

Language, Ideological Norms and Education

Mehrdad Shahidi

PhD Candidate

Inter-University Doctoral Program

MSVU, Canada

Faculty Member

IAU- Tehran Central Branch

Iran

Abstract

Focusing on the fundamental role of language in creating and developing ideas, beliefs and norms, the current paper revolved around the processes of emergence of ideological norms. Through five major assumptions, it was argued how commonalities and cohesion in beliefs may involve shared goals and intentionality to create hegemonic ideological norms. In addition to the role of collectivity and the mechanism of social normalization to establish the consistent ideological norms, it was demonstrated that educational system is a major context through which socially shared intergroup belief systems (ideological norms) develop. To create these norms, educational system functions through a four-stage process including performing, appraising, forming and norming. Finally, based on the power and the properties of language, it was argued that critical theories may help educational system, particularly in research, practice and evaluation areas, to modify hegemonic ideological norms.

Keywords: Language, Ideological Norms, Social Normalization, Shared Goals, Intentionality

Introduction

Each person in the world has a device to write and to transmit his or her ideas and thoughts that is called *language*. The nature, characteristics and functions of this capacity have been studied by many philosophical, sociological, biological and psychological theorists (Dunn, & Fox Tree, 2014; Christensen, Zubrick, Lawrence, Mitrou, & Taylor, 2014; Saul, 2012; Cowie, 2010; Wolf, 2009), but there are still many unknown facts related to language (Cowie, 2010; Malim & Birch, 1998). Language is defined as a capacity of vocal and unvocal expressing or communicating thought or emotions (Corsini, 1999). This ability deals with a system of symbols by which the human relationships are formed (Gillibrand, Lam, & O'Donnell, 2011; Santrock, MacKenzie-Rivers, Leung, & Malcomson, 2005). Many scholars argued that language is a multi-dimensional phenomenon (Steen, Reijnerse, & Burgers, 2014; Wolf, 2009; Malim & Birch, 1998; Santrock et al., 2005). Focusing on this multi-dimensionality, the role of language in generating and developing beliefs, social norms, and in establishing ideological norms was argued in this research. I also argued how educational system plays a central role in this process. Exploring the power and the properties of language, it was also demonstrated that critical theories may help educational system, particularly in research, practice and evaluation areas, in order to change or modify hegemonic ideological norms.

Language: Characteristics and Functions

Since a single dimensional definition of language cannot reveal all aspects of language, its characteristics and functions are central to this article. Santrock et al. (2005) characterized language by its *infinite generativity* and *organizational rules* in which infinite generativity refers to the power of language in producing endless number of concepts, words, and meaningful sentences. Organizational rules refer to the grammar of language that is universal (Chomsky, 1968 cited in Malim & Birch, 1998; Mils, 2007). In another perspective, language is characterized by the *syntagmatic* and *paradigmatic* properties (Wiley, 2006). Syntagmatic property is related to sentence configuration and paradigmatic is the process of word selection.

The process of choosing words or concepts is a cognitive feature of language by which individuals organize their thoughts and ideas through a meaningful way (MacWhinney, 2011). This characteristic creates an inquiry regarding the relationship between language and thought (cognition).

Contrary to some theories of language (e.g., the Theory of Language of Thought Hypothesis-LOTH) in which concepts (language) have central role in making thought (Margolis & Laurence, 2011; Katz, 2009; Aydede, 2010), language in other theories such as Piaget's is only one of the numerous symbolic functions of thought (Malim & Birch, 1998; Birney & Sternberg, 2011). In addition to those perspectives, Bruner (Demetriou, Doise, & Lieshout, 1998; Malim & Birch, 1998) argued that language and thought are separate; that is, thought refers to *enactive* and *iconic representation*, and language refers to *symbolic representation*. Likewise, Vygotsky (1962, cited in Santrock et al., 2005) believed that language and thought are initially independent, but then they merge with each other. However, these perspectives focused on the cognitive features of language in which "language may also be the medium of conscious propositional thinking" (Carruthers, 2002 p. 657). Regardless of cognitive characteristics of language, the terms 'social conversation' (Vygotsky, 1978), and 'Format' (Brunner cited in Demetriou, et al., 1998) revealed that language is formed in a close interaction between person and culture. This feature of language was argued by Vygotsky (Demetriou et al., 1998; Santrock, 2005), Archer (2012; Clarke, 2008) and also Wittgenstein (Peters, 2012). Wittgenstein (Peters, 2012) characterized language by three distinctive but interrelated characteristics including *contextual*, *performative* and *normative* features, amongst which contextual feature is prominent. Contextual feature refers to this fact that humans' language, (e.g., propositions, concepts and expressions) cannot be understood unless they are seen within a social context because the characteristics of language are embedded in situated activities (Peters, 2012). Based on contextualism, Peter (2012) noted that human language can be understood, if it is considered as a part of human's style of life.

Contextualism let researchers study the language's products such as beliefs and ethics contextually. The logical result of this perspective is to consider language as a social phenomenon. Not only Wittgenstein (Peters, 2012) as an analytic philosopher, but also other theorists (Ives, 2004) or critical realists such as Archer (2012) and Elder-Vass (2010) argued that culture is a major determinant of language. Although Elder-Vass (2010) particularly paid less attention to language in his book named *The Causal Power of Social Structure*, he has a social ontological view of language in which the causal power of language is originated in social structures. In addition to these theoretical views of language, empirical studies corroborated some contextual features of language (Moore, 2013; Vásquez & Naranjo, 2011; Malim & Birch, 1998). For example Bernstein (1961 cited in Malim & Birch, 1998) demonstrated that working-class and middle-class children tend to use two different types of language. In that research, working-class family and children tended to use *restricted code language* in which short sentences, crude words and simple phrases are used grammatically; in contrast, the middle-class children tended to use *elaborated code of language* in which individuals speak more flexible along with having large vocabulary span.

