcher is a community member: not necessarily or only a professional academic, but maybe an activist, educator, parent, public official, student, worker, or anyone with a stake in the policies and practices of his or her community. The PAR scientist never works alone, but rather always studies and organizes for change within a collective of “scientists.” This collaborative style of learning and knowing is, frequently, recognized as invalid in the ivory tower, because valid research supposedly only derives from academics and not everyday people.

A good example of how a sociohistorical perspective informs participatory action research derives from the scholarship of Enrique Trueba. Borrowing from Spindler’s cultural therapy, Trueba (1993) expands the concept to focus more intensely on issues of cultural identity and empowerment, particularly for marginalized communities of color. Ethnographic observation of one’s own educational and life experiences leads to a clarity of self, and a self-recognition among students and teachers leading to greater awareness of their actions, capabilities, and possibilities. By pushing culture to the forefront in the school context, ethnographers can help stakeholders to grasp their hidden and negative assumptions that are produced by dominant ideologies. The removal of these negative ideologies opens the possibility of positive affirmation of self and one’s culture. Trueba’s (1993: 151) cultural therapy encourages “a learning environment in which teachers can develop and strengthen their own self-identity ... an environment that will not jeopardize their students’ attachment to home language and culture, their self-respect and ethnic pride.”

Taking this idea of ethnography as a vehicle for direct intervention, Delgado-Gaitan along with Trueba (1991) visualize an active role for those researching in marginalized communities, through what they call “Ethnography of Empowerment.” This approach derives from the premise in cultural therapy that learning and school relationships develop not in a vacuum, but in socially, culturally, and historically embedded contexts. Ethnographic observations focused on the sociohistorical aspects of the school context reveal more than misunderstandings among school personnel; they also illuminate “the ethno-historical and cultural context that makes it possible to understand the nature of oppression experienced by disenfranchised people and communities” (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993: 392).

To recognize the circumstances of oppression, Delgado-Gaitan suggests inserting Freire’s critical theory into ethnography to move the research approach from a pure inquiry based stance to one of dialogue. Freire (1993, 1998) consistently argued for a merger between subject and object in the construction of knowledge so that the researcher (subject) and the researched (object) exist in a relationship of cross-fertilization. Assessments or judgments about the causes of oppression occur not in isolation, but in a dialogue between the researcher and the researched. Therefore, the researcher is consistently changing his or her questions and perspectives via the collective input of community members, while the community learns through the researcher’s involvement. Knowledge, in this approach, becomes a public good in its orientation and applied to further the general vitality of the marginalized community.

Although some may argue that ethnography has always adhered to cross-fertilization through collaborative techniques (Lassiter, 2005), the Ethnography of Empowerment moves significantly closer to PAR because research questions may change within dialogue. Field studies have always served as the testing ground to refine questions. However, Ethnography of Empowerment acknowledges stakeholders’ voices in designing questions for study. Therefore, questions may head in directions previously unbeknownst to the researcher.

The same can be said for interpretation of the data; empowerment is attained when stakeholders lay claim to the purpose and use of analysis. Delgado Gaitan (1993: 409) notes that “empowerment is affected in favor of the community if and when the researcher can reconcile the duality between the researched and the researcher.” The blending of subject and object begs the question(s): research from whom and for what purposes? A true dialogue about research findings should lead to a shared ownership/partnership with the data. The public diffusion of questions and analysis – extricated from the confines of the solitary researcher – facilitates praxis in communities. Knowledge emerges with the emphasis of delineating what needs to be changed and how this change will happen.

CULTURAL ORGANIZING IN SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

This chapter derives from my experiences with and research evaluation of the Social Justice Education Project (SJEP), a youth ethnographic empowerment program in Tucson’s public school district. The SJEP provides Latina/o students with an

opportunity to engage in youth participatory action research (YPAR) (Cammarota and Fine, 2008). The intention is to help students enhance their level of critical consciousness through a curriculum that meets state standards and affords them the opportunity to develop sophisticated critical analyses of their own social contexts.

I assist the instructor of record with the implementation of the YPAR projects. Currently, there are five SJEP classes throughout the school district. Instructional practices are documented in weekly notes. During my weekly visits, I often converse with teachers and SJEP high school students and then write these conversations down in field notes. I also conduct interviews with SJEP students to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. The interviews are informal, with open-ended questions pertaining to the students' academic experiences and their perspectives of school or community-based activism. Surveys completed by the students at the end of the course provide additional evaluation data. The evaluations intend to quantitatively measure the SJEP's influence on the students' commitment to social justice, critical awareness, academic performance, and college preparation. Exit interviews are conducted with students to document their own assessment of the program's effectiveness with augmenting their critical consciousness, academic performance, and willingness to attend college.

As part of the SJEP evaluation process, students' research is collected, including field notes, poetry, and photos, to assess their engagement and critical understanding. Therefore, documentation of the SJEP consists of field notes, evaluation surveys, exit interviews, and student-produced research. SJEP data illuminate how the sociohistorical perspective informs PAR.

The SJEP also provides students in five classes – offered at three high schools – traditional US government content required for graduation along with opportunities to conduct PAR. While students study the US constitution, they learn social science research techniques, including ethnographic observation, interview methods, and survey design. The intention is for students to collect data that may help analyze and explain their experiences within their own social contexts. PAR informs the SJEP with the hope that pedagogical praxis leads to transformation. Another hope is that the students' engagement with traditional research avoids undermining the power of informal youth culture. Students attempt to realize these hopes by engaging in something I call cultural organizing (Cammarota, 2008a, 2008b), a praxis-based pedagogy that provides students with the opportunity to connect their informal creativity with formal PAR techniques.

Cultural organizing engenders formal spaces in which students develop and sustain their cultural self-representations in ways that initiate transformations on several levels, including the self, the community, and the institution. The formal space may be a classroom, auditorium, school-board hearing, mural, newspaper, television program, video, or Internet site – any space organized and produced by young people for the sole purpose of the “public” to bear witness and respond to their experiences and self-representations. Students highlight their experiences and representations through research findings presented through their own cultural (i.e., informal) means and modes. In other words, young people engaged in cultural organizing conduct traditional research observations, interviews, and surveys and then present results through their own culturally creative and informal voice(s), including spoken word, poetry, music, photography, videography, street art, and theater. These creative forms organize

social changes to allow for greater acceptance and respect for self-determined identities within formal, institutional settings. Outcomes include individual transformation given that students experience the liberation of self-determination, as well as social transformation that students experience through their newly organized school-based practices, such as culturally and socially relevant curricula and policies, which grant them the formal, free space to produce their identities.

A primary example of cultural organizing manifests in the praxis initiated and implemented by a Chicano youth whom I call Arturo. I first met Arturo when he was 17 and almost “pushed out” of high school. Although the school listed him as a senior, he had the equivalent credits for freshman status. He did not graduate with his senior class but persisted through weekend and night courses to finally receive his diploma at 20. Among educators involved with the SJEP, Arturo is legendary in that, throughout the last seven years, we have witnessed only one other student who continued to make up her graduation requirements after her eighteenth birthday. In most cases, if a young person fails to attain a diploma by 18, he or she is most likely unwilling or unable to finish high school, except perhaps by acquiring a general education degree (GED), which grants graduation status without receiving a high school diploma.

When Arturo began the SJEP, he would often cut school and thus not attend class. However, by the second semester, he came to class every day. I asked him about his increased attendance rate:

[At first], I did not care about school at all. I did not care. It was like nothing important to me. And then I started opening my eyes and seeing things like, “Yeah I need an education.” I need to go on to college. I need to do this. And I need to do that. It just opened my eyes. And then I saw injustice and what it was doing with my people. I am real proud of being who I am. If there is something affecting me and my family, I want to do something to change. I want to do something about it.

The opportunity to engage in reflection and then action that requires learning how to help others motivated Arturo to attend regularly and seek ways to continue his education. He followed a new path toward justice, dignity, and action.

He spent most of his time in the SJEP working with his participatory research group to understand the extent of culture and language discrimination at his school. His group did well with observing and then documenting various aspects of students’ culture and language practices at school. Arturo led his group through analysis and then write-up, contributing considerable time, effort, and ideas. After his research group finished its study and report, he wrote these concluding thoughts about the importance of culture in education:

Culture is very important, because sometimes what makes us different also makes us unique. It is important to know your roots and where you come from to understand your place in the world, and to protect yourself from those who discriminate against people who aren’t like them. We need to keep our culture and our beliefs so that the next generation can celebrate and be proud of who they are.

Mexican culture and the Spanish language are vital for Arturo; education that supports his preferred identity makes a huge difference. However, schools that attempt to

extirpate students' culture and language represent serious threats to Arturo. In fact, Arturo perceives cultural extirpation as a real terror to his essential being. The majority of Arturo's schooling, unfortunately, has been threatening. However, his participation in the SJEP allowed him to understand the nature of this threat and realize the importance of overcoming the school's repression of his customary cultural expressions.

When he composed poetry from one of his research observations, Arturo engaged in profound cultural organizing. Poems are cultural organizing tools that assist with identity formation and social justice activism. The SJEP students are assigned the research task of observing some injustice in their own social context, either at home, school, work, or neighborhood. The students then document their observations in field notes. We then ask the students to report on their documentation through poetry. Students use their observational notes to create poems about experiences within their social contexts.

The following is an excerpt from Arturo's poem "Mi Bandera" (My Flag):

I see people rockin' their American flags without a problem.
 But when I rock my Mexican flag, they look at me like there's something wrong.
 They try to strip it from me like they try to strip my cultura.
 I also see some of my camaradas looked down upon because they don't talk like they do.
 They seem as if they are angry because they don't understand what we say.
 So that's when I notice that they start calling us Guachos and Wetbacks.
 To make them appear to be superior to us.

Arturo recited the poem to his school principal and explained how it was based on a real incident in which a school security guard removed a small Mexican flag from his possession. The security guard told Arturo that the flag represented "gang" affiliation, and therefore he could not carry it around at school. Arturo was understandably upset by this false accusation, and reported the incident to the principal via poetry. The principal immediately understood how this action was a violation of Arturo's rights and summarily made it policy to allow for the display of appropriate cultural symbols at school.

Arturo's research documentation and poetic expression aimed at changing his social context in ways that would support his desired self-representation. Arturo engaged in a praxis that allowed for the freedom of self-expression and the opportunity to challenge conditions undermining his respect and dignity. His creative expression to document personal experiences with oppression, which transformed school policy, represents cultural organizing in the most profound way.

