


Negotiating the Classroom Floor: Negotiating Ideologies of Gender and Sexuality

Kathryn A. Remlinger

Introduction: language, gender, and Critical Discourse Analysis

A brief history of language and gender in the classroom

The school, more specifically the classroom, is a political site of interaction in which power is distributed. Power is frequently taken for granted, and often we do not recognize the ideological, social, and cultural implications of these interactions. The school is a place where power relationships are re-created and redefined, and the classroom is a microcosm of these larger social and political structures. In other words, gender and sexuality are often more than just biological characteristics; they are cultural constructs that are influenced by societal norms and expectations.

What's sexuality got to do with it?

Nomatter which linguistic approach is used, pragmatic, variation or semantic, most often gender and language research in the context of the classroom and elsewhere examines how encoded meanings and speaking strategies reflect and reinforce notions of gender from an assumed heterosexual standpoint, excluding ideologies of 'other' sexualities. This exclusion typically happens because sexuality is subsumed within polarized gendered categories of 'woman' and 'man', which are often based on biological characteristics, and gender and sexuality are often more than just biological characteristics; they are cultural constructs that are influenced by societal norms and expectations. For example, the use of seemingly exclusive categories such as 'woman', 'man', 'straight', 'gay', and 'lesbian' give the appearance that both gender and sexuality are neatly defined, with clear and consistent boundaries. These terms also often reflect a polarized relationship between gender and sexuality, a relationship that reflects hegemonic discourse of gender and sexuality. For example, 'woman' subsumes 'straight woman', and 'man' subsumes 'straight man', neither gender term allowing for reference to sexualities other than heterosexual. This uniform sense of definitions and practices is itself a representation of the dominant sexual ideology that upholds the dualistic notion of either/or: either 'heterosexual' or 'homosexual', either 'woman' or 'man'. In this way most gender and language studies—eventhose studies from a performative approach—to often serve to maintain dichotomized gender categories and in turn reinforce the assumed heterosexual imperative by ignoring the fluidity of gender and sex roles. These assumptions perpetuate gender stereotypes in ways that differ for different kinds of speaking strategies in different contexts. Gender stereotypes are often reinforced through language and power dynamics, which can be seen in the way girls and boys are socialized to act in certain ways in the classroom. For example, girls are often expected to be quiet and reserved, while boys are expected to be aggressive and dominant. These expectations can have a significant impact on how boys and girls are treated in the classroom, and can contribute to the maintenance of gender stereotypes.

In Bodies That Matter Judith Butler (1993) problematizes the absence of sexuality in gender research. She argues that to subsume sexuality under the construct of gender is to presuppose that sexuality is already constructed, and that the lack of consideration of how sexuality is produced. Just as gender roles are constituted through people's everyday lived experiences and in influenced by cultural meanings of what it means to be 'women' and 'men', sexuality is constructed as people enact gender relationships within a framework of what it means to be 'lesbian', 'gay', 'bi', or 'straight', and so on. Julia Epstein (1990) uses a performative framework to demonstrate how the uniform sense of definitions and practices is itself a representation of the dominant sexual ideology that upholds the dualistic notion of either/or: either 'heterosexual' or 'homosexual', either 'woman' or 'man'. In this way most gender and language studies—eventhose studies from a performative approach—to often serve to maintain dichotomized gender categories and in turn reinforce the assumed heterosexual imperative by ignoring the fluidity of everyday experiences, which calls for different kinds of speaking strategies in different contexts. The classroom is a microcosm of these larger social and political structures. In this way, the classroom becomes a site of resistance, where students can challenge and subvert gender and sexuality stereotypes.

A brief history of language and gender in the classroom

gender

Introduction: language, gender, and Critical Discourse

Kathryn A. Remlinger
upholds the dualistic notion of either/or: either woman or man, heterosexual or homosexual. A struggle with these rigid categorizations is reflected in discourse as speakers negotiate what it means to be ‘woman’, ‘man’, ‘lesbian’, ‘gay’ or ‘straight’, as we will see shortly.

Critical Discourse Analysis and the negotiation of meaning

Approaching language, gender, and sexuality from a performance standpoint - as fluid and interdependent social practices - fits neatly within the framework of CDA and its approach to language as a socially constituted practice that shapes, challenges and changes cultural ideologies (see Remlinger 1999 for a developed discussion on integrating CDA and practice theory). In the Editorial of Discourse & Society’s 1993 special issue on critical discourse analysis, van Dijk (1993a) explains that CDA provides researchers of ‘pragmatics, semiotics and discourse analysis [with the means] to go beyond mere description and explanation, and pay more explicit attention to the sociopolitical and cultural presuppositions and implications of discourse’ (p. 131).