Alignment with Bernstein's (1961 cited in Malim & Birch, 1998) research, Vásquez and Naranjo (2011) investigated the relationship between *social stratum* and *written culture* in student population. Using a valid and reliable quantitative methodology, Vásquez and Naranjo (2011) demonstrated that both social stratum and written culture are associated with each other. Emphasizing cultural differences in using words and concepts, Phadi and Owen (2010) conducted a qualitative investigation to show the different meanings of the words 'class', 'middle class' in South Africa's indigenous people. They concluded that those words have different meanings in South Africa's indigenous language in comparison with English language. For example, "*middle class*, when switched into African language, means 'in the middle'; whereas, 'in the middle' can denote the middle of a space or a social position" (Phadi & Owen, 2010 P. 81) in South Africa's indigenous language. This is opposite of what we usually understand from the word 'middle class' as an economic category of social class. These studies revealed that language is socially situated and is a culture-based phenomenon. Being socially situated is not just a function of language; additionally, it is a central and inseparable characteristic of language as Thanasoulas (2001, cited in Elmes, 2013) argued that "language does not exist apart from culture" (P.12). Based on this view, most functions of language are fulfilled culturally. However, language as a multidimensional phenomenon has different bio-psychosocial functions. The function of language in enhancing mental health in students (Jafari, Baharlou, & Mathias, 2008), the cognitive self-regulatory function of language (Vallotton, 2008; Vallotton & Ayoub, 2011; Cheyney, Wang, & Bettini, 2013), and the mediatory function of language between agency and structure (Archer, 2012) are some of bio-psychosocial functions of language.

Regarding self-regulatory function of language, it is demonstrated that as soon as children can use words or concepts to express their desires, needs or emotions, they can develop their abilities of self-control, self-inhibition, and self-monitoring to regulate their behaviors (Vallton, 2008).

This function of language was also emphasized by Vygotsky (1962 cited in Santrock et al., 2005) who believed that language is used for social communication as well as for self-regulation. From different functions of language, the generation of beliefs, social norms and making social stances toward the society is a unique function (Archer, 2012). This function can display how norms, beliefs and language are interconnected.

Language, Beliefs and Ideological Norms

Approximately most scientists and social theorists emphasize the central role of language in generating beliefs (Steen, Reijnierse, & Burgers, 2014; Schwitzgebel, 2010; Malpas, 2014). Carruthers (2002) argued that language can be seen as a conduit of belief. Through this evolutionary device, individuals acquire their concepts by which humans' beliefs are constructed (Santrock et al., 2005; Malim & Birch, 1998). In addition to empirical research (Carruthers, 2002; Santrock et al., 2005; Malim & Birch, 1998), some philosophers such as Davidson (Malpas, 2014; Schwitzgebel, 2010) believed that individuals do not have beliefs without language. The major reason for this idea can be inferred from the role of concepts in human's language. Since concepts (words that carry out meanings) are the central core of thought and belief (Earl, 2007), and thought is a type of inner language (based on LOTH- Katz, 2009; Archer, 2012; Vygotsky, 1962 cited in Santrock et al., 2005), it is difficult to imagine that concepts, beliefs and language are separate from each other and they can exist autonomously. Focusing on the relationship among concept, language, thought and belief (Figure 1), it is assumed that belief is gradually constructed through the early stages of language development (Demetriou et al., 1998; Santrock et al., 2005).

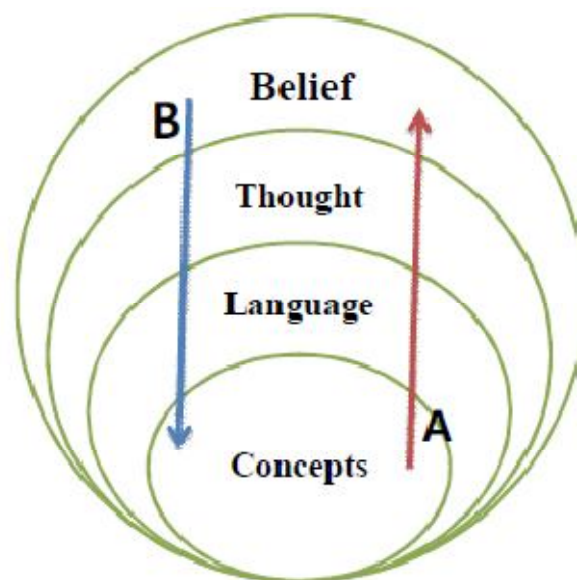


Figure 1: The Relationship between Concept, Language, Thought and Belief

Since the major particles of individuals' beliefs are concepts shaping their *propositions* in an organized and structured way, belief is defined as a propositional attitude. Propositional attitude is "the mental state of having some attitude, stance, take, or opinion about a proposition or about the potential state of affairs in which that proposition is true..." (Schwitzgebel, 2010, P.1). Similar to Schwitzgebel (2010), belief is also defined by Splitter (2011) as a key propositional attitude that highlights each individual's *subjective* and *objective stances* toward the world. Religious beliefs, scientific beliefs, and social beliefs (e.g., feminist belief, and racist belief) are some examples of beliefs that reveal people's stances toward the world ontologically and epistemologically. These beliefs are assumed as a set of propositional attitudes that determine individual's system of knowledge that is acquired through linguistic experiences. These experiences are gained through social and cultural interactions. Thus, language is socially situated (Figure 2) and is affected by social and cultural influences (Peter, 2012).