Poetry is therefore our initial pedagogical effort for providing students with opportunities to reflect on their identities and challenge injustices that impede possibilities for self-determination. They recite the poems publicly to classmates, peers, family members, and community.

The student poem below represents a critical expression of both identity and social struggle:

I am a proud Mestizo.
 I wonder if my color will change.
 I hear people screaming.

I see confusion in my eyes.
I want to be free.

I am a proud Mestizo
I pretend to speak, I feel angry, I touch a heart but I worry if my color will change.
I cry for my race.

I am a proud Mestizo.
I understand las vendidas but I say I am a proud Mestizo.
I dream that everyone will be equal.

I try to have a voice
I hope that someone will hear me.
I am a proud Mestizo

Yolo Rodriguez, a Mexican immigrant student, created this poem. At the age of 14, he came to the United States from Magdalena, Sonora. He attended Cerro High, and with his limited English proficiency, counselors immediately enrolled him in a Structured English Immersion (SEI), a program centered on remedial coursework in English. I asked him during his exit interview about his mandatory participation in the one-year SEI program:

JC: So when did you do the one-year immersion?

YR: That was my freshman year.

JC: Freshman year?

YR: I had just turned 15 when I was a freshman.

JC: And you didn't know any English?

YR: At all I didn't know nada [nothing], and that's when they put me in those classes you know my welding class and stuff like that.

JC: So they would just put you welding class, shop class?

YR: Yeah, and then they sent me to the ESL classes and like I knew more stuff than the students there and I had barely got here too, and the same students too but I kind of knew more stuff about the US how to say something I kind of knew more stuff but it was kind of hard because they put me in those classes, you know the ESL classes, and I was expected to learn English in one year and I took my freshman class, my ESL class and my sophomore year I was placed in English 78 you know and it was kind of hard for me because I didn't know nothing but I figure it you know I worked it and I did it.

JC: So what other kinds of classes did they put you in?

YR: Okay what kind of mierda [shit] is this? I took a cooking class.

JC: They put you in a cooking class?

YR: They show me how to do huevos. I had to do pancakes. I mean what the hell? I already know how to do that!

JC: You got to be kidding me.

YR: Yeah, we all came in together we had to do huevos, pancakes; they showed us how to do spaghetti.

JC: So how did you learn English?

YR: I just worked my stuff out and then like it was a big help because at my house you know because everybody like speak English except for my dad because everybody they would talk to me in English and I would be like yeah, cool or I would be you know just working it out you know cause

I wanted to learn it because I knew it was going to be hard. I was in another country where they expect me to speak English.

JC: So you didn't learn English in that one-year immersion?

YR: No, I didn't and still right now I still try to perfect my English and you can't learn English in one year! You know I've been here five years already and I still haven't perfected my English you know.

Unsurprisingly, his research with the SJEP focused on the loss of language and culture while learning English. He believes the US education system does not support his own, positive perception of Self as a Mexican immigrant. He realizes that partial assimilation (learning English) is necessary for full integration in American society, but it should not come at the shameful expense of losing one's language and culture. His research took aim at explaining why and how loss of primary language is a prevalent experience among immigrant students.

Yolo's preferred research methodology was photo documentation. He would run around campus taking photos of different classrooms, either his own classes or random ones. Then, he would bring the photos into our SJEP class for discussion. The following is a classroom dialogue based on one of Yolo's photos of a geometry class. We projected the image onto a screen while Yolo and his classmates discussed and asked questions.

Jaime: What class is this?

Yolo: This is a Geometry class.

Jaime: Geometry class? They have algebra books for geometry?

Leticia: Out of the whole class probably only about 3 kids out of 15 are participating. You've got kids over here [pointing at the photo] ... doing their own thing. Having their own conversation. A lot of empty seats.

Julio: So how can you use this picture with your research topic?

Yolo: Well, it's public schooling, you know? It's like, you know, basically all these kids are losing their education because the teacher is not doing her job or not helping fulfill their education.

Jaime: Right so it is taking away from their opportunity, right?

Carmen: What about ... what language are those kids learning now?

Yolo: Any text book that I've read at this school there really has been no Spanish. No, nothing else other than English – even though the school population is 70% Mexican American students. Like in English class almost all the class is Mexican. Maybe about one student in there that is not.

Angel: I've also noticed that the Spanish-speaking students are in classes and they don't understand what is going on because they don't speak English. I don't understand why they are not in classes with special classes so that they can learn to speak English. 'Cuz they came here to get an education but they are not getting it because the teachers don't know Spanish and they are in these English-speaking classes.

Yolo: In that picture, there are Mexican students ... they never ever, ever get a sheet. And she doesn't ask them any questions, you know, because she doesn't know how to talk to them.

Erika: There are a lot of Spanish-speaking students here in this picture.

- Elena: Talking about how students don't understand English. In every class I have there is at least. There is always a group of kids that don't speak English. And they are always sitting in the back in a little group and talk. And the teacher never tells them anything or what they are trying to explain or anything. They are in every class. They never do anything and the teacher never cares. They do whatever they want.
- Yolo: I don't know if the teachers are always scared to tell them because they don't speak Spanish or ... I don't know what it is but I think that teachers should do something.

Yolo and his classmates brought the photos and their ideas to the Tucson school board. They did a formal presentation on the educational inequalities experienced at their school. The SJEP students made several recommendations to enhance the possibilities for equal outcomes; among the recommendations was the suggestion that the district expand the bilingual education waiver program. Currently, the Arizona law prohibits bilingual education and mandates English as the only instructional language allowed in the classroom. However, Arizona schools can legally apply for waivers if they can demonstrate a need for instruction in a language other than English. The SJEP students' presentation clearly demonstrated "the need," but the school board failed to formally adopt their recommendations.

Although Spanish-speaking students at Cerro still do not receive proper education, Yolo and other students in the SJEP did receive educational benefits from participating in the action research. The SJEP pedagogy connects the students' learning to their lived context, which makes education relevant, interesting, and vital for students. Yolo's study of loss of language and culture helped him to understand his own institutional struggles around English language proficiency. This knowledge allowed him to realize how obstacles for language acquisition are not internal but external to his own being. He has the capacity to learn but external institutional forces attempt to limit this capacity. When Yolo realized his agency, he proceeded to excel academically.

Yolo also went beyond focusing on concerns within his own immigrant community to photograph injustices with special education students at Cerro High. Because students of color are extremely over-represented in special education, two special education students in his photo were unsurprisingly a Latino male and Latina female. These students were neither touching each other nor smiling; they were looking stoically into the camera as if they did not know why anyone would want their picture out there in the margins of the campus. The expressionless look revealed a sense that they were aware they are the forgotten or "invisible." The stoic, emotionless stare into the camera appropriately characterized their state of being in special education. Their classroom is located in an abandoned shop garage that had no windows and plenty of broken machines and rusted tools lying about.

The school forces the special education students to learn in the worst conditions. Many special education students are from low-income neighborhoods, and their parents are disenfranchised, lacking the political voice to improve the situation. SJEP students seemed angry and understood the injustice when viewing the photos. Students asked whether anybody knows about this, and Giovanna, an SJEP student, responded by saying, "No, not many people, even some of the students in our class

didn't know about it. It is something not really talked about." I asked the class, "Why is this a special ed room and not an advanced placement room?" Celina answered, "It's not a good learning environment and shows that nobody cares." "I do," said Angel, another SJEP student. I asked him how he first found out about the class and he said, "It was when I had to clean it during a detention." I asked what he thought about it the first time he encountered the room, and Angel quickly responded, "I didn't care then. I didn't start caring about things until this year [while participating in the SJEP]." Angel's comments reflect someone who has evolved in the SJEP and attained an acute sense of global awareness.

The SJEP students, led by Yolo, decided that day during the slide presentation that they would do something about the injustices experienced by the special education students. They would document the discrepancy and bring it to the administration and school board. Armed with a video-camera, SJEP students filmed special education students, most of whom were Latino, sitting crowded together in one corner of the abandoned shop garage, while the rest of the huge space was littered with broken shop machines, old mechanical parts, and rusted tools. The teacher did not have a desk or even a board to write on. The SJEP students made a video featuring the unjust learning environment for the special education students. Once copies of the video were distributed to the school board, the Cerro principal subsequently moved the special education students to a new room with fresh paint, newly installed carpet, and blackboard.

Yolo evolved through cultural organizing. He generated a poem that speaks to his pride and struggles around his racial/ethnic identity. He also engaged in language research to investigate problems within his own community of immigrant students. His research helped him to develop community awareness. Finally, his overwhelming compassion for the injustices experienced by special education students provided him with a global awareness. The outcome of moving through cultural organizing includes increased academic achievements and community involvement. Yolo graduated from Cerro High School and provided the commencement speech at his graduation ceremony. During this speech, Yolo acknowledged the SJEP and its contribution to his academic success. He entered Cerro with limited English speaking ability but graduated conducting research presentations in English for the school board, federal, state, and local officials, as well as national academic conferences. Many of these presentations helped to expand the SJEP to other high schools throughout the district.

THE EMPOWERMENT OF APPLYING EDUCATIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Outcomes therefore include empowerment and transformation, but with emphasis and effect on multiple social levels: the Self, Community, and Institution. We must continue to render connections between different worlds of knowledge, whether they exist in universities on the one hand or community organizations on the other, while extending equivalent value and capacity for all stakeholders, whether they are students, parents, community members, or professors. Social justice emerges from this valuing process by providing space and audience for those voices formerly silenced due to what Bourdieu calls "symbolic violence"

(Bourdieu, 1984): the subtle and sometimes not so subtle silencing of the other that manifests from processes of cultural devaluing associated with traditional, dominant curricula and discourse. A cultural therapy that applies educational ethnography to the self, community, and institutions will remove the veil of silence for marginalized individuals.

This chapter demonstrates how PAR renders silenced voices audible. In many ways, youth empowerment through PAR counters symbolic violence through what may be described as a type of “symbolic mediation” that negotiates multiple worlds, varied knowledge, and most importantly, the different levels of social experience, including interactions with community and institutions. Mediation is an important process in the sociohistorical approach; learning can be facilitated by mediation between everyday experiences and formal academic concepts (Moll, 1990). For instance, students may learn the academic concept of “symbolic violence” by discussing the “silences” they experience in their school. PAR provides the praxis-based pedagogy to initiate dialogue that mediates the knowledge gained from everyday experiences and academic concepts. A sociohistorical, praxis-based approach allows us to “hear” youth, parents, and families who have become audible through participatory pedagogies, methodologies, and strategies.

