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GLOBALIZATION AND CURRICULUM: INFERRING FROM BERNSTEIN'S CODE THEORY

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Abstract. The U.S.A. obtains a hegemonic position through globalization. Neoliberalism, a competition-based approach, spreads as a new world value. Neoliberalism lets so many countries abandon social justice to adopt international competitiveness, but in lacking of public service and policy it harms disadvantaged people. Bowles and Gintis (1976) stated schools' career replacement is directly related to the capitalist relations of production; namely, the reflection and protection of the capitalist dominant ruling class. Educational system is related to the social division of labor (Sadovnik, 1991) interlocking class and power manipulation. Curriculum is often a relay for certain dominant social and cultural values; this is a social class principle of selection. The research will investigate the characteristics of working class and their language codes which are based on Basil Bernstein's sociolinguistic model. In the 1960s and 1970s, educational reformers emphasized teaching process, individualized learning, relevant and meaningful curriculum, student spirit freedom, and the equal opportunity. They stay away from oppressive, authoritarian, elitist, and agree to a more invisible pedagogic practice which implies more freedom for teachers and students. Those characteristics are quite different from the globalization strong subject classification and hold fixed standards for evaluation purposes. Under globalization, the study claims that the curriculum characteristics from 1960s to 1970s, an invisible and a weakly classified curriculum, should deeply value again not only in higher education but also in other educational settings.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education researchers seldom discuss the curriculum seriously including little inspection of curriculum for professors are often with high autonomy and professional competence to insist their own unique favorite curriculums. Higher education is able to transform students' understanding and identities; good curriculum can transform their relations with themselves and the world (Ashwin, 2014) enhancing strong engagement with school knowledge. Effective curriculums can lead to positive learning outcomes finally. There is a variety of curriculum knowledge such as knowledge-as research, knowledge –as curriculum, and knowledge –as –student-understanding (Ashwin, 2014). Now, due to globalization it is based on market-oriented values and obeys external orderings in higher education (Beck, 2002). Knowledge, after nearly 1000 years, is divorced from inwardness and separated from commitments, from personal dedication, from the deep structure of the self (Bernstein, 2000, p. 86). The above characteristics are quite miserable to higher education settings. What kinds of knowledge are the core elements to different backgrounds of students since the world is so complex and stratified? School is as a vehicle for social reproduction, people often eager to ask who is regulator, what is consciousness, and for whom (Wright & Froehlich, 2012) the curriculum is never of neutral value.

The maximizing international competitiveness does increase social and economic inequality, but a fair opportunity for education can improve social equity, cohesion and harmony. A fair educational opportunity is rooted in an unbiased curriculum. The unequal distribution of wealth and income under globalization reinforces economic and cultural unfair reproduction. Curriculum often interweaves the relationship among the division of labor, political, and economic elements, it is impossible for schools to be totally fair and just institutions for all students. Schools are also related to the making of societies and social classes and the inequalities are passed on from generation to generation (Edwards, 2002). Curriculum and pedagogy are related to the inequality reproduction among social classes and there is constant and close relationship between social class and academic achievement. There is also a close relationship between production and education; the nature of social division of labor contains unfairness. Bowles and Gintis (1976) viewed schooling as the capitalist relations of production, the distribution of educational opportunity leads to reproduce unequal life chances and material bases (Edwards, 2002). Bernstein's code theory has the same evidences on stating that the educational system is related to the social division of labor, a kind of class and power relationship or employer-employee

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relations. Code theory is a powerful perception on educational inequality and reproduction (Sadovnik, 1991). Education goes often around to foster suitable skills and attitudes for employment. Education will seek to satisfy economic needs, and skill often keeps pace with the “needs “of the economy. Schools are around employability skills and defined according to the dominant values, beliefs and expectations of the dominant culture (Whelehan, 2007). According to status-competition theories maybe school education does not give chances to different lives, only facilitating social –class reproduction; educational outcome related to the autonomy of knowledge distribution (Sadovnik, 2015).

