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## Motion between the Stage and the Foyer: discursive shifts of the subjectivity of didactics in scientific narratives

*Empty and floating signifiers, discursive construction of the subject, amoeba models, symbolic interactionism, habitus, discursive field. The small and big A in Lacanian psychoanalysis, neo-Marxism and emancipation, critical discourse analysis, hegemonic ideologies, oppressive education, systems theory, and the social construction of the world through discourse....*

These are just some of the notions that were rumbling around in my head after each seminar meeting [with Prof. Tomasz Szkuclarek – B.K.M.]. I frantically searched for points of reference in linguistics as well as theories of literature and semiotics. I was grasping Habermas' theory of communicative action, trying to combine it with critical discourse analysis as a research method. I strenuously patched up psychoanalysis with semiotics and Wittgenstein's analytical philosophy. It was most difficult for me to find analogies for hegemony, neo-capitalism, or neo-Marxism in educational policies, but I eventually found their tropes in literary theories, cultural studies, and issues concerning intercultural communication. Neo-colonialism, hitherto associated with the histories of Britain and the USA, has suddenly moved into meta-theoretical discursive or political appropriation in so-called borderland pedagogies and critical theory. Language philosophy suddenly appeared as only a tiny point on the map of "paradigmatic translations", and Joanna Rutkowiak's "pulsating categories" (Karpińska-Musiał 2021: 200–201)

### Prologue

To write about what has remained in me after reading and listening to Professor Tomasz Szkuclarek, let alone authoring my doctoral dissertation under his tutelage a dozen years ago, goes beyond the capacity of a single text. It is impossible to summarise laconically what has extensively shaped my academic career. This career

consisted of *praxis* and, consequently, also of a specific type of conceptual thinking, both categories having been already recognised as inseparable since Martin Heidegger. The direction of their mutual correlation, as well as their “nominal weight”, were, in the case of my travesty of Szkudlarek’s thought, variable, unstable, even chaotic, which, overall, is an immanent feature of the relationship between thought and action. The manner of thinking awakened at the onset of this path initially induced concrete action in me, and this up to a certain point in my career was not fully conscious. It was only in the second phase of the transgression referred to as an academic career that acting (professionally) in a mature and painfully conscious way reflected a certain way of thinking and framed my social, professional, and geo-cultural world. I describe this process in a monograph entitled *Harcowanie na planie* (Karpińska-Musiał 2021). In both sections of this timeline, up to the present moment, it has been a process decisively marked by the category of *subjectivity*: the one resulting from the scientific theories that Szkudlarek masterfully juggles, as well as from his scientific and purely human attitude towards his academic environment.

It is impossible to summarize the complexity of this process of influencing and shaping an academic manner of thinking and action. It included various dynamics. However, the approaches chosen, the categories analysed by the supervisor of my PhD dissertation and, above all, the way in which he analysed thoughts have certainly seeped into my spectrum of cognition and given it shape. I met Tomasz Szkudlarek as an already professionally and academically experienced graduate of English philology at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. I used to be a scholar cognitively embedded in Anglo-Saxon systems of language analysis and discourse perception, marked by the dimensions of communication theories, Foreign Language Teaching, and all subbranches of linguistics. I used to be the scholar who made her so far research in the field of linguistic pragmatics and embraced a structuralist, although also communicative and slowly postmodern/poststructuralist definition of human subjectivity. I still value these approaches and areas of cognition and remain faithful to them. They have given the original shape to my view of subjectivity as such, in all its multidimensionality. However, at that point I suddenly encountered – at the borderline between the humanities and social sciences – a discourse understood more socially than socio-linguistically, more philosophically than pragmatically. What I found were differently defined subjectivity and autonomy, and new conceptualisations of freedom vs oppression. I also rediscovered discursively than just semiotically and syntactically constructed category of a subject, observed the juggling of discourses as agents of social change and entered the world of critical analysis of education. I began to decode unique perspectives of perception, the spiral of my hermeneutic cognition began to stretch, and the carousel of academic activities began to spin. However, as is the case with springs, it can bounce into space when excessively stressed. And the carousel has a high centrifugal force. I felt it years later, although I still do not regret getting on that carousel.