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CHAPTER 31

Parents as Critical Educators and Ethnographers of Schooling

*Janise Hurtig
and Andrea Dyrness*

ACCOUNTING FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Why am I letting you cause friction in my home? You're asking me to be a teacher at home, but I haven't asked you to be a parent at school ... I, as a parent, go home to my child to listen, learn, cook, wash, protect, pay rent and so on and now you want me to teach math ... Do you? Is that my job? Or yours?

From "Friction at Home" by Lilnora Foster, participant in a parent writing workshop, 2006

Rather than limiting education to school or book learning, rearticulating a broad-based definition of education allows for a reconceptualized form of teaching and learning that takes place in the household ... in moving to a *mujer*-oriented view of *educación*, we can see mothers as the teachers and "educated" persons in the household who have a role in the creative "transmission" of cultural knowledge.

Villenas and Moreno, 2001: 674

Our goal is for parents to be heard and feel part of the school, creating a family atmosphere where all families receive support ... since one of our purposes is to orient, assist, involve, and motivate the parents, so that they participate actively in the school, and for the Parent Center to be a second home for them.

From a proposal for a parent center, prepared by the group Madres Unidas (Mothers United), in Dyrness, 2008

As the anthropological study of schools and communities has shown, the social, cultural, moral, and educative roles of schools as realms of formalized cultural transmission are always partially defined through comparison with the roles of that other primary realm of cultural transmission, the family or household unit. Similarly, the roles of parents and teachers in the education of children tend to be conceptualized and represented in terms of each other. As the opening excerpts illustrate, this work of cultural comparison in the construction of parents and parent involvement is enacted by parents, educators, school systems, and ethnographers of education. In the writing “Friction at Home,” Lilnora Foster, a participant in a parent writing workshop Janise Hurtig taught, expressed her conviction that home and school, parent and teacher, should be conceived of as separate – though perhaps complementary – realms and roles. Lilnora’s writing was prompted by a lengthy discussion among writing workshop members about the role expectations they confronted as parents whose children attended urban public schools (Hurtig, 2008a: 207–209). Villenas and Moreno (2001) drew on their ethnographic work with Latina mothers to valorize the work of the home as distinct from that at the school, using the culturally specific concept of “*educación*” to broaden the notion of what counts as education and reframe the role of teacher. By comparison, the parent center described by the parent research group “Madres Unidas” that Andrea Dyrness worked with proposed to integrate parents into the school while imbuing the school with qualities of the home.

These excerpts represent the diversity of ways parents from marginalized communities in the United States respond to the school’s expectations for parental involvement in their children’s education. As Maria de Carvalho elaborated in a critical study of the history of parent–school relations in the United States, these expectations have been increasingly formalized, homogenized, and regulated over the past few decades as parent involvement is institutionalized as educational policy (2001: 24). Moreover, the standardization of parent involvement often takes on racist, classist, and patriarchal dimensions. This is particularly true in poor communities, where parent involvement policies are implemented through deficit-based programs that evaluate parental practices in relation to a normative model based in stereotypes of “effective” parenting associated with white, middle-class, nuclear families (Cooper, 2007).

In this chapter we review the contributions of critical ethnography and ethnographically informed participatory action research to our understanding of how parents from marginalized communities engage in, and think about, their participation in their children’s education. Approaching parent involvement from a critical ethnographic perspective, this body of work broadens the scope of inquiry beyond the policy frameworks of schools and school reform movements, in order to offer accounts of the social and symbolic practices that constitute parent involvement as a contested cultural realm always under construction. In particular, the ethnographic work we review illuminates the ways in which parent involvement as a cultural process engages with and participates in the production of social relations of power. While much of this work problematizes parent involvement as an institutionalized cultural realm, it does not claim that parents’ participation in their children’s schooling is intrinsically problematic. Rather, it opens up a critical space for considering the broader implications and impact of parent involvement, pushing beyond the narrow aims of particular school initiatives or reforms.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AS POLICY

The scrutinizing of parents living in marginalized communities, and efforts to script their roles in relation to their children's education, has a long history in the United States. Since the 1950s, the predominant tendency among educational researchers and practitioners addressing the role of parents in the education of "at risk" children has been to draw on deficit-based frameworks linking students' low school achievement to their socioeconomic and racial-ethnic backgrounds to then justify the promotion of parent involvement as a way of improving the educational experiences of marginalized youth, while simultaneously relying on perceived inadequacies in parental participation to justify minority students' school failure (Henry, 1996; Lagemann, 1993; Valdés, 1996).

The 1983 publication by the National Commission on Excellence in Education of *A Nation at Risk* emphasized the primacy of parent participation in improving the nation's public educational system in general, and pointed with particular concern to low rates of parent participation in poor and minority schools. The release of that report at the onset of the US state's neoliberal agenda seemed to usher in a proliferation of programs claiming to improve parents' apparently inadequate or flawed participation in and support for their children's academic development. Whether these programs offer to improve parents' English language skills or parenting abilities, train parents to be teachers' aides, or invite parents to serve on school committees or participate in school governance, they consistently locate poor and minority parents in subservient positions within the school, scripting parents' roles both in school and at home to conform narrowly to the academic ambitions of the school system (Hurtig, 2008c; see also Herr, 1999).

From an anthropological perspective, parent involvement as policy can be conceptualized as one of many cultural realms through which contemporary, systemic school reform operates as a "cultural apparatus" (cf. Varenne and McDermott, 1999), facilitating the state's penetration and regulation of family and personal life via education (de Carvalho, 2001: 37; Hurtig, 2008c). To the extent that parent involvement programs target parents within families as the primary locus of educational support for students, institutionalized parent involvement assumes and furthers a peculiarly modern, (post)industrial conception of community as a collection of discrete nuclear family units headed up by parents. Rather than collaborating with and drawing on existing community practices and structures, schools tend to pull parents into school-organized collectivities such as PTAs, school councils, or bilingual parent groups. Moreover, by using the term "parents" to refer implicitly to mothers, parent involvement programs and policies legitimize a paternalistic relationship between school systems and families. Through this double reduction of family/community to parents, and parents to mothers, the institutionalization of parent involvement reinforces discursively and programmatically a modern patriarchal model of school-community relations (Edwards, 2002; Vincent and Tomlinson, 1997).

By the early 1990s, educational researchers were beginning to theorize the sea change in the ways parent involvement was being incorporated into school reform efforts, taking on an increasingly central, institutionalized, and invasive role (David,

1996; Lagemann, 1993). Much of this recent research on parent involvement in marginalized communities examines parent involvement activities and programs from a perspective that is consistent with the cultural logic of systemic school reform. That is, it presumes the purpose of parent involvement is to contribute to the schools' academic objectives, focusing analysis on whether or not particular programs are effective in making such a contribution. This body of work, which we refer to as "mainstream" research, is broadly concerned with measuring the effects of particular parent involvement practices and programs on student achievement.

By contrast, the ethnographic work we review here explores diverse forms of parents' critical engagement with parent involvement programs and policies, often by asserting the legitimacy of parents' roles as educators in their own right. By positioning itself *outside* the apparatus of contemporary school reform, which frames the terms, values, and expectations ascribed to and imposed on parents, this work moves away from the mainstream research tendency to focus on the results of individual parent involvement practices. Instead, it offers a critical framework for examining "parent involvement" as a cultural process that produces particular educative roles, relationships, and inequalities. In this way these critical ethnographic studies decenter parent involvement as policy and recenter parents as educators, cultural critics, and historical actors.

We propose that the emergence of parent involvement as an identifiable cultural realm has produced two distinct bodies of ethnographic research – distinguishable theoretically, epistemologically, and methodologically from each other and from the vast majority of mainstream research on parent involvement. We characterize the first type of ethnographic research as "critical" ethnography because of its attention to the relations of social inequality that produce and are produced through the construction of parent involvement. In these ethnographic studies the researcher locates herself outside the logic of parent involvement as policy in order to offer a "cultural account" (McDermott, 1997: 114) of the multiple interpretations to which parents' activities are subjected, and examine the effects of such interpretations on relations of power and social inequality. Informed by critical race, feminist, constructivist, and resistance theories, this body of research has looked at how parents' practices in schools and homes engage with, resist, or counter official versions of parent involvement.

The second type of research takes an "activist" approach to the study of parent involvement, in which the ethnographer participates with parents in alternative forms of parent engagement, through which critiques of conventional forms of parent involvement often emerge. Through the collaborative efforts of parents and researchers to critique and transform the ascribed roles and expectations of parents in schools, activist ethnography generates unique insights into the cultural production of parent involvement, as well as a practical understanding of the possibilities and challenges involved in transforming parent–school relations.

In the remainder of the chapter, we review studies illustrative of both types of research. We focus primarily on ethnographic studies of, and with, Latino parents and communities, as this constituency has received considerable attention from anthropologists and other commentators on parent involvement. Moreover, both authors' work has taken place within Latino communities. Where relevant, we have referenced critical and activist research on parent involvement focusing on other marginalized

communities, as well as the work of critical race and black feminist theorists that is crucial to the critical dialogue on family–school dynamics. We end the chapter by reflecting on our work to consider how critical and activist ethnographic approaches can inform each other in the quest for ever deeper understandings of the cultural production of parents and parent involvement.

CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHIES OF PARENTS: PARENTS AS EDUCATORS IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL

During the 1990s, as national discourse called attention to the importance of parent involvement and sounded the alarm at the “low” levels of involvement of ethnic minority parents, anthropologists of education were well poised to respond with critical, nuanced ethnographic portraits illuminating the educative and culturally transformative roles of these parents in and outside of schools. Over the past two decades, critical ethnographies of Latino parents have countered deficit-framed stories of involvement in four ways: (1) by focusing on parents’ socialization of their children in their homes and communities to document the culturally specific ways parents are involved in their children’s education; (2) by examining Latina mothers’ pedagogies in the home as educative acts for cultural preservation and resistance to racism; (3) by turning a critical lens on schools’ reductionist efforts to involve parents by highlighting how the roles of schools and parents are mutually constituted in particular parent involvement contexts; and (4) by showing how Latino parents have appropriated school spaces to define their own forms of involvement in ways that expand the possibilities for personal and social transformation. All of this work goes far to dignify parents in the face of deficit discourses and to unearth their cultural knowledge and critiques that would otherwise remain hidden to educators. However, the studies vary in the degree to which they embark on an explicit critique of US schooling and a redefinition of the educational enterprise.