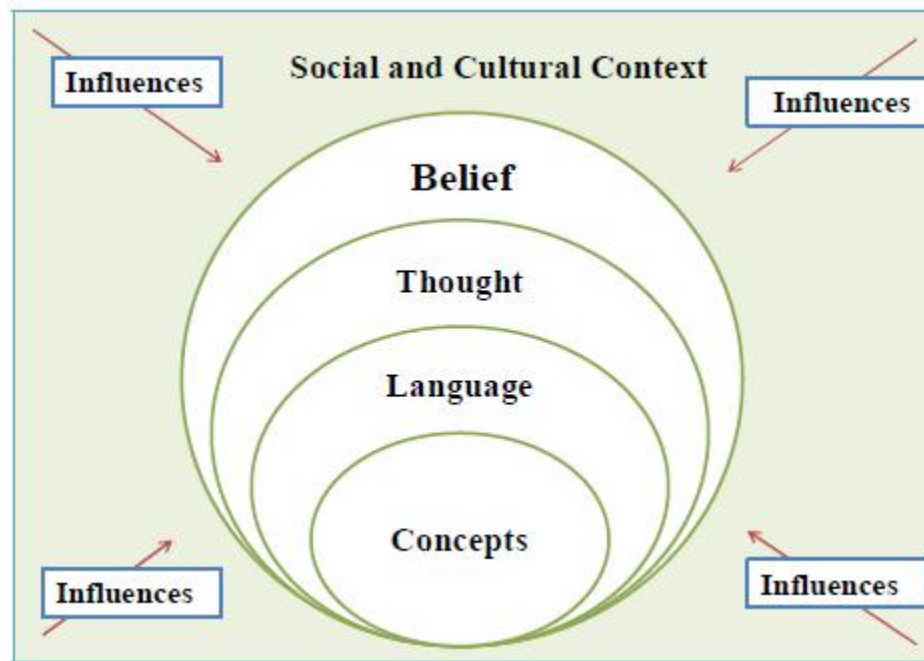


Figure 2: Contextual Relationship between Concept, Language, Thought and Belief

Accordingly, Wittgenstein (Peters, 2012) argued that one of the basic feature of language is *normative* that refers to normative expectations related to norms, rules and laws. Since beliefs belong to the social world historically (Davidson, 2001 cited in Splitter, 2011; Malpas, 2014), and particularly, because beliefs have *causal roles* in producing behaviors (Schwitzgebel, 2010), it is assumed that beliefs can create social norms or act as social norms. In this process, the propositional attitude functions in combination with desires, intentions, and expectations within a network to create social norms (Splitter, 2011). But, the question is: How does belief generate social norms or function as social norms? To answer this question, I assumed that:

- 1) Each person is a unique member of his or her own culture and society.
- 2) Each individual uses his or her natural language, which is socially situated, to generate beliefs and knowledge.
- 3) There are many commonalities between individuals' beliefs since they are living in an analogous historical and cultural context, and using their natural language.
- 4) Based on social life and having cooperation (collectivity), individuals form shared goals, build social norms, pursue and change norms through the *shared intentionality* (Tomasello, Carpenter, Call, Behne, & Moll, 2005; Schweikard&Schmid, 2013), and also 5) beliefs have causal power to create social behaviors.

These assumptions reveal that the relationship among language, belief and social norms is a causal relationship. This causality was argued by Elder-Vass (2010, 2011, 2012) using the concepts of *collectivity* and *norm circle*. He argued that each person holds a normative belief or disposition that endorses practice in a norm circle. Borrowing the term *circle* from Simmel (1955 cited in Elder-Vass, 2010), he defined a norm circle as a group of individuals who are committed to *endorse* and *enforce* a specific norm. These groups of people have many commonalities and cohesion in their ideas and beliefs giving them enough causal power to create norms, endorse and act norms. These commonalities and cohesion are originated in their natural language including meaningful concepts. In such norm circles, norms determine how members of a group should behave or should be punished if they do not follow the norms. These norms may be formal such as discursive rules (e.g., editorial rules in an academic journal-Elder-Vass, 2012) or may be implicit (Parks, 2004). When norms are formed, the behaviors of members are governed by norms, and the survival of a group depends on its norms. The major part of Elder-Vass' (2010, 2011) view is that each circle (a group of people) has its own *parts* and *relations* that generate specific norms. I portrayed all these characteristics and the processes of generating norms in the Figure 3 hypothetically.