In this text, I will not be able to make a significant contribution to the philosophy of education by action or to the new theory of the culture of education. However, in accordance with the invitation of the Editors of the volume dedicated to Professor Tomasz Szkudlarek, I want to invoke some categories of discourse analysis and use them to point to a certain phenomenon noticed in recent years. It concerns scientific narratives about academic didactics. I call this phenomenon, in accordance with the leading categories in the writings of Szkudlarek, among others, *the discursive shift of subjectivity*. The case I have chosen to represent is naturally hybrid in my subjective argumentation, as I juxtapose my structuralist-linguistic roots with the narrative, poststructuralist construction of simulacra of social structures in the postmodern imaginary. I hope to demonstrate that the title metaphor of motion between stage and foyer tells a lot about certain aspects of how an 'academic theatre' functions, and about roles didactics and teachers play on its stage.

### Problematizing questions and method

In the text, I apply elements of philological hermeneutics (based on analytical philosophy) very generally. Through an argumentation based on analysing phraseological associations, I will try to demonstrate how a linguistic (humanistic) perspective can have an impact on the social perception of narratives concerning science and educational practices. I base my interpretation on an original understanding of the semantic location of didactics among disciplines and scientific fields. I introduce it by explaining how, for the purposes of this text, I understand *subjectivity* and *its construction or deconstruction*. I refer here to Szkudlarek's introductory text concerning the reading of *Dyskursywna konstrukcja podmiotu* (Szkudlarek 2008), although I interpret the terms used in this text more broadly, drawing also on other writings and sources. However, this does not constitute a wide range of examples of scholarly literature on didactics, as my aim is not to analyse them comparatively. Rather, it is to focus on subjectively selected themes or categories present in the writings of Tomasz Szkudlarek, Karolina Starego, Anna Karpińska, Elżbieta Rybicka, or Norman Fairclough, around whom I attempt to build a subjective narrative concerning the discursive shifts surrounding the subjectivity of didactics.

Therefore, the aim of the analysis carried out in this chapter, is an exploratory diagnosis of the discursive turns (called also shifts) in the aforementioned areas of academic action and cognition: the construction of narratives about didactics as scientific discipline and, consequently, its praxeological practice and adequate research. For this reason, I pose minor questions that should not be regarded as standard research questions, but rather questions that problematise the discussed issues: What causes the discursive turns within these areas? What needs to happen to dismantle the hegemony of the current narrative about didactics (with an attempt to identify what it *de facto* is) in favour of changing it? What and whose levels of

causation (agency) and subjectivity have impact and application here? How does the transversal permeation of specific power relations, in Michel Foucault's terms, occur here?

### Subject and discourse versus subjectivity – a subjective understanding of interconnection

In my discussion I refer to the category of *subjectivity* rather than the *subject* itself. Since I will be operating with the notion of *discourses* and not “just” language, I prefer to match *subjectivity* and *identity* to this dance, rather than “only” the heavily blurred face of the *subject*. Especially since Szkudlarek himself concludes that in pedagogical discussions “the subject is an assigned rather than a given dimension of humanity, a problem rather than a basis for action” (Szkudlarek 2008: 9f–10). In doing so – obviously showing only one of the possible optics of looking at the *subject* and its levels of agency or lack thereof – he dismantles the concept of a subject as a primordial data that can be formed, in favour of the active causal function of the subject itself. In this aspect I do not significantly search for counterarguments concerning the greater or lesser essentialism of the subject. Its post-structuralist definitional journey from the point of detachment from the titre of “fixed being” towards the position of a “creating being” is beyond the scope of my argumentation in this text. Hence, I follow more readily the notion of *identity*. It seems also to be closer to the relationship with the *epistemic subject*, which Szkudlarek distinguishes within the three perspectives of understanding the *subject*: structural, related to consciousness, and defined by agency.