Initial ethnographic responses to stories of minority parents’ under-involvement applied “cultural mismatch” theories to highlight differences in child raising values and expectations between Latino parents and US schoolteachers. Guadalupe Valdés used a cross-cultural framework (1996) to examine how Mexican children were being socialized to succeed within their home and community contexts, in order to question the cultural universality of what schools considered “normal” behavior of parents and children. She found both “superficial misunderstandings” and “profound differences in values and beliefs” between Mexican families and school teachers regarding notions of success and failure, as well as parental roles. Valdés noted that “the mothers in the study saw themselves as participating actively in their children’s *educación*, that is, in raising their children to be good and well-behaved human beings. They did not, however, see themselves as adjunct schoolteachers” (p. 166). Based on her ethnography, Valdés criticized school–parent involvement programs as insidious attempts to “change families,” imposing White, middle-class parenting norms and eroding Mexican parents’ confidence in their ability to socialize their children as they see fit.

Drawing on a qualitative case study of five rural (im)migrant families, Gerardo Lopez (2001) similarly challenged school-defined forms of parent involvement that

render Latino parents invisible, by highlighting “marginalized forms of parent involvement” in one immigrant household. Lopez related “the story of a family who translated the lessons of working hard in the field into lessons for working hard in school” (p. 422). While the Padilla parents were not visible at their children’s school on the PTA, at parent–teacher conferences, or through volunteering, they actively taught their children the value of an education by offering *consejos* (narrative forms of advice) on the value of hard work and by exposing their children to difficult work in the fields so they would be motivated to work hard in school.

Ethnographic research on Latino child socialization in the home, while not necessarily examining or critiquing “parent involvement,” has contributed to what Lopez (2001) calls a “counter-story of involvement.” Norma González’s (2001) study of Mexican mothers and children in the borderlands revealed that Mexican-origin parents are intensely preoccupied with their children’s success; “The degree of earnest, sustained, and concentrated effort on raising children in these households is so marked that it is evident at every turn” (p. 149). Language socialization research in bilingual families (Zentella, 1997, 2005) also highlights the complexities of Latina/o caregiver practices, revealing both conflict and confluence with the norms of the school. While not directly challenging institutional conventions of parent involvement, this work goes far to dismantle deficit-based constructions of minority parents. As Villenas and Deyhle (1999) point out, ethnographic work on Latino families and schooling that takes the reader into the community and homes, “portray[s] Mexicano communities and families as linguistically and culturally sophisticated, strong, functional, complex, dynamic, and healthy, except for the racism and structural barriers they face in society” (p. 427). At the same time, because this body of research tends to focus on the cultural mismatch between home and school, it runs the risk of essentializing Latino families and cultures (Reese, 2002), implying that all Latino families follow the same set of parenting practices, and potentially masking the role of institutional contexts in the production of social patterns and inequalities (Zentella, 2005).

In contrast to research focusing on cultural differences between Latino homes and US schools, child socialization research informed by critical race theory and Latina feminist perspectives is more explicit in its critique of US schooling and the impact of racism. Sofia Villenas (2001) drew on ethnographic research in emerging Latino communities of the US South to describe “small town racisms” in programs designed to help new Latino immigrants. She found that Latina mothers were “constructed as ‘needy’ – needing English, parenting skills, and health care – and ‘lacking’ – wanting language, cleanliness, adequate housing, and, most of all, knowledge of how to raise and educate their children in a ‘modern’ way” (p. 8). While the media, “helping” professionals, and public discourse constructed Latina mothers as “bad mothers,” Villenas found that the mothers constructed their own narrative of superior moral education and had sharp criticisms of US culture and schooling.

The edited collection *Chicana/Latina Education in Everyday Life* (Delgado Bernal *et al.*, eds., 2006) includes several qualitative studies showing how Latina mothers use the home and community spaces to help their children resist the indignities of racism. Dolores Delgado Bernal (2006) examined how Chicana undergraduate students drew on their mothers’ “pedagogies of the home” to navigate racially hostile environments

and succeed in college. She writes, “the application of household knowledge to situations outside the home becomes a creative process that interrupts the transmission of ‘official knowledge’ and dominant ideologies” (p. 114). In this light, Latino homes shift from being sites of deficit in need of professional intervention to spaces of critique, engagement, and personal and collective transformation. Education in the home becomes visible as not only different from school learning, but as critical to the struggle for personal integrity and cultural survival.

This body of work contributes to the recognition and respect for the home as an autonomous educative space through which parents engage with other formal and informal educative spaces on their own terms. Moreover, by illuminating how the home as cultural sphere mediates between the family and the dominant ideologies of schools, these studies effectively define and defend local practices and beliefs about parenting. Other ethnographic work directly examines how schools attempt to engage parents, turning a critical lens on the institutional and discursive practices that shape parent involvement and “parents” (Calabrese Barton *et al.*, 2004; Johnson, 2009). Placing power inequities between parents and schools at the center of analysis, this research reveals how even progressive reform efforts promoting parents as “partners” tend to reproduce paternalistic school-parent relations. One example is Michelle Fine’s (1993) comparative case study of four parent involvement programs instituted as facets of broader urban school reform initiatives. Fine shows how programs directed at “empowering” parents shifted from empowerment to crisis intervention. In the process, parents were constructed as recipients of services and objects of remediation. By comparison, Cooper’s (2007) study of 14 poor and working class African American mothers focuses on their effective resistance to institutional efforts at domestication as they engage in the “motherwork” of educational advocacy for their children.

Critical ethnography focused on the micro-level of interactions within schools illuminates the critique of parent involvement as policy we discussed earlier (de Carvalho, 2001; Keith, 1999; Lubeck and de Vries, 2000; Nakagowa, 2000), by showing how cultural constructions of parents and parent involvement are produced in everyday life. Unlike research based in cultural mismatch frameworks, which tends to represent families and schools as though they were discrete cultural groups, this critical work focuses on distinctions between groups as they are produced through interaction (see Varenne and McDermott, 1999: 17, 151). Within this framework, “parents” and “teachers” do not exist as discrete cultural groups or social identities; rather, they are mutually constructed in particular parent involvement contexts.

Andrea Dyrness (2004, 2008, forthcoming) analyzed the construction of parents’ roles in a new small school reform effort over a three year period. She identified two “controlling images” (Collins, 2000) of parents in the reform: the passive and submissive Latino parent, who deferred to teachers’ authority and was uninterested in school design issues; and the angry and impatient parent, suitable for turning up at large rallies but not for engaging in deeper discussion about reform. Dyrness’ ethnographic study (including a participatory analysis with a group of Latina mothers to be described in the next section), revealed how parents’ behavior patterns of both passivity and anger resulted from extended parent–teacher interactions at the school. In contrast, educators identified these patterns as “traits” of parents: either “cultural,” in the case of the “passive Latina mother,” or personal, in the case of individually problematic “angry”

mothers. Both controlling images served professional educator self-interests in rationalizing a subordinate role for parents in reform. Dyrness' study revealed that these constructions of parents affirmed educators' self-image as autonomous professionals who were entitled to enact reform according to their professional expertise. For parents to become visible to teachers as people who were both interested in, and capable of, educational leadership, teachers would have to alter their own self-constructions.

A final body of critical ethnographic research on parents explores how Latino parents have appropriated school spaces to participate in ways not defined by the school, thereby meeting their own needs for personal and intellectual development, community, and self-determination. In the spaces of a writers' workshop and parent evaluation group (Hurtig, 2005, 2008c), a family literacy program (Delgado-Gaitan, 2005), a Parent Center (Dyrness, 2007), and a Latino parent organization (Delgado-Gaitan, 2001), Latina mothers become visible as *teachers of each other*. In these alternative programs, parent participants engage as teachers and learners, thereby modeling the kind of communal education they seek, implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) rejecting the form and content of parent education designed for them by the school. These spaces provide a forum for sharing personal experiences, building *confianza* (trust), *convivencia* (togetherness), and critical engagement with forms of schooling and parent involvement that are often dehumanizing and degrading of their personal and cultural identities.

ACTIVIST ETHNOGRAPHY WITH PARENTS

While the studies reviewed above contrast with mainstream research on parent involvement in the critical and cultural character of their analyses, they share a conventional interpretive approach to ethnographic research, inasmuch as the research is defined and controlled by an academic researcher separate from the community or school being studied. In this section we reflect (in the first person) on our participatory ethnographic work on parent involvement – work based in our active collaboration with parents in schools – in order to consider the distinct kinds of contributions activist anthropology offers to the critical ethnography of parent involvement. We have focused exclusively on our own work here because, within the already small body of participatory action research with parents (see, e.g., Agbo, 2007; D'Emilio, 2002; Perez, 2009), our research exemplifies the application of ethnographic methodologies and a critical “anthropological sensibility” (Hurtig, 2008c) to research with parents on parent involvement. Informed by insights from feminist/*mujerista* ethnography reviewed earlier, and by feminist participatory research (Joyappa and Martin, 1996; Maguire, 1987), our work aims to support the legitimacy of forms of knowledge production and pedagogies generated by marginalized women working collectively to transform their roles and empower themselves as mothers/women.

Drawing on the principles of participatory action research, defined as “a means of putting research capabilities in the hands of ... disenfranchised people so that they can transform their lives for themselves” (Park, 1993: 1), our research has entailed working collaboratively with parents in the exploration of issues the parents deem important and seek to change. Assuming a necessary relation between the methodology of

knowledge production and the knowledge actually produced, participatory research creates distinct epistemological and political conditions for knowledge production. Rather than coming to critical understanding through the indirect methods of observation, formal or informal interviews, and the interpretive space of critical distance, ethnographic data and understanding emerge through the collaborative work and reflection of parents and researcher(s) engaged in research and action aimed explicitly at transforming aspects of parents' involvement in the schools.

The issues addressed by participatory research are determined by the participants rather than the outside researcher: it is their agendas for exploration, self-expression, and change that drive the research. Thus, by engaging in activist ethnography we are taking a position of advocacy in relation to the parents with whom we work. While this means that we participate directly in the local construction of parent involvement, we do so from a position of cultural critique. Moreover, by taking the legitimacy of parents' practices, insights, interests, and concerns as the starting point for action research, our participatory work explicitly contests the production of social inequalities through mainstream parent involvement discourses and practices, while seeking to contribute to the production of more democratic educational and cultural practices. In the rest of this section, we describe our work with parents as distinct examples of activist ethnography, and consider what we and our co-researchers learned about parent involvement by engaging collaboratively in this kind of transformative cultural activity.