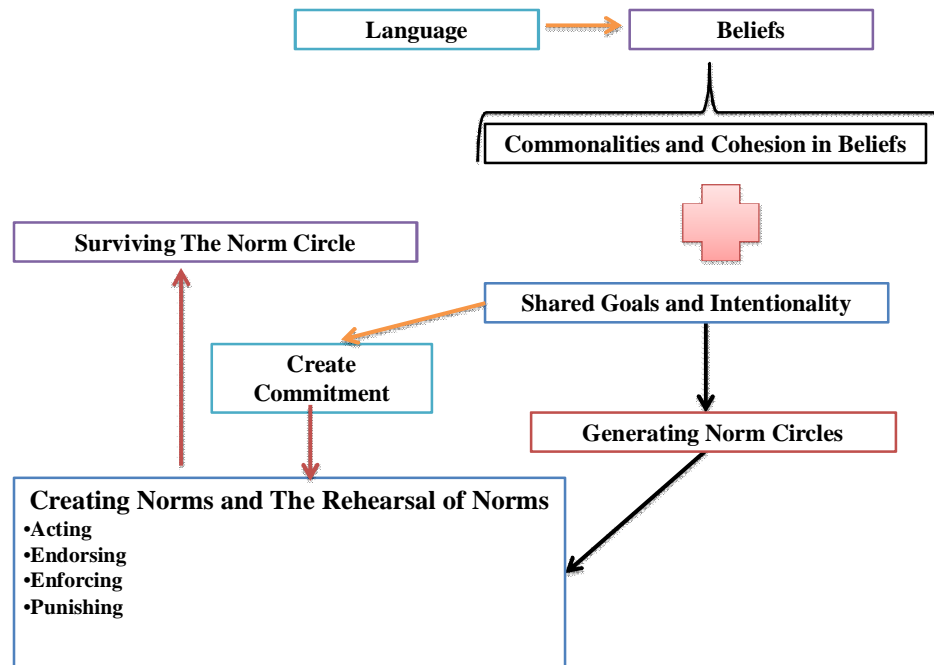


Figure 3: A Hypothetical Process of Creating Social Norms Adapted from Elder-Vass' (2007, 2010) and Tomasello's (2007) Ideas

In addition to Elder-Vass' (2010, 2012) view, which it has enough competency to demonstrate how social norms are constructed, the *theory of normalization* is another logical view by which I tend to demonstrate how social norms are shaped and how these norms can be converted to hegemonic ideological norms. Normalization is defined as "a valued-based set of principles" (Bronston, 1974 P. 492). That is also a process through which not only norms (principles or rules) are shaped, but also the formed norms can be generalized to whole society as hegemonic norms. To understand the mechanism of normalization, Normalization Process Theory (NPT) is an appropriate theory that was generated within a public health context, and it refers to how a set of principles or rules can be implemented, embedded and integrated within a group of people. This theory also refers to social processes through which new ideas, beliefs or other social activities are adopted by individuals within the context of a society (May, Mair, Finch, MacFarlane, Dowrick, Treweek, Rapley, Ballini, Ong, Rogers, Murray, Elwyn, Legare, Gunn, & Montori, 2009). In this theory, three stages including *implementation, embedding and integration* should be followed to normalize a behavior or belief (May & Finch, 2009; May et al., 2009). In addition to these stages, NPT deals with some major social-cognitive components by which normalization occurs. These components are "coherence, cognitive participation, collective action, and reflexive monitoring" (Murry et al., 2010). Based on this theory, normalization is possible, if a program pursues the social-cognitive processes. Considering all above noted stages and components, it is assumed that these processes can occur either automatically (spontaneously) or formally by institutional programs or mass media. However, mass media in Western countries has main role in establishing hegemonic ideological norms. NPT theory is approximately similar to what Elder-Vass (2010) theorized about norm circle.

According to Elder-Vass (2010) a norm circle can also be explicitly formal or informal. Although these theories are ontologically different, both perspectives refer to the process of causality in generating norms (social norms). NPT explains how a norm (e.g., health care norm) can be generated in a group of people by following some definite processes, and the theory of norm circle is explaining how norms are generated and function in circles by collectivity and causal power. Regardless of many benefits of normalization (Bronston, 1974), the researcher assumes that normalization process is used consciously (explicitly) or unconsciously (implicitly) to generate and establish ideological norms and make it hegemonic. Ideological norms are "socially shared intergroup belief systems" (Stewart, 2014). Thus, it is proposed that these norms are a set of valued-based ideas, beliefs and practices that are implemented, embedded and integrated in a group of people that acts as a system and represents a typical performance of that group. These types of norms reveal a profound and strong ideological agreement in a group of people or in a society.

When such norms are shaped, it automatically acquires enough causal power to become dominant in a society. I argue that the casual power of these types of norms may be enormous when the norms carry a historical philosophical background by which the norms become justifiable and legitimate. The examples of ideological norms and their causal power can be found in Stewart's (2014) findings: "I examined how normative or contentious sexism is across 57 nations. I found that people's sexist beliefs corresponded to whether they believed abortion and wife-beating were justifiable, but only when sexism was normative in the nation. In another study, I found that people's individual level ideological justification (i.e., using anti-immigrant beliefs to justify their opposition to immigration) corresponded to the level of income inequality between natives and immigrants, but only when ideological beliefs concerning immigrants were contentious.... ideological norms are important moderators of individual beliefs and social policy attitudes". (<http://socialstewart.com/research/norms.html>).

Unlike Stewart's (2014) idea, I believe that the roles of ideological norms are more than being as *moderators*. Furthermore, the norms are more powerful to bring changes in societies as well as to become hegemonic. Regardless of different types of hegemonic ideological norms (e.g., sexism or racism), I assumed that these types of norms are generated and established by the process of normalization through educational system officially or unofficially. From the early stages of schooling, educational system has central role in implementing, embedding and integrating ideological norms by using coherent (sense making) strategies, cognitive participations, collective actions, and reflexive monitoring in all students. Since educational system is based on a set of pre-programmed policies, educational system is an appropriate context through which ideological norms can be generated implicitly or explicitly and become hegemonic. To understand the hegemonic roles of ideological norms (such as sexism and racism in Stewart's findings), and to figure out how educational system creates these types of norms, it is necessary to focus on hegemony, its characteristics and the role of education in generating hegemonic ideological norms.