A subject in drift, a subject as a shifting consciousness in subject-object relations – and a shifting agency, a “locus of control” [as the first two perspectives – B.K.M.]. But here we touch on a third range of meaning. Therefore, the third perspective is to understand the subject as a subject of action, more generally of agency. That on or towards which we act becomes the “object”, including the person taking the action itself, if it is directed “at the self” (as may be the case with an epistemic subject – capable of treating the *self* as an object of cognition) (Szkudlarek 2008: 11).

The epistemic subject can treat itself as an object of cognition, and it is my intention to confer the title of causal subject (by extending its identity) precisely to didactics as an autonomous scientific discipline. Didactics is, to my mind, a ‘causal’ subject, despite being entangled in a system of hegemonic narratives working in the field. Therefore, I require a definition of discourse to identify and determine the shift of the subjectivity of the subject, meaning to screen the narrative positioning of didactics as a scientific (sub?)discipline.

Norman Fairclough (2004) describes discourse as something with representational qualities, as “differentiated ways of representing various aspects of the world:

the processes, relations and structures of the material world, the mental world – thoughts, feelings, beliefs etc., and the social world” (Old 2008: 27). Also, it always gets into relations with other discourses and by this fact has the power to create the “new”. As Starego writes:

Therefore, they [relations of discourses – B.K.M.] depend primarily on people’s relations towards the world, conditioned by their position in reality, social and personal identities, as well as interpersonal relations. As a result, discourses do not simply present the world as it is (or rather as it is perceived), but are also projective, they contain an imaginative element and present possible worlds different from the current one, projecting specific changes (Old 2008: 27).

Since constructivist discourses continue to create new discourses, and these enter power relations with each other, it must be inevitable that the position of subjects as their generators will change. It is exactly with the change of position in the discourse that the leitmotif of my argumentation in this text will be linked.

Therefore, the relationship between *subject* and *subjectivity* and *subjectivity* and *discourse* can be reduced – for the aim of the following discussion – to two assumptions. Primo, subjectivity as a constitutive element of identity, with a causal subject, requires agency (and implements it) also in the construction or deconstruction, depending on the positioning, of narratives (scientific, public, private). If this is the case, various *subjectivities* have the power to construct new discourses, and these – and here secundo – while entering into a relationship with each other, are subjected to the filters of certain structures of hierarchies of importance (such as Thought Collectives after Ludwig Fleck, significant voices) and power relations (after Foucault). And if we add here Ernesto Laclau’s hypothesis concerning the ontological nature of discourses and their striving for objectivity, which he expresses in the statement that “[rhetoric] becomes a principle for constructing social objectivity” (Szkudlarek 2008: 13), it is more than certain that *subjectivity* can never escape from the power of discourses, although it can move among them, drift, and establish its new unveilings (identities). In terms of a certain discursive entrapment (here: language use), subjectivity (here stretched over and embodying didactics) continues to struggle for agency. In this process it reconstructs its meanings in scientific narratives according to the structures of the hierarchy of meaningful voices. I dare to claim that it is on the constant move and drifting.

In these discursive displacements of subjectivity given to or taken away from teaching within structures of power, I notice many controversial threats to the social life of the academia, as well as interesting opportunities for change in “writing” science. Both types of drifts: psychosocial and semantic ones shall be reflected below, although in the approach presented by me, the former is more of a consequence of the latter.

## Didactics in academic narratives as a case of displaced subjectivity in the field of scientific cognition – a linguistic perspective

For some time now, at least in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there has been a heated debate in Polish scholarly communities about the scientific status of didactics as a sub-discipline of pedagogy. It is not a prioritized debate among scientific discussions, nor does it stand as a topic on the podiums of major scientific conferences in Poland. However, it is heard more dynamically at the backstage, as if in the foyer of the Grand Theatre stage, where the “real” science is being performed. Chatting about teaching can be heard during the intervals, when, over a glass of wine or water, some audience focuses on specific tasks or projects carried out locally in universities scattered around the country or abroad. Didactics reverberate at minor didactic conferences, teacher training workshops, sometimes didactics is a guest – by chance or without a ticket – at scientific conferences. It happens usually when research on teaching and learning is related to pedagogy, psychology or other basic disciplines as core agents. Despite this, teaching and learning issues have already found their place in the extensive Polish and foreign scholarly literature of recent years, (e.g. Klus-Stańska, Hurło, Łojko 2009; Karpińska, Wróblewska 2014; Sajdak-Burska, Maciejowska 2022; Sajdak-Burska 2018; Gołębniak 2020; Lave, Wenger 1991 and many other). However, this subject-matter area is mostly covered by pedagogy as a core discipline. Didactics is still majorly defined as its “sub-discipline”.