Critical discourse analysis typically examines a combination of linguistic features to discern how language functions in the reproduction of social structures. Van Dijk (1993b) maintains that because one way of enacting power is to control the context of a speech situation, CDA focuses on a variety of linguistic features that signify power and the legitimization of ideas. These features include the organizational and contextual features of the discourse that restrict speakers and their ideas from being heard and limit speakers’ control of context. For example, speakers may be silenced by not knowing about particular cultural values alluded to in the conversation or by speaking in a context, such as a classroom, that limits what speakers might say by the power vested in the particular roles they play: for example, students are often limited to how they respond and what they might say by their relative powerlessness. Analyses also include examination of features of the talk itself, such as turn-taking strategies, meanings, politeness, use of hedges, intonation and laughter. In addition, critical discourse researchers often include analyses of genre, rhetorical style and argumentation to determine the production and reproduction of power and dominance.

Relying on CDA to examine the constitution of gender ideologies in the classroom, this study approaches language and gender from a performative approach. The study demonstrates how students linguistically create, reinforce and challenge beliefs, values, and attitudes about what it means to be women, men, straight, lesbian and gay as they negotiate meanings and uses of the classroom floor. The negotiation of the conversational floor ultimately is a negotiation of ideologies as certain speakers’ turns and ideas are developed and those of others are silenced, as meanings are accepted, developed or rejected. Data from the context of the classroom is particularly significant, for not only do participants - staff and students - typically see the classroom as gender-neutral, but it is also one of those public spaces where participants reproduce and enforce ideology through speaking strategies while, nevertheless, both staff and students generally accept the notion that everyone in the classroom has equal access to participating, learning and shaping the beliefs and values of the group.

My interest in this study is to develop an understanding of the interplay of gender and sexuality and the role of language in constituting ideologies, both to demonstrate that the classroom is not a gender-neutral site and to suggest ways for participants - both students and teachers - to foster change. Thus this research is a way to advocate changes at the university through encouraging in students, staff and administration a critical understanding of language, gender and sexuality; this understanding may foster tolerance and inclusion so that all members of the community may have equal access to participating in and experiencing campus culture.

The study

This chapter reports results of a larger comparative ethnography of two public universities in the Upper Midwest of the USA: one is an engineering school of approximately 6,500 students and the other is a liberal arts and professional school of nearly 18,000 students. The demographic composition of both universities is similar, except with respect to gender. The undergraduate student population at both universities is approximately 90 per cent white and the majority of students at both schools come from the Upper Great Lakes region, with those at the liberal arts university coming mostly from Michigan. The gender ratio at each school is nearly the opposite of the other: whereas the engineering university has an undergraduate enrolment of approximately 75 per cent male students, the liberal arts and professional university has an undergraduate enrolment of about 60 per cent female students.

I have selected these sites not only because of their contrasting gender ratios, but also because of the schools’ distinct academic focuses and how these respective institutional practices may affect the constitution of ideologies. Engineering is typically a ‘masculine’ domain dominated by societal discourses of positivism that include ‘objective, distance’
Classroom Ideologies of Gender & Sexuality

Kathryn A. Remlinger

I explore the ways in which classroom environments are structured to reproduce and reinforce gender and sexuality stereotypes. By examining the classroom as a site of learning and socialization, I aim to uncover the mechanisms through which gender and sexuality ideologies are perpetuated in educational settings.

Methods

I analyze classroom interactions using a qualitative approach. Data are collected through observations of classroom interactions, interviews with students and teachers, and analysis of written materials such as course syllabi, assignments, and student writings. This approach allows me to explore the ways in which gender and sexuality ideologies are embedded in the classroom environment and the ways in which they are transmitted to students.