Education is the reflection of the capitalist ruling dominant group, assuming to be a totally socializing influence. Curriculum is a relay for certain social and cultural values (Wright & Froeblich, 2012); it is often beyond the control of an individual being quite unfair for disadvantaged people. Students from advantaged families are mostly learning to be winner, and so many working-class children fail in educational settings. What should education be about? What kinds of curriculums are more proper for those disadvantaged students under the new world order of globalization? No one seems to be able to give a correct and definite answer for complicated situations. Now, a regulative curriculum is even shaped by neo-liberalism, the new model of social order influencing worldwide educational policy. Under capitalism, there is normally strong classification between education and production. This is key condition of the real (Bernstein, 1977), and it stays away from the good nature of education. The study will also investigate curriculum for educational system that moves towards a more intense social reproduction under globalization and try avoiding such kind of inhumane treatments to disadvantaged students. The following will try providing explanations for unequal education performance by Bernstein’s code theory, similar to Durkheim mode. The outstanding academic achievements of students from disadvantaged backgrounds are rare, if they are, it is usually due to the person who owns a more mature attitude, a more excellent and intelligent ability, a more determined mind, a more noble and ideal life goal to fulfill, and someone around them is willing to help. The following will try finding a way to understand working classes, give helpful suggestions and do application to promote a better fair world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Restricted and Elaborated Codes

The concept of code is the main theme for Bernstein’s structural sociology. Power is hidden by devices of communication (Bernstein, 1990); educational achievement is a communication - process outcome which leads to learning result and academic achievement. The codes were principles of selection, social class, language and socialization that are related to each other (Power, Edwards & Wigall, 2003); language and codes are the core

elements of social class reproduction. Curriculum and pedagogy are considered message systems which are regulated by restricted and elaborated codes (Atkinson, 1985), but educational institutions are often mainly regulated and dominated by elaborated codes containing middle – class value and aspiration. Middle-class highly values and gets used to using elaborated codes, so it becomes a main - stream dominant culture applying in different educational settings. According to Bernstein, “If a person can get the school’s dominant code and doing well to gain excellent academic achievements, step back this is still under a social class principle of selection (Bernstein, 1990). Restricted codes leave people where they were, while elaborated codes are the language of individual and collective change (Edwards, 2002, p. 533).

Classification and Framing

Bernstein linked classifications and framing codes to the unequal distribution of resources in capitalist societies. Classification refers to “how strong the boundary maintains between contents (Bernstein, 1971). Strong classification refers to a curriculum that is highly differentiated and divided into traditional subjects. The visible curriculum transmits in orderly sequence according to explicitly detailed criteria (Broadfoot, 1996). The strong classified knowledge demands elaborated codes, and it is different from the local, everyday world (Edwards, 2002). Weak classification refers to a curriculum that is integrated and in which the boundaries between subjects are fragile (Sadovnik, 1991). Framing refers to the pedagogic practices relating to the rules of communication. Bernstein (1990) claims if classification regulates the voice of a category, framing regulates the form of message and degree of control. Framing refers to the selection, organization, pacing and timing of the knowledge. Bernstein’s concepts of strong to weak classifications around and within what was taught, and of strong to weak control (framing) by teachers and students over the timing, sequencing and evaluation of its transmission (Edwards, 2002). Disadvantaged groups will not be able to meet the requirements of the strong pacing and order rules, but middle-class students are more likely to master the order and pacing rules for cultural capital. Education cultural capital means what middle–class children are more likely to have acquired already from their original families (Edwards, 2002). Strong framing refers to more restriction; weak framing implies more freedom to both students and teachers. Conceptual or abstract knowledge is a form of vertical curriculum; whereas everyday knowledge is a form of horizontal curriculum. Vertical curriculums are a form of coherent, explicit, and systematically principled structure, hierarchically organized, as in the sciences (Bernstein, 2000, p. 157) belonging to strongly classified curriculums. To understand the vertical curriculums requires integrating meanings (Bernstein, 2000) rather than learning the isolated and unconnected contents of subject knowledge (Whelehan, 2007). However, in horizontal curriculums the

meaning of everyday knowledge is tied to specific contexts and events, so that the meaning of everyday knowledge is only understandable within that specific context and the material base it rests upon (Bernstein, 2000). Because meaning is meaningful only under specific context, meaning is swallowed by the context and cannot be applied to any situations (Wheelahan, 2007). Everyday knowledge infers that knowledge and competence acquired in one context do not necessarily have meaning or correlation in another (Bernstein, 2000). In short, the horizontal curriculum is tied to specific contexts and only meaningful within that context (Wheelahan, 2007). If students do not have prior knowledge, they can still do well and gain their learning achievements.