PARENTS AND ETHNOGRAPHERS AS PARTICIPATORY RESEARCHERS

Andrea's experience

As we described in the previous section, my research on parent involvement began as a critical ethnographic study of the cultural production of parent involvement in the evolution of a small community school. My engagement with the parents I was studying led me eventually to take the position of advocate for and co-researcher with the parents. A year into my research, I invited a group of Latina immigrant mothers with whom I had developed personal relationships to join me in a participatory research project investigating parents' roles in the new small school. *Madres Unidas*, as the group eventually named itself, began a year-long journey that took us from Ofelia's kitchen table – our weekly meeting place – to school classrooms, other parents' homes, district meetings, and back again.

Our navigation between the symbolic and physical spaces of the home and the school, and the distinct types of inquiry we pursued in each realm, offered unique insights and activist possibilities. In Ofelia's home, over food and coffee, we discussed the mothers' experience at their children's school and planned our formal research activities to answer questions that emerged from this experience. At the school and in the community, the mothers carried out focus groups with parents, teachers, and students; interviewed the principal, parents, and community organizers; and served as participant-observers in parent meetings and in their children's classrooms. Back home, we debriefed our research activities together, analyzed our findings, and planned actions that would begin to challenge the patterns of parent-school relations the mothers identified as exclusionary. Taking our experience and our findings back

to the school, we made a formal presentation of the research to the school staff, and proposed and ultimately created a Parent Center at the school that would be run by and for parents. The Parent Center modeled the forms of community *Madres Unidas* had developed in Ofelia's kitchen, becoming a safe space for the sharing of personal experiences and critical engagement with various forms of social inequality – in short, as the mothers put it, “a second home for parents.”

Each phase of the research, in the home and the school, was informed and made possible by the phase that had gone before, embodying the cycle of reflection–action (praxis) that is at the heart of participatory action research (Freire, 1993 [1970]; Park, 1993). The mothers expressed that they would not have had the confidence to engage in formal research activities at their children's school without the community building we did first in Ofelia's home. Likewise, their research and presentations at the school and in other professional venues changed teachers' images of them and their images of themselves, making possible, in turn, new forms of parent involvement at the school. Teachers testified that seeing parents in a new light, in the role of researchers, opened their eyes to new ways of being parents in and outside the school. In this way, the participatory research processes practiced by *Madres Unidas* generated a critique of, embodied an alternative to, and worked to transform dominant forms of parent involvement in a new small school.

Janise's experience

Like Andrea, I entered into activist research with parents organically, through the Community Writing and Research Project (CWRP), a program I co-direct through my home university. For the past ten years I have taught writing workshops to adults in schools and other community settings. When writing group participants become interested in an issue or program in their community that they want to study, report on, and change, I also offer assistance as an outside researcher, guiding parents through the research process and supporting their efforts to circulate and apply their findings in order to make changes in the school or community. Informed by principles of popular education (Bell, Gaventa, and Peters, 1991; Freire, 1993 [1970]; Mayo, 1999), these projects aim to support the collective capacity of ordinary people to educate, defend, and transform themselves and their communities on their own terms (Hurtig, 2008b).

The writing workshops provide a forum for creative expression in which participants can share writings based in their experience, draw on their work to examine their lives, and develop the art of writing. By distributing magazines of participants' writings to the teachers and school libraries, and inviting parents to read their own published stories to their children at events like family literacy nights, participants become recognized within the school and its community as writers, thinkers, and educators (Adams and Hurtig, 2002). In this way the parents serve as role models for their children within the schools, rather than simply as “helpers.”

The writing and research groups also seek to enact democratic practices of collective learning, stressing the value and contribution of each participant, as well as the importance of supporting and respecting the group and its process (Hurtig and Adams, 2010). Participants often describe the groups as a space where they

feel respected as full individuals, a place that provides a “rest” from the “affronts” of everyday life. Moreover, participants have written about and commented on how the educative spirit and practices of the writing and research groups have influenced their perspectives on their children’s educations. For instance, parents have periodically compared the writing workshop practice in which the instructors offer enthusiastic comments on participants’ writing in purple, green or blue ink, with classroom teachers’ uses of “red ink” to correct and mark up writing. Through the experience of receiving encouraging and engaging feedback on their writing, one group of parent writers were prompted to explore the ways their own teachers’ use of red ink had intimidated them and alienated them from the writing process. The writing and discussion led a few parents to approach their children’s teachers about the deleterious impact of “red ink” on their children’s relationship to writing and to school work more generally.

The confidence workshop participants develop in their writing and in the legitimacy of their experiences and perspectives is the basis for the research groups that have formed periodically from the writing workshops. These parent researchers have studied and reported on a range of issues. One group evaluated the school’s parent programs and child care, including the writing program; another conducted a parent participation and needs assessment survey to inform the community school. A third parent research group documented the history of their community’s struggle for a new high school, and reported on the impact of a much-loved principal’s forced departure. Much like the *Madres Unidas* described by Andrea, these parents’ involvement as researchers in their children’s schools has had a transformative effect on how they, the school personnel, and other parents define the nature of parental involvement.

REFLECTIONS ON CRITICAL AND ACTIVIST APPROACHES TO THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

In the previous section we described how our collaborative work with parents involved cyclical processes of participation in, critique, and transformation of parent roles and involvement. We conclude our review by considering how activist or collaborative work and research with parents offers insights into the cultural production of parent involvement that are distinct from, or complementary to, those produced through critical ethnographic research.

Janise’s reflections

The parent writing and research projects contest and provide alternatives to deficit-based frameworks of mainstream parent-involvement programs, redefining and further dignifying the role of “parent” by equating it with writer and researcher. That this redefinition matters to participating parents became apparent to me a few months into the first workshop I taught, when the parent writers chose to replace the project’s official name of “Parents Write their Worlds” to “*Padres como Escritores*” (parents as writers). During the discussion surrounding the project’s name, one of the mothers distinguished the act of writing – which she said anyone can do – with becoming a

writer. She told the group that after reading one of her stories to her daughter, her daughter commented that she wanted to become a writer “like you, Mommy.” That story prompted discussion about the difference between reading school books to one’s children and reading one’s own stories.

Engaging in writing and research activities within their children’s schools has similarly contributed to changes in the parents’ identities in relation to teachers and school leadership. Much as Andrea described earlier, the parent writers-researchers at one school felt they gained greater respect from, and rapport with, teachers and administrators after the release of a magazine of writings, or after presenting a report on the quality of parent programs at a community school. One group of parent-researchers who evaluated the impact of the writing program on the school community came away from the process of interviewing teachers feeling as though they were not only the teachers’ equals “as people,” but also “as thinkers.” In other words, the transformation of parents in relation to teachers and schools occurs both through others’ perceptions of the parents and the parents’ perceptions of themselves.

However, the apparatus of systemic school reform would not be hegemonic if its mechanisms were so easily transformed. Parent writers in some schools have received more recognition from outside organizations where they have done public readings than from the school community itself; and in only one school – a small school with a commitment to integrating Latino parents and their culture into school activities and curriculum – has the parents’ writing been periodically incorporated into classroom instruction.

The position of the popular educator is necessarily one of teacher and learner – and the activist researcher should be disposed to being transformed by the research process as well. The dialogue that has taken place as parents write about and discuss their children’s educations and their roles as parents, or analyze data they have collected about the parent involvement programs in which they are also participants, has exposed me (Janise) to a diversity of perspectives, aims, and interests among the parents – not all of which I may be in agreement with. Engaging with parents in discussions about their views and expectations around parenting – from parents who emphasized preserving their family’s traditional customs and native language at home, to those who took parent homework support classes to ensure their children went to college – has challenged me to rethink the critical feminist frameworks that informed my critique of parent involvement. For instance, parent writers have a range of perspectives on whether and how to help their children with homework, often disagreeing with my perspective that the school’s expectation that parents help children with their homework placed an additional burden on them and invaded their home life. While some mothers feel that the pressure to help their children with school work takes away from time they would have preferred to dedicate to informal family activities, for others homework time represents the kind of educative relationship they did not have with their parents.

As this example illustrates, the participatory experience of working with women with whom I share the roles of mother, writer, and researcher has provided me with the opportunity to understand their perspectives about parent involvement. More generally, the critical praxis of the parent writing and research projects has illuminated the complexities and challenges involved in constructing alternative forms and

meanings of parent involvement while engaging, necessarily, with the values, roles, and expectations of parent involvement produced by the apparatus of systemic school reform.

Andrea's reflections

Reflecting on my engagement with critical ethnography and participatory action research and how these inform each other, I can identify three areas of synergy and dynamic interplay. First, my participatory work with Madres Unidas was fundamentally informed by *mujerista* (Latina feminist) critical ethnographies of the home that taught me to recognize Latina mothers' ways of building community as integral to the struggle for cultural survival and social change, and therefore to affirm and build upon the mothers' practices of *convivencia* (togetherness) in Ofelia's kitchen as integral to our own research process. I needed the insights from critical ethnography to recognize the safe space developed by Madres Unidas as equally important to the formal research activities we carried out. Furthermore, I would not have been able to engage in collaborative action with the mothers without an understanding of the ways they experienced and resisted their objectification in daily life, insights gained from my own critical ethnography and the work of feminist scholars of color who have gone before me (Collins, 2000; hooks, 1989, 1990; Sandoval, 2000; Villenas, 2001).

Second, while direct engagement has the potential to challenge critical perspectives on parent involvement (as Janise described earlier), in my experience with Madres Unidas, collaboration with the mothers deepened and enriched the critique I formed as an ethnographer in ways I could not have foreseen. To the extent that the exclusion of parents from school reform was supported by the discursive construction of (Latino) parents as "passive" or "angry," the mothers' sensitivity to these images and their social location as parents, in relation to other parents and teachers, made them best able to direct the analytic lens in order to illuminate this process. For example, they chose to interview neighborhood parents who had participated in the school's organizing but whose children had been excluded from the school, to hear their perspective on the school's admissions process. The insights gained from these parents, literally unknown to the teachers, offered evidence of lasting harm caused by negative parent-teacher interactions. With these and other testimonies of exclusion, the mothers concluded that the treatment of parents by school staff led logically to disengagement and passivity, unless there was a forum for the collective exploration of grievances. In this case, the participation of parents *as researchers* along with the ethnographer allowed research experiences and forms of data that ultimately generated a richer critique.