In addition to analyzing classroom interactions, I also examine how gender and sexuality ideologies are reflected in the curriculum and in the ways in which the classroom is organized. This includes examining the ways in which gender and sexuality topics are included in the curriculum and the ways in which classroom activities are structured to reinforce gender and sexuality stereotypes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I argue that the classroom is a site of gender and sexuality socialization. By examining the ways in which gender and sexuality ideologies are perpetuated in the classroom, I hope to shed light on the ways in which these ideologies are transmitted to students and how they may influence students' attitudes and behaviors. Through this analysis, I hope to contribute to a broader understanding of how gender and sexuality ideologies are reproduced in educational settings.
the communicative events that make up the genre, or what CDA refers to as the 'textual form', of classroom talk. In this sense, textual form is the linguistic product of the social event, its speakers, setting and related values, especially the values related to who can and cannot participate, and in what ways. As Kress notes (1990: 90–1), 'Textual form thus becomes a matter of the greatest interest, not simply in itself, but as a means of gaining access to an understanding of social and cultural organization.' I believe that the textual form, in conjunction with encoded meanings, is also an indication of how cultural meanings are constructed, challenged and maintained. Thus, how students use language indicates how power relationships based on gender and sexuality hierarchies are established and played out through language. Below I analyse the function of classroom talk as a means of encoding social and cultural values rather than its structure and form as a specific genre.

Findings

Semantic encoding

As I investigate gendered descriptions in students' language, semantic patterns have developed similar to those in other studies of gender and language in university communities. This study, along with those by Holland and Skinner (1987), Holland and Eisenhart (1990) and Sutton (1995), has found that whereas women tend to be represented in terms of their sexuality and appearance, men tend to be described with regard to their behaviour, intellect and attitude. Yet different patterns have also emerged through the data of my research which reflect notions of sexuality. The data reveal how the valued ways of being women and men are linked to beliefs about women's and men's sexual practices. Furthermore, the data demonstrate that these notions are constantly negotiated, among students as well as within individuals' own thinking.

Definitions and descriptions

In the following example (see the Appendix for an explanation of transcription conventions) we see how semantic encoding works to create a gender ideology that depends on heterosexual ideals. This talk took place in an introductory linguistics class discussion of colloquial naming practices. The discussion begins with the female professor asking students for examples of names for people in their hometown neighbourhoods.

EXAMPLE 1

Don: Yeah, like uh, like I'm talkin with some of uh the um fellas in the neighborhood we refer to women as skeezers.
Prof: As what?
Don: Skeezers.
Prof: Skeezers?
Don: I don't know where it came from. Or uh —
Prof: — Anybody else have that word?
Natalie: [ ]
Laticia: [Yeah. And I mean a synonym for skeezer is sack chaser.
Prof: Is what?
Laticia: [Sack chaser.
Natalie: [Sack chaser.
Prof: Sack?
Laticia: Sack chaser.
Prof: Sack chaser.
Natalie: That's it.
Laticia: Gold:: digger, you know.
Don: [LF] Watch your language now!
Laticia: But I mean – it's – you know –
Prof: — But what does that mean?
Laticia: That you're looking for somebody – gold digger I –
Don: — Well, somebody that dates somebody for their money.
Laticia: Yeah.
Prof: OK.
Laticia: You might not – I mean –
Prof: — Gold digger is common. I know that one. But skeezer is somebody who (.).
Laticia: [LF] (
Natalie: [ ]
Laticia: Or a, a person – or a female who doesn't carry herself well.
We'll call her a skeezer.
Natalie: Yeah.
Don: Oh, no. We got another word for that, buddy.
Class: [LF]
Prof: [( )] Would you like to tell me?
Don: It's not appropriate for this type of conversation.
Prof: OK.
Class: [(LF)]
What is interesting here is that students give examples of derogatory, gender-marked terms for women when the professor has asked for words. "Chick" is often perceived as a term of solidarity and endearment when used by women to address other women. In the following example, we see how a student has negotiated various meanings and uses of "chick." The example comes from a criminal justice class where the professor has been conducting conversations by asking students what they have come to understand about gender during the past week.

**Example 2**

Prof: What about you? Anything happened this week? Any different perspective on things, or—

Mike: —uh, personally, I do (the perspective— I mean. I don’t say ‘chick’ anymore—I mean that’s. since last class that’s it— I—

Class: —((Clapping, cheering, laughter))

Mike: I didn’t realize it was bad. I wasn’t thinking to do it to be dehumanizing.

Here we can see how the student has changed his use of the word, and especially in his own writing, girls have been replaced by chick, and in particular by the variants spellings, grrl, have been replaced by chick. Kathryn A. Remlinger's talk represents the discordant meanings of the term and his own struggle with understanding this. Class members' responses reflect an evaluation and affirmation of his new understanding and language use. This example also demonstrates that CDA applied to studies of language and gender can help us to understand how students learn to negotiate traditional gender roles socialization as it manifests in so-called 'neutral' language, which in turn influences their understanding of gender.