However, under the new order of globalization all higher education institutions are required to demonstrate their performance and the outcomes should be measured, compared and ranked (Torres, 2006). The globalization is apt to operate strong subject classification and hold fixed standards for exact evaluation purposes. Due to competition, it needs to compare all schools on student performances by rigid standardized tests to reach fair evaluation results. When criteria are implicit, the students have much more freedom to create his or her personal criteria for evaluation (Sadovnik, 1991). Strong framing refers to a limited degree of options between teachers and students; weak framing implies more freedom. Under weak framing implying more freedom situation than strong framing, the criterial rules are more numerous and diffused, and the teacher is a facilitator rather than a transmitter. Being a facilitator a curriculum will be full of dynamic like changeable shape of clouds; being a transmitter a curriculum will be rigid and fixed like unchangeable shape of boxes. A quite fixed and rigid standardized test for evaluation won't be good for diverse students, it limits creativity and human potential development under extremely strong framing. The strong classification and framing of pedagogic practices finally relay power relations and class inequalities, especially in the reproduction of power and symbolic control settings. According to Bernstein, if a school values socio-economic composition, it will more likely adapt to a visible curriculum rather than an invisible curriculum (Sadovnik, 1991).

Using the concept of classification, Bernstein defined two types of curriculum codes: collection and integrated codes. Collection means a strongly classified curriculum; integrated means a weakly classified curriculum. Integrated curriculums mean a music curriculum being able to contain a sweet potato-roasted picnic activity. The strong pacing rule of the visible curriculum creates a process that reproduces the social-class inequalities. Traditional academic hierarchies still provide the main mechanism for entering "higher level employment (Edwards, 2002), but the choosing process is unfair. However, disadvantaged people are lacking of prior knowledge, are led to low abilities on sequence of academic curriculums, without previous key competencies, they cannot follow the schools'

strong pacing rules and they only fail in educational settings. The middle classes are well prepared and trained by family experiences to cope with what they are supposed to learn in educational settings which totally contains middle-class values and elaborated language codes to facilitate abstract and integrate whole concept abilities.

Working-Class Characteristics

Bernstein believes in different conditions of life that create different priorities and produce far-reaching differences among people (Edwards, 2002). The social class differentiates "ways of living", and it reproduces social inequalities (Cohen, 1981). The differences in material resources determine what educational and career choices seem appropriate and researchable to them. Social class is the critical influence on the "focusing and filtering" of children's experiences because it generates very unevenly distributed perceptions. For the impacts of cultural reproduction, the poor children's consciousness is differentially regulated according to their social class origin and their families (Bernstein, 1990, p. 77). Finally, restricted codes leave people where they were, while elaborated codes are the language of individual and lead to collective change (Edwards, 2002).

Tunstall's (1973) findings imply that physical labor pays little attention to mental abilities, but puts lots of attention on physical strength. Willis (1997) also states that the working class would like to display masculinity and practical-oriented culture rather than reasoning behavior, does not value abstract concepts and logical relationships. These characteristics show that working class failures are not caused by their mental conditions but their reasoning ability (Chiang, Meng & Tian, 2015), the contexts in which they are placed will impact reasoning and language abilities. Bourdieu (1990, 2000) states that one's behavior like an autonomous action; in fact a disposition guides a person evoking reactions to face the outside world. Inner mechanisms are closely related to social space embracing a certain type of cultural capital which is often provided by parents. The family influences and molds a logical reasoning ability that is rooted in how the family trains and interacts on enhancing linguistic ability. A democratic mode which middle class parents apply creates an open and interactive context for mutual sharing dialogue, allowing their children to have more time and space to go through the meanings of issues that they are involved in (Chiang et al., 2015). Communication is more individualized and flexible; interaction and decision-making are the individual qualities of the interaction and decisions are more open to discuss. Also, children tend to influence their parents as well as to be influenced by them. The parents are also sensitive to their children's unique standpoints. Elaborated linguistic code is often rooted in open role systems, and individual's most direct and distinguished experiences are learned through family interactions. Consequently, in the long period of family training facilitates these middle-class children own an elaborated code to understand abstract terms. An

elaborate code helps them use logical reasoning and get “un-context bond” competence which is the core skill to decode an academic discourse. In contrast, working class parents employ an authoritarian style, a didactic mode that tends to train children to get used to using a restricted code and being obedient children. The role of such families tends to be very firm for ascribed statuses and fixed role norms tend to determine the distribution of power and authority. Behavior tends to be regulated by age and sex role expectations. Socialization tends to occur from parent to children (a top-down mode) rather than reciprocally. This authoritarian style does not facilitate their use of logical reasoning, termed as context-bound competence (Chiang et al., 2015). Much attention has been given to the relationship between social class and language elaboration; it combines social organization, linguistic and cognitive factors. Both Bourdieu and Bernstein provide outstanding insights in decoding the phenomenon of cultural reproduction; namely, language reproduction that is from people’s original family settings.