The insight that patterns of parent behavior were jointly constructed by teachers and parents was the most important critical ethnographic "finding" for enabling action for change at the school, and this suggests a third area of dynamic interplay between critical ethnography and participatory action research. While critical ethnography unveils the culturally constructed nature of reality, highlighting at once the necessity and possibility for change, participatory research involves those who are most dehumanized by that reality in the process of its unveiling, making action for change an integral part of

the research process. As the mothers developed their analysis of parents' roles as socially constructed over time, they also developed their awareness that these roles could be changed. Their creation of the Parent Center was both an effort to change the terms of involvement for other parents by providing a space where they could feel "at home," and to transform teachers' views of parents' roles in the school by demonstrating and modeling alternative forms of involvement. Through their presentation to the staff and their activities in the Parent Center, the mothers were educating teachers about parents' needs, insights, and values. Participatory action research, while building on the cultural critique of critical ethnography, goes further by embodying alternative forms of participation, thus opening up new realms of inquiry and action.

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CHAPTER 32

The Critical Ethnography of Public Policy for Social Justice

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The goals of this chapter are twofold: first, we illuminate the inner workings of power and exclusion that occur during the policy-making process in education in the state of Texas, in a way that provides an understanding of both the limits and possibilities of research-based social change. Second, we develop an argument for the constructive, illuminating, and even decisive role that critical ethnography can play in the inherently political process of policy-making. In particular, we maintain that fresh insights into the constructions of policy require that scholars coalesce their roles as researchers and direct participants.

Critical ethnographers are preoccupied with societal inequities and they apply a sociopolitical framework in order to interrogate these relations of power with hopes of transforming them through the research process itself (Carspecken, 1995; Foley and Valenzuela, 2005; Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead, 2009; Madison, 2005). The field of anthropology has helped to articulate theoretical roadmaps for making research actionable (see Emihovich, 2005, for example), and such roadmaps underscore the multiple tensions, rewards, and politics that arise for researchers (see Hale, 2008). Anthropologists like Julio Cammarota (2008) have shown the ways in which high school students “develop and initiate their own ethnographic praxis based on their educational experiences and specifically, enter policy debates” (p. 45). Street (2001)

provides an ethnographic account of Mexican teachers as social actors who transform state-granted autonomy, redefining their commonly prescribed position as “objects of reform” to that of “policy designers” (p. 148). These accounts provide examples of forms of agency that seek social change and flip the script on the roles that different groups can play in policy-making. Our focus in this chapter is on a specific policy proposal, namely, House Bill 3 (HB 3), a version of which was passed during the 81st legislative session in Texas, spring 2009. In the same spirit as the aforementioned studies, our ethnographic case study seeks to demonstrate how the involvement of ethnographers and researchers in the policy-making process can push our analyses beyond conventional, frequently reductive, notions of educational policy development and illuminate not only the prospects for, but also the strategies behind, achieving constructive social change.

Using our status as researchers – and research itself to help re-frame policy – we utilized a theory of action that responds to the void of research in policy-making, and the absence of researchers in that same process (Adams *et al.*, 2001), to directly interrogate and disrupt (Lather, 1986) an otherwise aggressive policy agenda during the 81st Regular Session of the 2009 Texas State Legislature. We further responded to the need for “politically engaged ethnography” (Lipman, 2005: 315) by drawing on trusting relationships and a shared collective memory of social, political, historical, and contemporary inequities among minority legislators and community members involved in the policy debate to stymie what turned out to be a potentially injurious policy proposal. Our account also underscores the unfortunate, limited role that academics typically play in policy-making (Shaker and Heilman, 2002, 2004).

THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF PUBLIC POLICY

According to Valenzuela (Foley and Valenzuela, 2005), the “ethnography of public policy,” or the “public ethnography of policy,” may include the use of qualitative techniques such as counternarratives, observation, critical policy and discourse analysis, and data that are generated through direct involvement in the legislative process. In the context of policy-making, anthropologists highlight that counternarratives are powerful for communities of color, and that “ethnography can serve as a tool for passing on these counternarratives for illuminating rich reservoirs of strength and persistence” (Sleeter, 2004: 134). Our ethnographic work involved a thorough discourse analysis (Taylor, 1997) of proposals by various education organizations, the business sector, lobbyists, and interest groups. All of this work culminated in a 27-page matrix that positioned each of the seven accountability reform proposals across 13 categories. Our analysis extended beyond text to include observations of public hearings, stakeholder meetings, and public forum events. Finally, we drew from our observation and analysis of print and news media that contributed to the social construction of HB 3 throughout the duration of the 140-day session of the Texas state legislature.

Wedel and colleagues (2005) note that “an anthropological approach attempts to uncover the constellations of actors, activities, and influences that shape policy decisions, their implementation, and their results” (p. 30), and that through ethnography, researchers can disrupt the notion that policy is a “linear process [that is] a neat,

logical, orderly, and rational set of flows and procedures that move systemically from formulation and design to execution and evaluation” (p. 38). This chapter reveals how through its ethnographically informed work, the Texas Center for Education Policy (TCEP) at the University of Texas at Austin bridges the world of the academy and the state legislature to carve out for itself an agnostic third space (Gutiérrez, Rymes, and Larson, 1995; Lloyd, 2005), bringing research, narrative, and historical inequities to the forefront of the political arena and thereby disrupting a policy agenda rather well, if shrewdly, devised by powerful actors. Our case study thus elaborates on how the anthropology of education can actually effect political change.

STATE POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

State political structure

The Texas State Legislature is arguably the most powerful branch of government in the state (Texas State Historical Association, 2009a). This body comprises a 31-member Senate and 150-member House of Representatives that convenes in regular session for just 140 days, beginning in January of every odd-numbered year. In some cases, the Governor may call the legislature to a special session, which is limited to a maximum length of 30 days based on a specific issue stated in the call. The short regular and special sessions are a manifestation of the Reconstruction Era, when the state constitution was written, in response to the excesses of the administration of Governor E.J. Davis (Texas State Historical Association, 2009b). The result is a limited-government approach to policy-making. While our observations of the policy-making process highlight how this structure can lead to exclusion through its short sessions and the various forms of capital necessary to participate, we also find that it creates a niche for university researchers whose goal it is to inform educational policy development.

Our observations of who can and actually does take part in the process of state policy-making in Texas reflect similarities found at the national level. Research at the federal level suggests that after interest groups, academics, researchers, and consultants are the most important set of non-governmental actors in the policy-making process (Kingdon, 2003). While academics may not be solely responsible for issues on the congressional agenda, they have the capacity to influence both the policies proposed and the general “climate of ideas” in which policies are understood (Kingdon, 2003: 56). Both Texas and federal policy-making reveal how in many cases, elected officials may not have the general legislative capacity to deal with issues (DeBray, 2005), thus leading to a reliance on “pockets of expertise” that develop over time among professional staff and elected leaders (Burns, Gamm, and McConaughy, 2008).

The structure’s reliance on the expertise of individuals seems to contribute to a general lack of detailed understanding of issues by all legislators, thus creating a space in which some are “in the know” while others, even elected officials, may be somewhat serving as spectators. Reflecting on the structure of the legislature, one Texas education lobbyist put it quite simply by stating: “The system is doing exactly what it is supposed to do; it either makes nothing or it produces *chorizo*-like [i.e., sausage-like] legislation.” In layman’s terms, the system is designed to obstruct the passage of legislation or produce piecemeal policy, haphazardly

comprised of bits and pieces of proposals and leftover amendments that appease a sufficient number of legislators, advocates, and constituents, even as they leave others with ghastly indigestion.

Organizing for social justice and political change

In the field of educational anthropology, Adams *et al.* (2001) argue that the following two factors contribute to the process of improving the quality of education: the first is the relationship between researchers and policymakers, and the second are efforts to join research, policy, and practice. In response to these sentiments, the TCEP of the University of Texas at Austin confronts the structural barriers that impede the effective and proper utilization of research evidence in the policy-making process throughout our state and nation by promoting interdisciplinary and collaborative research, analysis, and dissemination of information to impact the development of research and equity-based policy reform in PK-16 education. Established and directed by Dr. Angela Valenzuela, the Center operates with the following two primary objectives: first, to be a source of credible, policy-relevant research, and, second, to provide a forum in which researchers in partnership with local, state, national, and international education communities can deliberate the policy issues of the day. The goal of the Center is to engage and bridge multiple spheres, especially the academic and legislative ones.

At the core of the Center's organizational theory of action is the notion that in order to promote the utilization of research in decision-making, university scholars must facilitate a research-informed dialogue and build relationships among stakeholders at multiple levels. Notwithstanding structural disincentives like the reward structure of academia – with its frequently reductive treatment of such activities as “service” – centers like TCEP can be a vehicle for social change primarily by facilitating the involvement of university researchers in the legislative process.

In the context of Texas state policy-making, it is important to note the various forms of capital associated with our positions as University of Texas at Austin researchers. With respect to our positions, we wish to acknowledge that our “privileged insider” status is shaped by our respective insights and community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), as well as our status as researchers for Texas' flagship university, members in the Mexican–American, civil rights leadership community, and beneficiaries of the ground-work that Dr. Valenzuela has laid over the years as a state leader and advocate for all children (see Valenzuela, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006; Valenzuela and Black, 2003; Valenzuela and Maxcy, in press; Cervantes Soon and Valenzuela, in press). These factors combined to facilitate strategic relationships with education stakeholders and state legislators.

While cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) equips us with the expertise required for us to understand the technical aspects of policy-making, our observations reveal its primary impact in facilitating our access to the very exclusive policy-making arena of the legislature. Further, the name “Texas Center for Education Policy” fosters an aura of authority, as if we are in fact *the* education policy experts in the state. With these factors in mind we understand the potentially far-reaching impact of our work. Accordingly, we hold ourselves to an ethic that acknowledges the extent of our privilege and our responsibility to advance equity and opportunity in education for *all* of Texas' youth.