Euphemisms and reclamation

On both campuses, women students are most commonly referred to as 'girls' by both men and women. Like 'chick,' 'girl' is perceived by students as neutral or euphemistic rather than pejorative, despite the fact that these terms do not connote especially positive representations of women. "Girl" is euphemistic when used to refer to female students because it masks their age and sexuality. The use of 'girl' in comparison with the use of 'guy' reflects a gender inequality in which males develop from 'boys' to 'guys' to 'men,' and in which females may or may not develop from 'girls' to 'women.' (It is also common for other women on campus to be called girls, especially women in support-staff positions.) In this sense, female students have not yet developed, while their male counterparts are in the process of evolving into more mature, 'men.' The maintenance of a gender hierarchy based on androcentric ideals is further supported by the fact that there are no comparable euphemisms marked male. Certainly, 'boy' and 'boys' are used, but not as frequently as 'girl' and 'girls.'

'Girl,' and especially its variants spellings, grrl, have been reclaimed by some female students to empower themselves, especially when used within all-female groups. A technical communication major uses the name Danger Grrl in her e-mails and signatures for her writing published in a local magazine. She told me that this name was inspired by Riot Grrls, a gendercentric music genre and activist movement among young feminists in the music industry. Danger Grrl also explained that the variant spellings graphically depict the anger of the oppressed, of women, as 'grrl' has the onomatopoeic quality of a growl. Other all-female groups have also adopted 'girl' as part of their names: for example, Velocity Girl, a modern rock singer/songwriter, and Guerrilla Girls, an anonymous group of women artists who have statistically and graphically documented sexism in New York art galleries and museums (Chadwick 1990). For these women, and others, the use of 'girl' and 'grrl' on themselves and to address other women is an act of resistance against the social construction of femininity and powerlessness. In the following example, Danger Grrl is expressing her discomfort at being classified as a woman because her ‘girl’ and ‘grrl’ are not only a celebration of her identity as a woman, but also an assertion of her power. She is claiming her womanhood and her right to be respected and treated as a woman.
a student discusses how ‘girl’ simultaneously constitutes contrasting ideologies of what it means to be a woman. The excerpt is from the criminal justice class, Crimes Against Women. The first speaker, Mark, is asking how often women refer to themselves as ‘girl’.

EXAMPLE 3

Mark: How often does it happen just cause I’m not there, that when women are in conversation together like the phrase girl comes up or they’re calling each other girl. So as a male / / (Prof: Mhmhm.) would you use the word boy or son? That’s demeaning and that’s—that’s offensive the only time you use it is to offend, to call somebody son or boy.

Prof: Good.

Fran: I think it really depends on [the group of women who are speaking together because generally in society it’s OK to use the word ‘girl’ and it’s not OK to use the word ‘boy’. So, if you’re—if I’m in a group of my feminist friends we might use the word ‘girl,’ um sort of to reclaim the word? But we’re very conscious of it. If I’m at work, my co-workers use the word ‘girl’ all the time but they use it () just because I work with women in a job that has very low requirements, um so to speak, so it’s assumed only quote girls can do it. And people call us the ()room girls and stuff, and my bosses—the doctors I work with. But if I call them on it they still don’t understand it. And I’ll use the word but only in my circle of friends, with the understanding that we use the word, if we choose to and we understand all the background behind it.

Prof: (employ)

Zoe: I think it’s also because there’s no equivalent to ‘guy’. // You say boy, girl. You say girl, guy. You say man, woman // Right.

Prof: (There’s —

Fran: Yeah, no one uses // the word gal.

Prof: // Yes.

Zoe: Yeah, there’s no equivalent.

We see in this example how students are aware of the gender hierarchy based on male-centred ideals and how it is supported by the fact that there are no comparable terms with ‘guy’ marked female. The talk reflects a gender inequality in which, as mentioned above, males develop from ‘boys’ to ‘guys’ to ‘men’, and in which females develop from ‘girls’ to ‘women’. Given that students refer to themselves as ‘girls’ and ‘guys’, the use of ‘girl’ implies that female students have not yet developed, although their male counterparts are in the process of evolving into more mature beings, ‘men’. Thus, similar to gender-marked terms such as ‘chick’, the naming practice of calling female students ‘girls’ relegates female students to a disempowered, diminutive, non-aggressive, complacent, less mature position. (See Kramarae and Treichler 1992 for a detailed discussion on the uses of ‘girl’.) The example also represents the semantic shift of ‘girl’ as well as speakers’ awareness of this shift and how it is affected by speakers’ genders.