The middle class parents invest lots of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1993) in making an academic context for preparing their children’s logical reasoning abilities. Furthermore, working class culture shows that vigor and strength are the core elements for jobs to be done (Willis, 1977). Working-class parents tend to be deprived of the sense of rational capital and seldom put education achievements in the first place. Their children are within a practical-oriented context, staying away from developing appropriate habits for getting logical rations (Chiang et al., 2015). Thus, difference in social class affects differences in individual cognitive skills. Disadvantaged group’s messages are relatively context-bound, in the sense that the communication relies heavily on shared, taken-for-granted knowledge. The messages tend to be implicit, and more or less tied to the immediate situation, and are well understood only by the shares of the code and the context that its users would be expected to be psychologically more oriented towards the simple and concrete anti-intellectual and have lower cognitive abilities of abstract reasoning and analytic thinking. Class differences in family interaction patterns will evoke the development of different linguistic codes, such as individual from the lower classes tend to use the restricted code whereas individuals from the middle and upper classes tend to use the elaborated code. It is possible that linguistic elaboration is valued by the upper and middle classes. Bernstein (2000) has claimed that differences in social class, education, and family interaction foster different levels of verbal IQ.

CONCLUSION

In the 1960s and 1970s, educational reformers emphasized teaching process, individualized learning, relevant and meaningful curriculums, student spirit freedom, and the equal educational opportunity (Sadovnik, 1991). They stay away from oppressive, authoritarian, elitist, and agree to a more invisible pedagogic practice which implies more freedom to teachers and

students. These above characteristics often exist in the horizontal curriculums combining different codes in educational settings to offer disadvantaged students more benefits and opportunities to give teaching contents from easier to more difficult and provide knowledge from vocational technology to academic specialty. It is all due to the boundary of horizontal curriculums that is much easier to penetrate than vertical curriculums.

The restricted code is often the major speech form of the lower class, denying chances of advancement to those who lacked the necessary verbal strategies (Deutsch, Katz & Jensen, 1967, p. 179); it is similar to a kind of verbal deficit theories pessimistically. But no one should take advantage of others’ weaknesses to set unfair game rules to gain much more benefits or resources from the society that often means depriving others. An academic subject means strongly classified curriculum, it is not always totally suitable and proper for working class students to reach ideal learning goals. Integrated means a weakly classified curriculum, a weak boundary among subjects, through this kind of curriculum working class students can adapt better and get more favorable opportunities in educational settings, for more equal educational opportunities.

Surely people will attack on the decline of academic knowledge and the failure of schools for people do not have a basic knowledge, people insist that schools should pass down such knowledge (Sadovnik, 1991) which often belongs to strongly classified academic curriculum knowledge. It is quite correct that schools should take such kind of responsibilities, but according to social justice and fair rules people should also prevent working-class educational potentials from wasting (Bernstein, 1961). For genetic differences in individual abilities (Nash, 2001), regardless of social status every individual potential should be highly and equally valued.

Collection means a strongly classified curriculum, higher education which relates to specialized fields and personal unique research targets; professors often are likely to apply a strongly classified curriculum to satisfy personal interests and fit one individual specialized research field. No one is able to deny that academic subjects are important because students can obtain the collective representations for approaches and theories that foster these reasoning abilities, for example, people infer those mechanisms that cannot be learned only through direct experience or problem-based learning. A strongly classified curriculum can offer students a certain kind of abstract reasoning and integrating abilities. The subjects should let students close to the connections within a field or between fields which are highly intelligent academic functions, students need to be familiar with” style of reasoning” for subjects and to be beyond a focus on isolated examples of content (Muller-Hartman, 2000). If the world is so diverse and co-determined, students should not restrict their understanding only to the level of events or experiences while participate in weakly classified curriculums.