Hegemonic Ideological Norms and Education

Hegemony is derived from the Greek word *egemonia*, and its etymological root goes back to *egemon* meaning ruler often in the sense of a state (Mastroianni, 2002; Ives, 2004). Giving emphasis on Foucault's (1980 cited in Brookfield, 2005) views about power, Brookfield (2005) equates 'hegemony' with 'power'. He argued that hegemony refers to the maintenance of political control. This type of definition of hegemony is originated in Ancient Greek political philosophy in which the terms authority, leadership and domination characterize hegemony (Ives, 2004). In this sense, hegemony is associated with colonialism that is characterised by military power, invasion to occupy a state or country; although, in post-colonialism, hegemony contains new forms and features in which cultural prestige and language are prominent. The term hegemony was comprehensively described by those critical theorists who emphasized the relationship between hegemony and language (Brookfield, 2005; Ives, 2004; Mayo, 2008). These theories argued that hegemony can be penetrated in all layers of educational system.

In this sense, hegemony per se is a dominant powerful norm that is characterized by some specific features such as power which is innate and inseparable (Brookfield, 2005). Adaptability is another characteristic of hegemony since it can reconfigure itself in terms of time and situation. This feature seems to be progressive and originated in an innate capability of language. Since language is always a dynamic and progressive phenomenon (Margolis & Laurence, 2011; Katz, 2009; Aydede, 2010; Santrock et al., 2005), it is assumed that hegemony has non-static nature (Mayo, 2008), and it always is renewable through language development generating new ideas, beliefs and norms. Since the essence of education is language and language is central in hegemony, it is argued that the third characteristic of hegemony is *educational relationship* (Brookfield, 2005). In addition to this characteristic, hegemony is also recognized by generating a counter-hegemony activity (Mayo, 2008). However, this feature does not mean that hegemony can be removed completely because it changes to a new form with a new structure in a new frame of ideology, trends or social movements. In this process, two pivotal mechanisms are central 1) *Language*, by which people interpret the world and generate norms, beliefs and ideologies. 2) *Institutional*, through which norms, beliefs or ideologies are developed and become hegemonic (Ives, 2004). Focusing on these characteristics and mechanisms and using the following basic assumptions, I will discuss how ideological norms become hegemonic through educational system:

A) It is assumed that the concept of *institution* is literally equal to Elder-Vass' (2012) concept of *norm circle*, in its formal types (e.g., editorial rules in an academic journal- Elder-Vass, 2012).

- B) Educational system is not neutral (Apple, 2006; Freire, 1970) since it deals with beliefs, ideas, ethics, and norms.
- C) Ideological norms are originated in human language by which beliefs and norms are constructed (See Figure 3).

Based on these assumptions, it is deduced that while the norm circles are constructed (formally or informally), the members of a circle will perform a set of activities such as endorsing, enforcing, encouraging and punishing to survive the norm circle (Elder-Vass, 2010, 2011, 2012), but I think that these performances are not enough to provide a long term survival. To prolong the survival, the members of norm circle change the norms to ideology that is defined “as a shared pattern of more abstract ideas that serves to manage and make sense of the flow of information that we have about the world” (Mitchell, 2005, P.2). Transforming norms to ideological norms will provide norm circles with a particular ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology. The members of a norm circle have a definite *methodology* through which the consent of people will be obtained. This methodological process is similar to converting *theory* into *doctrine* (Monasta, 2000). The important point is that this conversion does not occur spontaneously; rather it is “organic to the political use of theories” (Monasta, 2000 P. 7). This type of usage is an educational use of theories that is applied by educational policy makers.

In this regard, adult education is called an “*ideological state apparatus*” (Althusser, cited in Brookfield, 2005 P. 86). Stressing on critical theories, Brookfield (2005) argued that “ideology becomes hegemonic when the dominant ideas are learned and lived in everyday decisions and judgments and when these ideas, which is reinforced by mass media images and messages, pervade the whole of existence” (P. 95). Since formal or informal educational system is a context within which the learning of everyday decisions and judgments happens, it is assumed that ideological norms is generated, developed and changed to hegemonic ideological norms by educational system (educational policy and practice). Therefore, education has central role in establishing ideological norms. But, how does education system establish ideological norms? In this regard, it is assumed that educational system goes through the following stages to establish these norms: *forming, norming, performing, appraising*. After forming the primary structure of education, educational policy makers attempt to generate their policies based on their desires, intentions and beliefs to make their decisions norm-based. In the stage of performing, the conversion of theories to practice or the conversion of ideology to doctrine occurs. The systematic evaluation of group performance is the stage of formal endorsing and enforcing by which education system obtains public consent. This process generates hegemonic ideological norms (Figure 4).

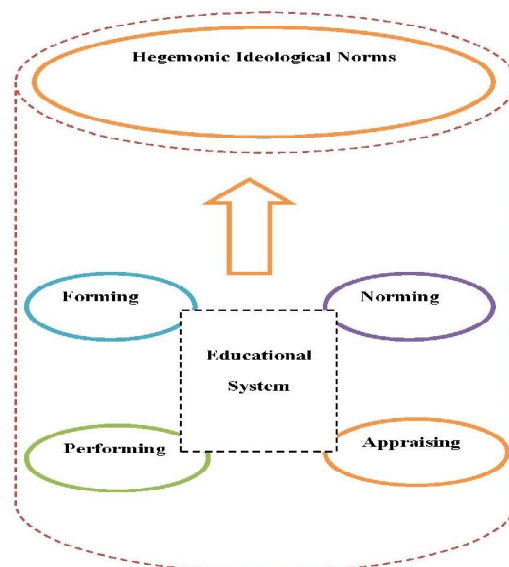


Figure 4: The Process of Generating Hegemonic Ideological Norms by Educational System

Hegemonic ideological norms in educational system, particularly in adult education, have many social and cultural consequences positively (e.g., social identity) and negatively (e.g., marginalization). To reduce or remove the negative consequences, many scholars lay emphasis on the power of critical theories (Mayo, 2008;

Brookfield, 2005; Monasta, 2000). Exploring the fundamental principles and benefits of critical theory, the role of critical theory in educational system (its research, practice and evaluation) to reduce or remove such negative consequences will be explained in the following.