However, can we conclude that taking pedagogy as a dominant field of study for didactics is unambiguous and obvious? A substantial number of researchers have been reflecting on this issue in recent years, most notably Anna Sajdak-Burska (2018) and Bogusława Gołębniak (2020). Didactics discursively has been inserted into the role of a sub-discipline of pedagogy, although it is a much broader category than the formerly “methodology” used for teaching technology. In the scholarly narratives, if one now looks at it not only as a social phenomenon but also as a linguistic discourse, didactics still languishes as a lexeme (followed by its semantics and scope of influence) reserved for a task-based, practical, and even instrumental approach to learning and teaching. Whereas, it has already been recognised that there exists a specified area of cognition and practical action, differentiated by specified subject matter, embedded in personal teachers’ theories and theories of education, as well as paradigms of thinking about social reality. The practice-based research in didactics as a scientific field has already been described as an important, but mainly praxeologically oriented cognitive territory, instrumentally oriented towards achieving certain *effects and results*. In this context, particular attention is given to subject didactics and their specificities. These successive derivative lexemes, as well as their meanings constructed in the narratives of certain social theories (e.g. the

anti-neoliberal one, which criticises neoliberalism for the instrumentalization of educational processes), place didactics – in its methodological and aim-oriented dimension – on the peripheral borderlands of the narrative centre. At the centre of semantic fields and research in pedagogy as a core science, despite its being recognised as multi-paradigmatic and drawing on many “neighbouring” disciplines, the most immediate focus is laid on the philosophy and theory of upbringing, as well as the specificity of educational processes in anthropological-ontological terms. Here we can find: the universally understood well-being of a child/pupil/student/human being in culturally-politically and socially profiled institutions (family, school, state). This ontologically desirable and scientifically debated good is by definition unquantifiable, unmeasurable, and praxeologically undefinable. Played (that is obviously a metaphor) on the main stage of science by popular and prominent actors, and not being subject to chatting in a theatrical foyer.

Of course, this is only one way of perceiving the construction of narratives concerning didactics and weighing its status as an autonomous area of study. That is because, on the other hand, one also observes *the movement between the stage and the backstage of the theatre*. Sometimes the actors also need a break, a cognitive integration with the audience, because of which scientific concepts are decompressed, dismantled, modified. We read that:

We begin to deal with a gradually forming structure of didactic sciences, consisting of specific didactics, until recently called subject-specific teaching methodologies, and sub-disciplines of general didactics, the so-called sub-didactics, e.g. university didactics, military didactics, medical didactics, onto didactics, neurodidactics. Therefore, didactics is undoubtedly a science – one of the basic sub-disciplines of pedagogy – a living science, with an excellent output, a rich history, many varieties, and many opportunities for development, as well as considerable potential for creative impact on educational practice (Karpińska 2021: 56).

The Polish researcher and theorist of didactics acknowledges that didactics has its own object of research, history, research goals, and “territorial” (subject) specificity. As well as that it carries considerable potential for “creative impact on educational practice”. I agree with the author. However, let us note that we do not find in this description one component that is important from the perspective of the definition of the scientific character of the discipline: *its own distinct research methodology*. Perhaps this is an individual oversight, or perhaps evidence of a prominent issue that is still often overlooked in scholarly narratives concerning didactics: the difficulty to explicitly specify and define this methodology. There are even claims that such a separate methodology is not legitimate, because didactics in its nature hooks into too many disciplinary research subjects and these will always determine how the research procedures are conducted.