Education policy and politics in Texas

For over a decade, many of Texas' schools and districts have witnessed the harsh realities that educational policies have imposed on the state's students, families, schools, and communities (e.g., Valenzuela, 2004). From punitive consequences such as school closure, to the disappearance of students who have been pushed out of school as a result of the perceived liability they place upon struggling schools (Haney, 2000; Valenzuela, Fuller, and Vásquez Heilig, 2006), the realities of the state's current education system continue to obstruct opportunity and equitable educational attainment for many poor, minority, and English-learning youth (Valenzuela, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004; McNeil and Valenzuela, 2001; Valencia *et al.*, 2001). This Texas-style accountability framework has induced a similar educational landscape among the lives and schooling experiences of many students nationally (Mintrop, 2004; Nichols, Glass, and Berliner, 2005; Saunderman, Kim, and Orfield, 2005), and it continues to predicate itself on the false pretense of equalizing the educational playing field so that all students receive equal opportunities regardless of social, economic, or ethnic background (Scheurich, Skrla, and Johnson, 2000).

On March 13, 2009, few Texans and precious little media attention captured the introduction of HB 3 into the bill docket of the Committee on Public Education, despite its far-reaching consequences to public school education that will unfold in the 2012–2013 academic year when its implementation begins. This 208-page bill amounts to an overhaul of public school education in Texas as follows: the development of measures of college readiness based upon performance on standardized, end-of-course exams; the promotion of job- or career-based forms of curricular specialization that incentivize student placement in applied career and technology courses that would “simultaneously satisfy” foundational math, English language arts, science, and social science curricula; the use of growth measures that would rate schools in large part on students' average test-based performances on high-stakes, end-of-course examinations; and the institution of end-of-course examinations that will impact both final course grades and exit requirements to receive a high school diploma. Our assessment of the final iteration of the bill is that while poor, minority youth will generally be negatively impacted by HB 3, the proposed changes promise to significantly and negatively impact English language learning youth, in particular.

Though HB3 purports to increase “college readiness,” it continues to emphasize standardized testing in a context of disparate capacities across schools and districts to offer a college-going curriculum, and limited access to qualified teachers and counselors for all children. Additionally, the blatant disregard for equity and minority youth in HB 3's bill language comes less than a year after national attention was placed on the state's failure to adequately meet the educational needs of more than 140,000 Latino/a, English language learning secondary-level youth (*USA and LULAC GI-Forum v. Texas 2008*). Despite this ruling, HB 3 scarcely mentions English language learner youth, and does not propose any changes that would improve their standing in the current system.

While HB 3 stemmed from the 2008 Public School Accountability Select Committee's deliberations, public awareness of the bill and access to the bill's proposals were minimal. For this reason, because so few either anticipated or were equipped to respond to HB 3, TCEP's arrival to the political scene was solitary and somewhat late.

Notwithstanding the presence of politically powerful actors that have historically controlled the direction of education policy-making in Texas, TCEP leveraged its capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Yosso, 2005) to bring research and issues of historical inequities to the discussion, and subsequently disrupt the intent and political passage of HB 3 in its most egregious form.

THE POLITICAL CAREER OF HOUSE BILL 3

Disrupting the session: Research in action

In October 2008, prior to the March 13, 2009 public release of HB 3, TCEP began compiling a series of public briefs and proposals related to the bill from business, testing companies, conservative think-tanks, and teacher and administrator associations. Combing through the briefs, we began decoding the discourse and rationale behind the varying programs that different entities were proposing, most of which were ideologically based, and lacked a supportive research base. One example was the legislation's attempt to codify tracking practices into state law, effectively circumventing the work of the previous legislative session to move the state towards a required college-ready curriculum for all students. In this vein, notable business and testing companies' testimonies promoted the false impression that career and technology (CT) courses contribute to the success of college-going students following their completion of high school, suggesting that CT courses helped students become either college ready or college-ready enough. What the data actually show is a distinction between those students who are tracked as college going and enroll in CT courses as value-added experiences, and those students who are tracked into the minimum graduation plan, often involuntarily, and the CT program sequence alone. While college-bound students who self-selected CT program courses as an extra elective did enter college in higher proportions, those students who were tracked into the CT program as their primary course sequence comprised one-fifth (or 10,373) of all reported dropouts statewide in 2007 (TEA, 2007). These dropout numbers do not include those students who have disappeared from the state data system altogether (see Haney, 2000; Valenzuela, Fuller, and Vásquez Heilig, 2006).

Abetted by historical knowledge and experience from previous sessions, we analyzed these briefs and proposals in order to ascertain interest group membership, language, and ideas. We were able to make well-reasoned deductions about which actors were influencing the different parts of the bill, together with the interests that were embedded within them. This early preparation played a significant role later when we were asked by community members, civil rights organizations, practitioners, and a growing number of interested legislators to critically analyze voluminous pages of bill language and respond with research in a timely and accessible way. Through our ability to respond and our growing presence as a credible source of research, our roles as participant observers deepened during the policy-making process, gaining us access to key conversations that provided pertinent context to the politics outlined in HB 3.

Lloyd (2005) highlights the subaltern's potential to exercise agency in the context of traditionally marginalizing spaces (such as the Texas state legislature) by disarming

the hegemonic discourse among the elite. One of the ways that TCEP accomplished this was by centering our research-based critique on the invisibility of the subaltern – frequently English language learners – in this public policy discourse. We also privately acknowledged that we, as traditionally marginalized, minority researchers, were similarly “othered” through various means. For example, our public voice was diminished when we were placed late on the docket for invited, public testimony. However, because we demonstrated an agility with an otherwise terse bill that few could grasp in its entirety in so little time, we grew to become among the most central, respected players in the ensuing phases of the legislation. Working “behind the scenes,” as it were, we used research together with our own lived experiences as subalterns to launch effective challenges to some of the more egregious aspects of the bill. The majority of our research-based opposition to HB 3 found expression in bill amendments, with some prevailing on the House floor, though not ultimately in the final joint House and Senate conference committee version.

Writing the subaltern into text

As TCEP began engaging the political arena, one of our primary efforts was to bring awareness to the public about the discourse on “curricular specialization” by reframing it as “tracking” in our writings, conversations, and explanations to lawmakers, and to demonstrate the potential effects of the policy on the lives of Texas students. Moreover, we did so in a way that illuminated from an historical and research perspective the predictable, detrimental effects that HB 3 would incur if equity were left unaddressed in the bill. This meant that we leveraged our role as a credible resource to share the documented narratives of the educational experiences of poor, minority, and bilingual youth that have historically been marginalized by policies such as HB 3. While a conventional perception on how to inform policy is to emphasize the importance of rational, often quantitative, decision-making, our experiences reveal limitations to the exclusive use of this approach (see Lindblom, 1995, for a similar example). Instead, we find that qualitative accounts such as this one add depth and breadth to policy debates, clarifying the perennially understated roles that context, history, and narratives play in the process of policy-making.

Our rhetorical battle against tracking involved challenging HB3 supporters’ references to “pathways,” and their rationalizations pertinent to making schools more “relevant,” by suggesting that regardless of intent, HB 3 sought to codify tracking into law. That is, HB 3 would result in statutory support for a practice held in wide disrepute by the scholarly community (Blanton, 2004; Gándara, 2008; Oakes, 1985). The merits of a research-based reframing of educational debates like tracking from a subaltern standpoint of argumentation lie in centering the discussion on something that is foreign to the experience of those in power. This approach, as we observed, can thereby minimize, or eliminate, the opposition’s capacity to refute it, thereby enabling a fresh negotiation of reality (Lloyd, 2005). After equipping African American and Mexican American legislators with this subaltern view and equipping them with the language that they needed to marshal in order to effectively oppose the legislation, they were able to carry forward this discourse in public testimony.

The framing of HB 3 as a “tracking bill” was similarly echoed by the media and various community groups. Legislators in support of the original legislation decried this framing during public testimony. During one public hearing, a legislator corrected himself and apologized to the bill’s author and committee chair by saying, “I apologize. I know you’re not wanting us to refer to the bill’s intent as tracking.” In short, we see how the act of crafting a valid, albeit divergent, framing destabilized existing constellations of power and contrived an inclusion of the subaltern’s experiences into the larger policy narrative (Lloyd, 2005).

Coalition-building: The rise of a political counterstory

Drawing upon TCEP’s goal – to serve as a vehicle for bringing people together to deliberate on education issues as a means for developing well-conceived policy – our participant observation in HB 3 revealed the development of a historical minority coalition. As our analysis of HB 3 began making its way through the capitol community, the chairs of the Mexican American and Black Caucuses called upon TCEP to provide an overview of the bill. The act of coming together for a joint briefing on an issue was something that both caucus chairs regrettably confessed had never been done before – or at least not in recent memory. As we shared the details of the bill, it was clear that few of them had anticipated the emergence of such a proposal. We also observed legislators verbally reflect on their shared frustrations for having been positioned in a way that required them to react to HB 3. The constraints that stem from the structure of the legislative session led to HB 3 being scheduled for a committee hearing between two time- and resource-consuming pieces of legislation (i.e., voter I.D., and top-ten-percent) that had absorbed the attention of virtually every legislator. TCEP’s role in alerting them about the details of the bill and subsequently providing their staff with research and analyses thus resulted in a historic gathering of minority legislators that helped to set a precedent for how the two caucuses can strive to proactively collaborate on K-12 education matters.

The minority oppositional voice

As the political career of HB 3 took its course, tensions in stakeholder meetings, public committee, and chamber hearings occurred. Our recasting of HB 3 as a promoter of curricular tracking quickly took root. The pain of the marginalization and exclusion entailed in HB 3 triggered traumatic memories among minority representatives, resulting in a bringing together of personal, historical accounts of educational inequities to the center of the policy debate. This division between select minority and non-minority representatives forced the debate into a political third space (Gutiérrez, Rymes, and Larson, 1995), where these leaders spoke from two positions: one of the decision-maker and the other, an aggrieved, collective voice bearing testimony to the harmful effects of racial-, ethnic-, and class-based tracking and discrimination. This action, and the responses that transpired, are examples of what Cammarota (2008, Chapter 30, above) has called “cultural organizing.” Cammarota’s (2008) third-space praxis coalesces Spindler’s (1959, as cited in Cammarota, 2008) notion of cultural therapy and the concept of cultural production to move beyond the act of documenting and reflecting on social injustice, to actionable expressions that initiate institutional and structural change.

Particularly offensive was original bill language that called for endorsements that would stamp a student's transcript – and, in effect, the students themselves – as either “college ready,” “postsecondary ready,” or “work force ready,” based on their performance on a standardized test. The public testimony of one elite businessman, who has historically played a central role in driving Texas education policy and who also lobbies for a testing company that stood to profit from the passage of this legislation, was met with vociferous opposition by one minority representative. During testimony, this minority legislator responded by stating, “Do you not see how you're labeling a child for life? You ought to be ashamed of yourself!” and ended her comment by emphatically pushing the swivel microphone away from her mouth. Having attended the briefing where TCEP was called upon to provide a critical overview of HB 3, this representative set off a chain of cross-examination-like questioning to proponents of HB 3 as they stepped up to the podium to provide public testimony.