Critical Theory, Hegemony and Education

Historically critical theory, which is recognized by several generations of social and political philosophers, refers to the Frankfurt School (Bohman, 2013). A group of philosophers including Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas, Horkheimer and others are known as critical theorists who focused on social science and criticized the positivist tradition of social science. Although a theory, in all these philosophers' views, is defined practically as a set of explanatory understandings that helps individuals make sense of the world (reality- Brookfield, 2005), each of those philosophers has its own definition of critical theory. Horkheimer (1982, cited in Bohman, 2013) argued that a theory is critical to the extent that it focuses on human emancipation and tries to liberate human beings from the hegemonic situation and circumstances. He established three criteria for each critical theory that are *explanatory*, *practical*, and *normative*, all at the same time (Bohman, 2013). The core feature in almost all critical theories is being practical; that is, philosophy should be penetrated in everyday life. This view of philosophy is known as a philosophy of praxis (Brookfield, 2005; Bohman, 2013; Monasta, 2000). Originated in this view of philosophy, feminism and critical race theory are two examples of the successors of critical theory. Criticizing traditional theory, all these successors deal with major social issues in order to solve them. Generally, critical theorists believe that social systems such as educational system should be changed to overcome hegemonic conditions (Cohen & Gelbrich, 1999). Since educational system embrace economy, culture and power in an interconnected and interrelated way (Apple, 2006), and because it has central role in creating hegemonic ideological norms, it is assumed that our educational *research*, *practice* and *evaluation* should be critically viewed.

Research: approximately, such theorists have crucial views about natural science, social science and methodologies of research. Ontologically, a critical researcher focuses on social reality believing that reality is culturally and historically contextual and is produced by people (Bohman, 2013). Based on this perspective, knowledge is produced through a reciprocal interaction between researcher and research field (subjects, participants or cases). To change or modify the circumstances or conditions through which norms are constructed, a researcher has some vital responsibilities including: 1) to study social issues in order to unmask power and to remove restrictive and alienating conditions of the status quo; 2) to focus on the language of research (Ives, 2004) as it may be hegemonic such as English language (Phaalhla, 2006); and 3) to focus on the combination of theory and practice in service of humans, which is the philosophy of praxis (Mayo, 2008; Ives, 2004). Additionally, critical researcher may direct his/her research toward the following matters to provide social justice.

- 1) The meanings of language in different culture (Rehardson & Peirre, 2005).
- 2) Structures and conditions that contribute to the present situation.
- 3) Empowering minorities or marginalized people
- 4) Personal experience (qualitative studies) in addition to using scientific methods (quantitative studies).

Practice or pedagogy: pedagogically, *critical dialogue* is encouraged by critical theorists in all layers of educational system (Freire, 1970). In this critical pedagogy, *questioning* is a core method by which critical educators struggle for cooperation-learning in classroom along with participating in any type of moral activities (Balampekou & Floriotis, 2012). Regarding critical dialogue, Freire (1970) argued that "dialogue" is directly related to the role of language in establishing either hegemonic ideas or to inaugurating a real society in which people collaborate with each other. In this view, a dialogue is conditioned to have value, love, modesty, openness, faith, hope, and critical thinking that all can be summarized in *moral virtues*. In addition to these conditions, having a critical rational discussion can cause people to be involved in sharing information, collaboration, and problem solving. Consequently, these outcomes provide people with a 'sense of agency' by which individuals feel more active and powerful in changing their worlds (inner and outward world). However, it is assumed that dialogue per se cannot create all the above necessary conditions.

Unlike Freier (1970), who argued the hegemonic educational system as a result of having anti-dialogue education, I argue that this problem originates from the content of education which is 'language' rather than the form of using language (monologue or dialogue, spoken or written language).

Despite the fact that the major impacts of dialogue is to create a ‘sense of agency’ and transcendental moral virtues in individuals, prior to acting as an “agent” in the society, individuals need to be ‘morally self-regulated’, and this is possible if educational system focus on piety and godliness. Since morally self-regulation is constructed through the language and language shapes individuals’ beliefs, ideas, thoughts, reviewing the content of language (literature) is necessary in the field of education.

Evaluation: To solve negative consequences of hegemonic norms, educational system must reappraise its system of evaluation. As Sayer (2011) demonstrated in his book *Why Things Matter to People*, evaluation in social science is differently meant by critical theorists. However, educational system including adult education (universities) rely on ranking, rating, learning objectives and learning outcomes, which are originated in positivist tradition, to evaluate students’ performance. This type of evaluation, which is supported by technological and industrial trends, caused social science to remove value from both its ontology and epistemology (Sayer, 2011) Much of contemporary social sciences not only divorce emotions and values from reason, but miss the role of reason in everyday practical actions and evaluations (Sayer, 2011 P. 96). Since any type of attempt to detach reason, value and emotions from human epistemology will bring death to rationality and ethics (Sayer, 2011), and because human knowledge is socially constructed and is profoundly value-laden, it is deduced that evaluation should take both a “value-committed and value-critical stance” (Schwandt, 1997, cited in Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010). Values are certain facts about well-being of conscious creatures. Therefore, value is a central part of evaluation in each layer of institution (educational or economic institutions), and it is necessary for social justice. Freeman and Vasconcelos (2010) argued that there are some core assumptions that educators and researchers should be engaged with them. Some of those assumptions that prevent society from hegemonic norms are:

- 1) Believing that society can be improved, or altered through education [...]
- 2) Giving emphasis on diverse perspectives and interests
- 3) Emphasizing that the process of the inquiry is just as important as the result [...]
- 4) Being self-critical and self-reflective about how their practices are implicated in maintaining or creating unjust structures and relationships [...] (P. 5).