## Seeking justification in research methodology

This problem may, with the emphasis on “may”, have its origin (or indeed its cause?) if only in the official, only seemingly irrelevant, discursive “removal” of pedagogy from the humanities and its “assignment” to the social sciences in 2011. It has rather been a political-discursive shift, because it has been known since Jan Ámos Komenský’s *Didactica Magna* that the study of human education combines issues and questions encompassed by other fields of social sciences, as well as is grounded in the theories and cognitive assumptions that characterise the humanities. Without a detailed discussion, impossible to conduct reliably within the framework of this text, I merely draw attention to one possible outcome of such a discursive displacement. It is a cross-domain *divergence in terms of research methodologies*.

Each of the two research fields: social sciences and humanities, can be defined by the criteria of: history, object and purpose of research, scope of theoretical and research impact, canonical authors and representatives, methodological paradigms, research techniques, and traditions of research methodology. And just as in most of these criteria pedagogy as a social science would find common parameters within *the aims of research* with humanistically qualified history, literature, linguistics and glottodidactics, it is more difficult to find analogical similarities *in the research paradigms and methodologies*. Let me look at this hypothesis to reconsider where didactics should be placed in this respect. Perhaps it will be possible to discover what could enhance the subjectivity of didactics and relocate it to a different position in educational discourses. In this regard, let me weigh up what might constitute the purpose and object of research in didactics, if viewed as an autonomous scientific discipline rather than merely a sub-discipline of pedagogy.

As a potentially independent discipline in the social sciences, didactics covers the creative impact of ideas and research on educational practice, but also touches upon social relations in institutions, aim at *learning analytics* and the use of AI in education, studies the impact of didactic interventions, explains philosophical paradigms and their role for understanding didactic phenomena. Research methods accessible to didactics are available across the entire spectrum of techniques and tools known in the social sciences (Table 1).

In turn, didactics as an independent discipline in the humanities possibly covers the dimension of the aesthetic impact of cultural texts on educational processes as its object and research goal, uses the creative character of literature for didactic purposes (Wenzel 2022), applies the tools of historiography, geocultural studies or ecopoetic (Rybicka 2011), finds references to the history of language or its sociology, psycholinguistics, or communicology. In the table below, I propose an arbitrary juxtaposition of research approaches, methods and techniques used



more frequently (which does not mean exclusively) in the humanities, separately in the social sciences, and those that are more likely to be applicable in both fields.

Table 1. Research methods, tools, and techniques as distinct and shared criteria between the social sciences and the humanities.

Humanities	Social Science	Common for both areas
Text analysis and work on corpora	Diagnostic survey	Critical discourse analysis
Aesthetics	Interview (several types)	Grounded theory
Comparative linguistics	Statistical comparative methods	Case study
Conversational analysis	Psychological tests	Transactional analysis
Engaged humanities	Participant observation	Autoethnography
Geopoetic	Pedagogical monograph	Historiography
Media archaeology	Pedagogical experiment	Narrative methods
Research methods in translation studies		Historical and comparative methods
NLP – natural language processing (including AI)		Phenomenography
Literary criticism		Analytical philosophy
Phonological and acoustic testing		Hermeneutics
DIDACTICS AS AN AUTONOMOUS SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE?		

Source: own elaboration.

I dare to draw a following conclusion from the above juxtaposition: research methodologies that can successfully be applied in didactics as a research and practice area, are not only limited to approaches reserved for social sciences (including pedagogy), or even “common areas”. Research methods traditionally reserved for the humanities can equally well serve as methods for research in didactics, depending on *the research aims*. Therefore, didactics appears semantically as a category (term, lexeme) with a wider frame of meanings than pedagogy, of course if one takes the methodological context as a reference point (i.e. semantic frame).