Since reasoning and integrating abilities are also important to disadvantaged students, now there is a horizontal interdisciplinary academic curriculum that may be better for disadvantaged students than strongly classified academic curriculum. So working-class should also be offered the opportunities to access the popular integrated trend and it is more similar to weakly classified than strongly classified curriculum. Horizontal interdisciplinary academic curriculum means it is also necessary to understand concrete detail, because concrete details are always a result of co-determination such as in the example of factory production. Such an interdisciplinary work takes place in each workplace and competency must be related to realistic workplace practices, so through explicitly negotiating boundaries for running co-teaching rather than denying a weakly integrated classified curriculum (Wheelahan, 2007) in higher education.

Progressivism was concerned primarily with the development of the intrinsic capacities of the students. The task of the teacher was not to instill subject knowledge, but to “expose students to situations in which they could build their knowledge of the world” (Wheelahan, 2007). To construct their knowledge would be much easier happening in a democratic or a weakly integrated classified curriculum setting. Now young students hope and are eager to interact with classmates and speak out loud their individual unique opinions instead of listening to the teachers’ authority and teaching materials; students would like to show and reveal themselves rather than to be silent listeners. Therefore the horizontal curriculums are much easier for worldwide various young generations to accept and teachers to execute; communicating and interacting with others will attract young generations to be more passionate and highly involved in school curriculums.

Consumer rights, freedom and individuality are valuable and important, because these are morally good and belong to the good nature of education. Under the globalization people often cling to strongly classified curriculums for the nature of competition; however, the weakly integrated classified curriculums should also be valued not only in higher education settings but also in other school settings. Vocational and professional academic knowledge are both deep and complex, people need to value both by combining into curriculums such as electricians need to think like mathematicians, and community development workers like sociologists to enhance one’s potential development and self-fulfillment. In school settings, no matter how working class gets more benefits from weakly integrated classified curriculum or weakly integrated classified academic curriculums, it infers that integrated weakly classified academic curriculums or integrated weakly classified curriculums are both important to all students, and integrated weakly classified curriculums will be more helpful to gain benefits for disadvantaged students.

Under the globalization trend, integrated weakly classified academic curriculums let students have broader standpoints to solve complex problems of globalization. If a person does well in

applying vocational practice knowledge then one can move towards academic professional curriculums by using clear whole concept to be an innovative person. In weakly classified curriculums different curriculums or language codes can be connected to each other; namely, it is from simple to a more difficult curriculum, just like moving from primary to intermediate then towards advanced level. Now, market-driven official curriculum devalues the nature of education, it often appears as a kind of sequence knowledge or evaluation for marketing purpose which belongs to strongly classified curriculum, especially for overseas university online curriculums. Different education codes should coexist continuously and should be differentiated by purposes and population. An integrated weakly classified curriculum is much better, but teachers need to have more professional trainings for getting access to different fields. In addition, the huge potential of information technology has created a “totally pedagogized society” in which the transmission of information has moved out and away from its traditionally authorized sites (Chisholm, 2001). People surf and own a lot of information, owing to a lot of information students need professors to teach them how to evaluate, analyze, integrate and apply information; a weakly classified curriculum will be much useful for the above functions. An integrated curriculum in higher education settings is much better than strongly classified curriculum for undergraduate students, but professors need to be full of teaching experiences and having interdisciplinary expertise rather than an inexperienced transmitter. Bernstein also had concluded that the stronger selection and grading procedures will divide pupils; the weaker and the expressive curriculum will keep pupils together (Edwards, 2002). Education shouldn’t always reward success and punish failure: It will be unfair and miserable to students for all schools’ choices are only selection, control and reproduction.

Finally, there are different kinds of curriculum knowledge such as knowledge-as research, knowledge as curriculum, and knowledge as student understanding (Ashwin, 2014). What kind of curriculum is suitable for disadvantaged students? A weakly classified curriculum and horizontal interdisciplinary academic curriculum are quite good for disadvantaged students. Strongly classified curriculum and weakly classified curriculum are always like a coin with two faces turning towards “external linkage and internal power struggles” in various educational settings (Bernstein, 2000). No matter what kind of curriculum, education should let people gain something and find own specific identity through educational functions at least, that’s one of educational purposes. Since horizontal curriculums and vertical curriculums are both important; mutual support and the road of moderation are quite important to weakly and strongly classified curriculums in educational settings. Under the road of moderation and mutual support exciting and hopeful possibilities may lie ahead for disadvantaged students.

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