Conclusion

Exploring the characteristics and functions of language (e.g., power), I argued that language is central in social and even in natural science through which human knowledge, ideas, beliefs and norms are constructed culturally. The process of constructing ideological norms by using Elder-Vass’ (2007, 2011, 2010) theory and the NPT was demonstrated. Focusing on how ideological norms may be converted to hegemonic ideological norms, the role of education in this process revealed that language is central part in hegemonic ideas. To suggest reliable and feasible solutions, the researcher focused on critical theories by which educational policy makers, practitioners and researchers can challenge with hegemonic norms in three major areas: research, practice and evaluation. I emphasized on educating morally-self-regulated students by focusing on piety and godliness.

References

- Apple, M. W. (2006). *Educating the right way: Markets, standards, God, and inequality* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Archer, M. S. (2012). *The reflexive imperative in late modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Aydede, M. (2010). The language of thought hypothesis. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2010/entries/language-thought/>>.
- Balampekou, M. & Floriotis, G. (2012). Antonio Gramsci, education and science. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*. 10 (1). <<http://www.jceps.com/?pageID=article&articleID=255>>.
- Birney, D. & Sternberg, R. J. (2011). The development of cognitive abilities. In M. H. Bornstein & M. E. Lamb (Eds). *Cognitive development: An advanced textbook*. (pp.369-404). Psychology Press. Taylor & Francis G. New York.
- Bohman, J. (2013). Critical theory. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/critical-theory/>>.
- Bronston, G. W. (1974). *Concepts and theory of normalization*. Proceeding of Down's Syndrome Congress, Milwaukee. Wisconsin, USA, 490-516.
- Brookfield, S. (2005). *The power of critical theory: Liberating adult learning and teaching* (1st ed.). San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-Bass.
- Carruthers, P. (2002). The cognitive functions of language. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 25, 657–726.

- Cheyney, K., Wang, J., & Bettini, B. (2013). Make every word count: Using language as a bridge to self-regulation in early childhood settings. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*. 41(2), 11-17.
- Christensen, D., Zubrick, S. R., Lawrence, D., Mitrou, F., & Taylor, C. L. (2014). Risk factors for low receptive vocabulary abilities in the preschool and early school years in the longitudinal study of Australian children. *PLOS ONE*, 9 (7)e101476.
- Clarke, G. S. (2008). The internal conversation: A personal relations theory perspective. *Journal of Critical Realism*. 7(1) 2008, 57-82, Doi: 10.1558/jocr.v7i1.57.
- Cohen, L. N. M., & Gelbrich, J. (1999). Philosophical perspectives in education. OSU- School of Education. <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/ed416/module1.html>
- Corsini, R. (1999). *The dictionary of psychology*. Brunner-Mazel, USA
- Cowie, F. (2010). Innateness and language. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2010/entries/innateness-language/>>.
- Demetriou, A., Doise, W., & Lieshout, C. V. (1998). Life-span developmental psychology. Wiley Press. USA.
- Dunn, A. L. & Fox Tree, J. E. (2014). More on language mode. *International Journal of Bilingualism*. 18(6) 605– 613
- Earl, D. (2007). Concepts. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: A peer-Reviewed Academic Resource*. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/concepts/>. 1-13.
- Elder-Vass, D. (2010). *The causal power of social structures: Emergence, structure and agency*. Cambridge University Press.
- Elder-Vass, D. (2011). The causal power of discourse. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*. 41:2, 143-160.
- Elder-Vass, D. (2012). Towards a realist social constructionism. *Sociologia, Problemas E Práticas*, 70, pp. 9-24. DOI:10.7458/SPP2012701208.
- Elmes, D. (2013). The relationship between language and culture. *National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Kanoya International Exchange and Language Education Center*. P. 11-18. <http://www2.lib.nifs-k.ac.jp/HPBU/annals/an46/46-11.pdf>.
- Freeman, M., & Vasconcelos, E.F.S. (2010). Critical social theory: Core tenets, inherent issues. In M. Freeman (Ed.), *Critical social theory and evaluation practice*. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 127, 7–19.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Gillibrand, R., Lam, V., & O'Donnell, V. L. (2011). *Developmental psychology*. Pearson, London. UK.
- Hussain, B. & Asad, A. Z. (2012). A critique on feminist research methodology. *Journal of Politics and Law*. *Canadian Center of Science and Education*. 5 (4), 202-207.
- Ives, P. (2004). *Language and hegemony in Gramsci*. London: England. Pluto Press. Ann Arbor, MI. www.plutobooks.com.
- Jafari, S., Baharlou, S. & Mathias, R. (2008). Knowledge of determinants of mental health among Iranian immigrants of BC, Canada: "a qualitative study". *J Immigrant Minority Health*. 12:100-106 doi 10.1007/s10903-008-9130-x.
- Katz, M. (2009). The language of thought hypothesis. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, P.1-10. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/lot-hypo/print>.
- MacWhinney, B. (2011). Language development. In M. H. Bornstein & M. E. Lamb (Eds). *Cognitive development: An advanced textbook*. (pp.405-439). Psychology Press. Taylor & Francis G. New York.
- Malim, T. & Birch, A. (1998). *Introductory psychology*. 1st Ed. Macmillan Press, LTD
- Malpas, J. (2014). Donald Davidson. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/davidson/>>.
- Margolis, E. & Laurence, S. (2011). Concepts. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* Edward. N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/concepts/>>.
- Mastroianni, D. (2002). *Hegemony in Gramsci*. <http://postcolonialstudies.emory.edu/hegemony-in-gramsci/#ixzz2s6nLEbS1>.
- May, C. & Finch, T. (2009). Implementing, embedding, and integrating practices: An outline of normalization process theory. *Sociology*, (43)3, PP 535-554, DOI: 10.1177/0038038509103208.
- May, C., Mair, F., Finch, T., MacFarlane, A., Dowrick, C., Treweek, S., Rapley, T., Ballini, L., Ong, B., Rogers, A., Murray, E., Elwyn, G., Legare, F., Gunn, J. & Montori, V. (2009). Development of a theory of implementation and integration: Normalization process theory. *Implementation Science*, (4)29, Doi:10.1186/1748-5908-4-29.
- Mayo, P. (2008). Antonio Gramsci and his relevance for the education of adults. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 40 (3). doi: 10.1111/j.1469-5812.2007.00357.x
- Mills, P. A. (2007). Knowledge of language. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, P. 1-9. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/lot-hypo/print>.