Another reclamation, common among lesbian students, is ‘dyke’. It has been reclaimed by some students to positively name lesbians, to redefine female sexuality, to identify, as well as to empower. ‘Dyke’ reflects a social category based on gender and sexual practices, which within the contexts such as the student lesbigay organization meetings, tend to be positive attributes (see Remlinger 1997). ‘Dyke’ has been reclaimed to express the concept of woman as powerful, as positive. As students Carolyn and Diane explain:

Carolyn: A dyke is actually... a leader in the community or is active in the lesbian community... she has a social role... a mentor.

Diane: That’s a good thing!

Carolyn: That’s right! Because a woman in power here is good!

Diane: A woman in power anywhere is good!

Practices and beliefs such as reclamation, which function to challenge or otherwise modify the status quo, are those that are not legitimated within the dominant value system. Resistance here is a struggle over the legitimate meanings of gender and sexuality. What differentiates these resistant events from those that reproduce an oppressive ideology is their critical element: during resistant events meanings and actions tend to be clearly defined in the attempt to challenge and change normative attitudes and values about gender and sexuality. Resistance is a therefore a conscious action to challenge normative ideologies. These examples of reclamation show how definitions of gender and sexuality are semantically shifted from the perspective of the dominant to that of the oppressed to resist imposed attitudes, beliefs and values. Specifically, ‘dyke’, ‘chick’, ‘girl’ and ‘grrl’ reclaim the power and constructions of sexuality denied women through the pejorative use of these terms. The semantic shift challenges an ideology that categorizes women according to phallocentric ideals based on physical
Classroom Ideologies of Gender & Sexuality

There is a crucial issue with the categorization of gender and sexuality. The reclaimation takes issue with these limiting categorizations to claim that there are ways of being women and ways of practising sexuality other than those defined by status quo.

Pragmaticsof discourse

In my analysis of speaking strategies, I pay special attention to speakers' uses of interruptions, silences, extended development, and topic control. I develop this analysis to explain what notions of gender and sexuality are taking shape within the discourse, how they are produced, and what they reveal about power relationships within the campus communities. For example, a pragmatic analysis examining turn-taking will reveal power structures within the community by showing who is holding the floor, who is excluded from the floor space, and whose ideas are developed or silenced. Julia Penelope (1990) calls this aspect of language a 'universe of discourse' as it specifies roles for members and assigns certain values to members based on their roles and behaviors.

Extended development

Extended development (Bergvall and Remlinger 1996) is a means by which speakers interact with each other, recycle an old topic, or dominate floor space: in short, it consists of ways of holding the floor. This kind of talk control is what Tannen (1990) calls 'rapport' talk, and it is typically associated with women's speaking strategies. Conversely, speakers may also use extended development in monologic turns that dominate floor space, thus creating a symmetrical power relationship among speakers. This kind of talk control is what Tannen calls 'report' talk, and it is often categorized as a masculine form of language use. In this next example, both the collaborative and controlling aspects of extended development are played out as students use the classroom floor space to raise issues with the professor about the theme and objectives of the course, Literary Representations of Gender, Class, Race, and Ethnicity.

Before we get started with the story, Dave, right? I came in my office yesterday and had a question that I thought was important and that I thought would be worth pursuing with the class, at least at the beginning. Dave, do you want to tell them about it?

Dave: Well, I just thought that not all the stories had any connection necessarily with race, class, or gender, but I thought people sometimes just said that because that's how society is organized. And sometimes you have to answer one of those themes. I didn't necessarily interpret the story the way you did. That's basically it.

The professor threw David out. (rising then falling into aitations signalling sarcasm)

Class: (LF)

Prof: No, I think these are good questions and I'm sure if you have these questions, others do as well. I don't have any answers for these questions, but I do. I think these are good questions and I'm sure if you have these questions, others do as well. But you would agree?

Gary: [I agree, I agree.]

Mae: My story I read especially.

Prof: In what sense?

Mae: In the sense of...

Andrew: —What story was this?

A Wedding for Stella.

OK, now class. I can see a little bit more clearly, because there was the thing about the husband being rich, Rachel's husband.
And then they said a little bit about her husband who was a drunk, but (.) but (.) but what point does it make? I mean as far as to write an analysis on it? (.)