As the public committee debate progressed, awareness of the bill's failure to include resources, namely quality teachers, counselors, and opportunities for learning for the state's already vulnerable poor, minority students, brought into focus HB 3's exacerbation of Texas' highly unequal status quo. Minority legislators' explicit comments on historical educational inequities fueled the fire as they exposed the absence of resources and opportunities in HB 3. Reverberating the message of Lyndon B. Johnson's speech during the signing of the Voting Rights Act (Johnson, 1965), one minority committee member expressed concern for anticipated “failure” among minority students who would have to fight to stay afloat, while being weighed down by the “shackles of discrimination,” which would punish them for not keeping the same pace as their more privileged peers.

Another minority committee member echoed the absence of funding, resources, and supports in HB 3 by stating, “It seems we're always raising the ceiling and forgetting about the floor.” This same representative also exposed and gave criticisms to the bill's attempt to mask the use of tracking by using the term “specialization” to falsely suggest that the removal of certain courses would result in students' increased opportunities to pick and choose classes that were relevant to them. He further suggested that the bill was disingenuous by failing to address the extant lack of capacity in under-resourced schools to even provide a minimum exposure to a breadth of content and elective courses. Visibly holding TCEP's policy brief in hand, this representative questioned proponents of the bill by asking them how tracking practices would be avoided, and how the bill would account for “late bloomers” – a term lifted directly from our submitted testimony and oral presentation before the caucus to refer to students who are not yet ready to make such a high-stakes decision as curricular track placement at such an early point in their high school careers.

In another dramatic encounter on the issue of tracking during deliberations on the House floor (Texas House of Representatives, 2009), one minority representative became frustrated with the bill's author's refusal to eliminate the minimum diploma track by asking, “What is so wrong with having high standards for our children?” For this representative and many others, HB 3's attempt to lower the expectations for what schools would be required to offer all students translated into an extreme loss in equal educational opportunity.

Theory in practice

To understand our methodological and theoretical approaches to chronicling, analyzing, and participating in the political development, process, and passage of education policy, our analysis draws from Lloyd's (2005) conceptualization of strategic essentialism, Gutiérrez, Rymes, and Larson's (1995) concept of the third space, and Apple's and Buras' (2005) notion of the subaltern. By coalescing these three theoretical constructs, we are able to highlight the varying, and often competing, ideological spaces that must be navigated when ethnographers take part in the legislative process. These frameworks also help to demonstrate how agency, or the social practice of power (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead, 2009), was enacted to develop state education policy during Texas' 81st legislative session.

Examining teacher–student relationships in classrooms, Gutiérrez, Rymes, and Larson (1995) consider the power-laden interactions between a teacher's script (often a function of their acceptance and representation of dominant, ideological values and norms) and students' counterscripts, or their opposition to such norms. Students and teachers often retreat to their respective scripts, albeit in a hybrid "third space" where these "scripts" interact. If relations do not succumb to a mutual sense of alienation, the conflicts and tensions between scripts can help to shape a more balanced power differential among teachers and students. The physical and discursive interactions of scripts within a classroom setting further reveal the role that social relationships play in the construction of power and who has access to learning. When applying this lens (Gutiérrez, Rymes, and Larson, 1995) to the Texas legislative context and interactions across those who participate in the process of education policy-making, similarities, such as the interactions between legislators who supported tracking legislation and proponents of our counterarguments, may be found.

Mirroring the concept of the third space, Lloyd (2005) explores how "subaltern" persons with a perspective that resides outside of the hegemonic power structure can leverage "the political purposes served by essentialism" and forge a powerful "agnostic space," where someone speaking as a "type" of subaltern voice can emerge with authority and have serious "political effects" (p. 59). Lloyd (2005) further identifies the power of bringing the experiences and narratives of the subaltern (like minority legislators and ourselves as subaltern researchers) to the table, and how this very act of presenting a "subaltern consciousness" can disarm certain elites, even as *we* write *their* experiences into this larger story.

Apple and Buras (2005) draw from Gramsci's (1971) notion of the subaltern to explain the role of historical practices of exclusion and dominance by elites that subjugate oppressed groups. This concept of the subaltern posits that power is less often exercised through force than consent, and that elites, or those in powerful positions, capitalize on the absence of an organized, subaltern consciousness that challenges the status quo. Adding to this is the inequitable dispersion of power that unequally positions subalterns across such different contexts as higher education institutions and the Texas state legislature, so that a reduced sense of agency and power is often encouraged. Occluded are calculated maneuvers that otherwise could contribute to subalterns' capacity to respond to conflict in an agentic manner. Indeed, as we have

demonstrated herein, disrupting ongoing forms of oppression, together with a strategic positioning of individuals, holds catalytic promise for transformational change (Apple and Buras, 2005).

By merging our roles as researchers from one of the state's two flagship institutions with the relationships and accessibility we had with key legislators, we leveraged our experiential knowledge as subalterns to create a context where research expertise made a difference in terms of the issues outlined in HB 3 (Apple and Buras, 2005). We were able to forge a third space (Gutiérrez, Rymes, and Larson, 1995) that momentarily allowed us to reverse the power dynamic within a shared political context. By informing minority policymakers – many of whom had intuitive, but not fully formed criticisms of HB 3 – with research on the harms associated with tracking, the role of CT courses on non-college tracked students in Texas, and data on the dropout probabilities associated with tracking and test-based promotion and retention policies, our work gained strength and leveraged power across allied actors, forcing the proponents of the bill to respond. Spivak's (1988) characterization of the potentially catalytic role of a collective consciousness lodged in a shared historic experience of subalternity explains how literally, in minutes before the committee hearing on public education, a consensus between minority legislators to collectively question the bill was swiftly obtained.

As we continued to participate, observe, and document the process of HB 3 throughout the course of the legislative session, we witnessed an increasing coalition of opposition on the part of minority legislators. This led to a day-long debate on the House floor where 92 amendments to the bill were proposed and 67 adopted, many of which were informed by the research that TCEP brought to bear on decision making. Ultimately, HB 3 passed both chambers of the legislature, was signed by the governor, and is currently slated for partial implementation in the 2012–2013 academic year, with full implementation scheduled for 2013–2014.

The most notable victory was the elimination of high-stakes testing for all third-grade students in Texas. No longer will the retention or promotion of these students be determined on the basis of a single, standardized test-score indicator. Rather, a holistic assessment comprised of student grades, classroom performance, teacher and parent evaluation, as well as test performance will be used. This monumental shift in assessment is a direct result of the research on the harms of testing and student retention by Dr. Angela Valenzuela (1999, 2000, 2002) continually being made accessible to legislators over the course of five legislative sessions (i.e., 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009).

Another example of an outcome that TCEP played a role in facilitating was removing the explicit attempt to codify the use of endorsements that would label high school students' diplomas and, in effect, students themselves as either "college-ready," "post-secondary-ready," or "workforce-ready" (i.e., in need of remediation) based on test-score performance. Such tracking is presumed to already be occurring in practice, but writing this into law would have been an exceedingly harmful precedent, as it would have codified young people for life – as having either greater or lesser ability and potential – by the putatively "neutral" hand of the state. As our data and research show, there is an increased probability of high school dropout associated with both removing students from a college-bound academic plan and tracking them into the career-and-technology (CT) course sequence. Through the amendment process,

a modicum of success that we were able to achieve was instituting a tracking mechanism in the state data system that monitors which students are tracked and at what point in their academic careers.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we explain how multiple factors are simultaneously at play in the political process and how this process is often designed to be non-transparent and exclusionary, thereby obstructing accessibility, and consequently, full democratic participation, even for the stakeholder community for whom these policies are intended. Our experience teaches us that the development of effective education policy agendas for subaltern communities should optimally consist of a conscious bringing together of a diverse, stakeholder group into the policy-making arena (see Elmore and McLaughlin, 1988). The machinations of power, however, reveal that there must be a vehicle, or an actionable model, that is organized to facilitate this vision, especially if the goal is to include university researchers who as individuals are typically distant from the inner reaches of legislative bodies.

Despite an abundance of research-based policies, and volumes of peer-reviewed academic journal articles, books, and narratives that contain equitable and viable policy proposals, our work at the state level reveals that few of these ever ultimately inform the legislative process in a direct manner. In this vein, Shaker and Heilman (2002, 2004) provide a cutting analysis of the systemic vacuum in leadership that exists between higher education institutions and policy-making bodies at all levels – only to be overwhelmingly filled by reactionary think-tanks and institutes that pursue narrow, self-serving and frequently, market-based, agendas in education. Contributing to this imbalance are elitist, ivory-tower constructions of the professoriate that delimit academics' identities to professional-associational activities that – tragically, even for professors of public policy – exclude them from the policy-making arena.

Added to this mix is the exclusive nature of the legislative process itself, compounded by an academic reward structure for tenure and promotion that dismisses this arena of activity as mere “service” in the context of an evaluative hierarchy that privileges research and teaching. In those instances in which faculty do seek to weigh in on the development of education policy, our experience is that they typically either lack expertise in making their work consumable to non-academics who work in high-pressure environments, or they lack the social and political capital that enable either the development or defeat of sound or unsound policy proposals, respectively.

As our work in the 2009 81st session of the Texas state legislature reveals, TCEP's model of engaged policy accomplished through the ethnography of public policy overcomes conceptual hurdles presented by the discrete, value-laden categories of “research” and “service.” It does so through a merger of the two. This model further illustrates how research in the public interest (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 2006) can be wholly compatible with the advancement of theory. Finally, our chronicling of policy development simultaneously brings transparency to the legislative process and illuminates the inner workings of power and exclusion, on the one hand, and the possibilities for transformational social change, on the other.

This chapter hopes to leave readers with a snapshot of the multiple realities that are associated with education policy and how ethnographic techniques can move researchers beyond sterile, text-book portrayals of the policy-making process toward more robust ones where raw, political interests frequently trump rationality, democratic values, and social justice. Using Texas state policy-making as an example, our approach helps researchers to consider the utility of more carefully aligning their research with both incipient and runaway policy agendas that have real-world significance. Our failure to do so not only re-inscribes both existing hierarchies of power and narrow definitions of the professoriate, but it also threatens to render us impotent when the “policy pistols” are aimed in our direction.

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