- Mitchell, J. N. (2005). Calculating and believing: Ideological norms in the cradle of utility maximization. *Social Justice Research*, (18)3. DOI: 10.1007/s11211-005-6824-2.
- Monasta, A. (2000). Antonio Gramsci prospects: The quarterly review of comparative education. (Paris, UNESCO: *International Bureau of Education*), vol. XXIII,3(4), 1993, p. 597-612.
- Moore, P. J. (2013). An emergent perspective on the use of the first language in the English as-a-foreign-language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 97 (1) DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2013.01429.x.
- Murry, E., Treweek, S., Pope, MacFarlane, T., Ballini, Dowrick, C., Finch, T., Kennedy, A., Mair, F., O'Donnell, C., Ong, B., Rapley, T., Rogers, A. & May, C. (2010). Normalisation process theory: A framework for developing, evaluating and implementing complex interventions. *BMC Medicine* (8)63. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1741-7015/8/63>.
- Parks, C. D. (2004). Group norms. *Encyclopedia of Leadership*. SAGE Publications. PP. 627-631.
- Peters, M. A. (2012). Educational research and the philosophy of context. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44(8), 793-800.
- Phaahla, P. L. 2006. *Knowledge production in what language? The hegemonic use of English as a language of commerce and industry from a South African perspective*. In Selected Proceedings of the 36th Annual Conference on African Linguistics, ed. Olaoba F. Arasanyin and Michael A. Pemberton, pp. 142-154. Somerville, MA: Cascadia Proceedings Project. www.lingref.com, document #1418.
- Phadi, M. and Owen, M. (2010). The language of class: southern Sotho and Zulu meanings of 'middle class' in Soweto. *South African Review of Sociology*, (41) 3. South African Sociological Association. 81-98.
- Richardson, L. and St. Peirre, E. (2005). *Writing: A method of inquiry*. In the sage handbook of qualitative research. (third edition). Thousand Oaks: Sage, 959-979.
- Santrock, J. w., Mackenzie, A. R., Leung, K. H., & Malcomson, T. (2005). *Life-span development*. McGraw-H, Ryerson. P. 5-67.
- Saul, J. (2012). Feminist philosophy of language. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/feminism-language/>>.
- Sayer, A. (2011). *Why things matter to people: social science, values and ethical life* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Schweikard, D. P. & Schmid, H. B. (2013). Collective intentionality. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/collective-intentionality/>>.
- Schwitzgebel, E. (2010). Belief. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2011/entries/belief/>>.
- Splitter, L. J. (2011). Agency, thought, and language: analytic philosophy goes to school. *Stud. Philos. Educ.* 30:343-362. DOI 10.1007/s11217-011-9236-9.
- Steen, S., Reijnierse, W. G., & Burgers, C. (2014). When do natural language metaphors influence reasoning? A follow-up study to Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2013). *PLoS ONE* 9(12): e113536. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0113536
- Stewart, L. A. (2014). *Ideological norms: How do societal norms affect attitudes, beliefs, and physical well-being?* Retrieved from <http://socialstewart.com/research/norms.html> on April, 11th, 2014.
- Tomasello, M., Carpenter, M., Call, J., Behne, T. and Moll, H. (2005). Understanding and sharing intentions: The origins of cultural cognition. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, (28)5, Cambridge University Press.
- Vallotton, C. (2008). Infants take self-regulation into their own hands. *Zero to Three*. 29-34. www.zerotothree.org/reprints.
- Vallotton, C & Ayoub, C. (2011). Use your words: The role of language in the development of toddlers' self-regulation. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 26, 169-181.
- Vásquez, D. and Naranjo, L. (2011). Basil Bernstein y la relación lenguaje-educación: el caso del Semestre de Afianzamiento (SEA) de la Institución Universitaria de Envigado. *Revista Lasallista De Investigación*, (8)2. PP 18-32.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, USA.
- Wiley, N. (2006). Inner speech as a language: A Saussurean inquiry. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* .36:3 0021-8308
- Wolf, M. P. (2009). Philosophy of language. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, P. 1-12. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/lo>.