Darlene: (.) (.) (.)
Class: (.) (.)
Mae: (.)
Class: (.)
Prof: [OK. Do you have an answer?]
Darlene: No, I don't have an answer. I wouldn't call it that, but what I was going to say is that I think that it's, it's up to each individual because like on some of the stories I've read I felt had more of what this class is about // more than others. Just like the last one we read where everybody wrote their analyses of their friendships — I can't remember the story's name — the last one (.) Yeah. I just thought (.) you know that she was just getting to know something different about her, but yet everybody else was like, you know, there was something more [there to (.)]

Right! (.) more to the story than the (.)
Prof: // Mmhm.
Mae: (.)
Mae: (.) (.) (LF) (.) Mmhm.

Here the female professor and students use extended development to facilitate talk and to hold the floor. What is most interesting is that students are using extended development through monologic turns as well as developing and affirming other students' ideas, to hold floor space specifically designated for the discussion of gender, class, race and ethnicity, yet they deny that it is a relevant issue. Dave in particular holds the floor both to challenge the relevance of gender and to develop other students' ideas. Mae and Darlene, although the content of their turns reveals a challenge to the importance of ethnicity and class in interpreting the readings, also use extended development to draw and affirm as well as to hold the floor. The students' denials function to resist the perspective that gender is a relevant and important issue for study and discussion and that discussing gender issues brings about change, as well as to reinforce a perspective that discounts the relevance of gender in the construction of culture and experience. Reinforcing this perspective maintains notions imposed by the status quo by ignoring, and therefore silencing, notions that may challenge the norming of gender-related ideologies. Gender issues are simultaneously at the margin and at the centre of campus politics. Thus gender, as a politicized topic on campus, cannot be made an issue without its being silenced by those who wish to marginalize it. And without discussion, ideas that may change perspectives about gender cannot be produced or developed. In fact, the questioning and discussion that comprised this class session led to changes in students' beliefs and attitudes. Over the course of the term, Dave became interested in connections between gender and literature; his final project for the class specifically dealt with representations of gender in several short stories.

Extended development – interacting

In the following example, the female professor uses extended development to help students expand their ideas, to evaluate and affirm what they say, as well as to keep the conversation going. Although the discussion focuses on Samson and Delilah's characterizations, the development of this conversation depends on students' perceptions of gender roles and heterosexual relationships. The talk comes from a humanities class, Milton's Women Characters.

EXAMPLE 5

Prof: How would you describe Delilah, as her reputation? (.)
What would be your description of Delilah? (.) I mean the person. Describe her personality, her character.
Kelly: She seems opportunistic.
Prof: Opportunistic? Good.
Kelly: She seems like, well — I'm not sure she is a prostitute, but there's this feeling that you get that she might be a loose woman.
Joel: (.) caring for him or (.) or really kind of opportunistic (.)
Prof: Yeah. It describes about how Samson feels about her, says that he loved and fell in love with a woman in the valley of (Zorich). (.) Which isn't surprising when he's always falling in love with some woman somewhere. But in this case, uh, we know how Samson feels about Delilah, how does Delilah feel about Samson?
Alice: She just used him to get (.) money. (.) [she's —
prof: Why is she not telling him the truth about—what does she lie to him about?

sandy: She doesn't tell him what she's going to do.

prof: Samson.

joel: He lies to Delilah about one thing.

prof: He lies to Delilah about one thing that matters to her. He actually tells the official Out and Out lie. But we see him as somehow justified. Right?

Earl: Yes.

prof: The good guy. He's our hero.

In the above example extended development is used to draw out student ideas, to help them develop their ideas on how Delilah and Samson are characterized. Yet we also see gender stereotypes in these characterizations: women as deceptive and thus evil, men as justified in their deception, just as promiscuous men are justified in their actions, yet promiscuous women are perceived as 'loose', as prostitutes. In fact the female professor leads into this perspective with her use of 'reputation' in reference to Delilah; the 'reputation' of women tends to refer to the community's perception of women's sexual activity, yet 'reputation' is 'vested in men' (Kramarae and Treichier 1992). A gendered ideology is further developed through the professor's evaluative affirmations of students' responses, with evaluations such as 'Good', 'OK' and 'Yep', as well as with rephrasing and repeating their responses, as in 'Opportunistic', 'A loose woman', and 'the good guy'. The extended development thus acts to not only create notions of gender and sexuality, but to reinforce these expectations and roles.

Topic control

Topic control often represents a speaker's position as the authority to set the topic. Topic control typically indicates who the dominant participants are and what the agenda of the conversation is (Fairclough 1992). In this sense the topic of the conversation influences the construction of knowledge, ways of thinking. Example 1 above demonstrates how Don, as a student, controls the topic as well as the conversational floor. In this example, the professor interjects in an effort to get students talking. However, Don controls the topic by not elaborating on the definition of 'skeezer' and by bringing the topic to its conclusion. Natalie and Latica support the topic through their use of extended development and tandem turn-taking, to affirm and help develop the discussion of 'skeezer'. Therefore the category of woman as sexual object is not only created through Don's control of the conversational floor, but also through his use of 'skeezer' as an analogy for women who don't 'carry themselves well'. The professor's role is to resist this control and to initiate the discussion of gender and sexuality. However, Don's control of the conversational floor and his use of 'skeezer' as an analogy for women who don't 'carry themselves well' is reinforced through the professor's responses, such as 'Yep', 'Good', and 'OK'. This reinforces the gendered ideологии that women are sexual objects and that men control the conversation.

Interruption and silencing

The next example reflects a similar kind of resistance to the negotiation of ideologies through the use of extended development to dominate the floor. However, the more significant aspect of this segment is the use of interruption to assert control as well as to silence. This talk is from a humanities class, Intercultural Communication, during a question and answer period of a group presentation on 'homosexuality as culture'. A panel of students from the university's gay alliance has been asked to speak as part of the presentation. Frank is a member of the class, whereas Carolyn and Jack are panelists.
EXAMPLE 6

Frank: How do any of you respond to people that—uh—they are saying that homosexuality growing in the United States because of the— it's a product of our times, with, uh, family values and the father figure not necessarily being there all the time.

Carolyn: My father was there all the time. I, uh—

Frank: — I just — I mean, that's not the way I feel. I just—I think that homosexuality's been around—has always been around and uh, I hear from my friends and stuff that they think it's growing because in the United States, it's—it's a product of the times. I don't know what you've heard.

Jack: That the key family unit—the family unit is breaking down?

Frank: Yeah.

Female: So there's more homosexuals?

Professor: Yes! Blame those single parents! (rising then falling intonation signalling sarcasm)

Students: ([LF])

Male: [No ()]

Carolyn: (I guess—no—they are entitled to their opinion. If they do want to engage in conversation about it, uh, you can point to all sorts of historical examples. I think what they're seeing is more people being out as homosexual rather than more homosexuals. So, that might be a ()).

Jack: // Yeah.

Interruption here appears to be a form of control. The interruption does come at a point where Carolyn pauses in her speech, so it may look as if Frank is not interrupting, but rather following up or adding to his previous statement. However, it seems as if Frank wants to control what Carolyn says, to stop her from explaining that she comes from a home with a father figure and yes: is lesbian, which contradicts the point he is trying to make. When Jack takes a turn to clarify what Frank is asking, Frank affirms that homosexuality is 'growing' because the 'family unit is breaking down'. An unidentified female student in turn clarifies the presupposition of Frank's statements: that the change in family structures leads to the increase in homosexuality. The professor's sarcastic turn challenges this notion. Not until eight turns after she's been interrupted does Carolyn attempt to take the floor again.

As Tannen (1993) and West and Zimmerman (1983) among others—demonstrate, neither power nor culture alone can be used as interpretive backdrops in the analysis of interruptions. Given the culture of this classroom and the campus community, I interpret the interruption above as a form of control for three reasons: (a) because members of the alliance who were a part of this presentation told me after the presentation that they felt Frank was controlling the floor space in that he did not allow Carolyn to answer his question when she began to give an example that contradicted his claim, and in that Frank relinquished the floor to Jack and agreed with him when Jack reiterated Frank's main point; (b) because Frank's second turn merely restates his first comment; and (c) because Carolyn is silenced by his interruption. Her silencing is not only through Frank's interruption, however; eight turns follow, including a joke made by the professor, before Carolyn retakes the floor. After her response the topic changes with a male student taking the floor to talk about his rejection of Blue Jean Day, a campus event sponsored by the alliance. Both Carolyn and her topic are derailed, thus silenced. The talk here therefore is used to control and silence ideas that do not fit those of the dominant ideology, to affirm heterosexuality as the norm, to limit the participation of 'others' in constituting the culture, and to perpetuate notions of homosexuality held by those who perceive it as 'a product of the times' (thus denying its historicity and existence, although Frank states that it 'has always been around'), as well as a negative result of changing social structures such as the family. Likewise, Frank's talk regulates as well as restricts negotiation of meanings and the floor. In his exclusion of Carolyn's construction of 'lesbian', Frank's talk works to enforce an ideology grounded in androcentrism and heterosexuality.

Conclusions

The data represent the complex interweaving of linguistic features and ideological processes. Various linguistic features—silence, extended development, reclamations, dysphemisms—conjoin in student talk and texts throughout the university to produce, resist, as well as oppose resistance to a multitude of notions about gender and sexuality. These elements of language and ideology might best be conceived as threads that intertwine to continually weave new patterns and even to shape new and distinctive fabrics.

The data also demonstrate that ideologies of gender and sexuality are interdependent. How students believe, value and practise gender in
The study of student discourse and the constitution of gender and sexuality ideologues is vital to understanding how and why these factors be oppressed; it is to be existentially denied, to be outsider, invisible, the other. ‘If students are treated differently because of their gender and sexual values and practices then access to the same education is not possible. The more powerful social formations of these are scopo and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocators, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocators, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocators, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocators, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocators, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlocutors, they control or influence the scope and interlo...
their readings and feedback of previous versions of the chapter. I am grateful to Tracie Hammontree who collected and transcribed a portion of the data during Spring 1997 and to Valerie Ward for her perspectives on the in-group/out-group uses of the terms 'skeezer' and 'sack chaser'. I am also indebted to the students and instructors who allowed me access to their classes and conversations, and their thoughts and feelings about language, gender, and sexuality; this research would not have happened without them.

Notes

1. See Graddol and Swann (1989) and James and Clarke (1993) for overviews of this research.
2. All participants' names are pseudonyms.
3. During an informal interview after class Natalie and Laticia made the connection between 'sack chaser' and 'gold digger' more clear. In this variety, 'sack chaser' refers to a woman who is after a man for his bag of marijuana, or 'sack', similar to a 'gold digger,' who wants a man for his money.
4. This reluctance to define may be related to in-group/out-group language use: 'skeezer' and 'sack chaser' are words from African American English (AAE). Don, Laticia, and Natalie are AAE speakers, whereas the speaker asking for clarification, the professor, is not. In addition, these students are the only AAE speakers among the 32 students in the classroom. Hence race and ethnicity, in addition to gender, may affect the negotiation of the floor and of the encoded meanings in this particular example.
5. It is also important to note the possibility of the female speakers, Laticia and Natalie, subverting as well as conforming to the dominant norms of the classroom. Laticia and Natalie produce highly 'masculine' and heterosexuallyized ways of referring to other women, conforming to a dominant norm. Yet, at the same time, the label may work to subvert the conversational floor by topicallyising the supposedly private and potentially taboo subjects of sex and sexuality within a public and academic context, just as it may also function to subvert the dominant 'whiteness' of the conversational floor.
6. In Examples 2 and 3 there is also the possibility of students conforming to expected or assumed norms of the class, similar to what may be happening in Example 1. In Examples 2 and 3 it is possible that the male speakers are conforming to what they perceive as the dominant perspective among other students (female) and the professors (female) in the classrooms.
7. The female professor is a single parent of two children.

References

Performing State Fatherhood: The Remaking of Hegemony

Introduction

Michelle M. Lazar

The Remaking of Hegemony: Performing State Fatherhood

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the politics at work in representations of the modern father. Particularly in contemporary industrialized societies, where women have made considerable strides in the public work arena, there has been a growing visibility and accentuation of men's domestic identity as fathers, giving rise to a 'culture of daddyhood'. Adapting the term from Larossa (1997), I mean by this the general popularization of the paternal identity. It is not unusual these days to see fathers spending time with their children, pushing strollers in parks, and playing with them. This is particularly pronounced in the media as a common representation of modern masculinity, and is fast becoming a global trend. Governments and political leaders around the world are no exception: the promotion of the 'Family Life' campaign in Singapore, for example, is an illustration of how the state is involved in the construction of this identity. In the late 1980s, the Singaporean government launched a pro-natalist campaign aimed at encouraging people to have children. The campaign emphasized the importance of having children, and how it is a duty of all Singaporeans to contribute to the country's future. This chapter examines the discursive construction of the 'daddyhood' culture in Singapore through a different kind of endorsement provided by the state, starting in the late 1980s, in the form of a national 'Family Life' advertising campaign. This was a pro-natalist campaign which was