## Consequences for the displacement of the subjectivity of didactics

Following a linguistic (discursive) perspective, should we then not consider didactics as an area of scientific cognition mistakenly ascribed a hyponymic name of “sub-discipline” or “sub-field” in relation to the “core discipline” that pedagogy is viewed to be? From the perspective of linguistic semantics, didactics is *hyponymous* to pedagogy, so far taken as a framework and core. If we consider a methodological criterion, didactics deserves to be referred to as a broader semantic category in the field of “humanities and social sciences”, being a *hyperonym* of pedagogy and, analogously, of literary, linguistic, psychological, sociological core disciplines. What is more, once we consider a specific object of cognition and research as another defining factor of an autonomous scientific discipline, teaching and learning processes (within didactics) represent a powerful theoretical-cognitive area for description and empirical analysis. As aforementioned, didactics in its struggle to redefine its *subjectivity* in scholarly discourse, still requires delving deeper into bridging its assumed hyperonymous position between the humanities and the social sciences. The study of a social relationship (of any kind) is, after all, done through an analysis of communication and language. Creating an educational diagnosis constitutes a combination of analysing students’ performance based on their texts and narratives (among other things). Pedagogy also examines developmental and educational processes with the help of tools and didactic aids typical of a specific area of knowledge (e.g. in the subject areas of conversation analysis, dialogue in education, text analysis, corpus research in linguistics, cognitive analysis of learning processes in mathematics, processes of linguistic inference, analysis and mental synthesis in chemistry education, cross-cutting competences in earth or biological sciences, case studies in medicine or legal sciences etc.). Therefore, is it not the time for so called “subject didactics”, not fully recognized in scientific narratives, to be granted greater subjectivity in the discourse structure?

Let me argue in favour of this hypothetical question below. This kind of questioning the completeness of the narrative about didactics is caused by my assumption that in a purely narrative discussion of the aims and objects of research in didactics one does not find attempts to displace or change the discursive character (and, as we know, this also means the social scientific practice and research) of the lexeme “didactics” against the lexeme “pedagogy”. This suggests that approaches found in linguistics (and therefore the humanities), which draw attention to lexical and semantic relations between words in a cultural text/narrative, are not used in constructing these narratives in social sciences. Let me try to do so, drawing on the analytical approach and from the perspective of philological hermeneutics. Where would we position didactics if we looked at its subjectivity from the perspective of linguistic semantics? How does the understanding (and semantic load) of the category such as “didactics” change if we located it syntactically (i.e. create collocations) in relation to its leading/core disciplines? The language use present in narratives concerning didactics today

(i.e. established collocations) show us, for example, the following customary categorisation of subject didactics, most of which are also names of scientific disciplines: didactics of chemistry/ biochemistry, didactics of biotechnology, biological and life sciences; didactics of mathematics, physics, computer science; didactics of foreign languages; didactics of the Polish language; didactics of history, archaeology; didactics of culture, religious studies and media studies; didactics of biology, nature, environment; didactics of economics, management; didactics of law and administration. In the following cases, just for the sake of a linguistic experiment, I will apply a kind of *semantic drift* to do justice also to other scientific disciplines, with an equal status after all, yet less frequently visible in scientific discourses, i.e. with a rare collocation. At the same time, this drift (due to the syntagmatic relations between the elements of the phrase) makes it possible to notice the reflexive and reciprocal interconnection of the discipline and its didactics. They serve both (1) as a teaching style (acknowledged, subject function), but also (2) as a quasi-basic discipline (less acknowledged, subject function), emerging through the new collocation of research areas within didactics. Let me explain this by the following examples:

- didactics of literature, linguistic studies, translation studies – we teach about literature in a certain way, but there can also be a linguistic analysis of this teaching (a study of its differentiated metalanguage, e.g. a linguistic analysis of the metalanguage of didactics) – so: why not a “linguistic analysis of didactics/ narratives and didactic registers”?;
- didactics of psychology – we teach about psychology with a specific set of professional register and research instruments. In this sense, it is subject didactics. However, when this research is used practically and realistically to construct/ diagnose didactic relations, to build the well-being of the subjects of education, this already becomes a process of a separate activity and can be an area of further research, so: why not a “psychology of didactics”?;
- didactics of sociology – the language of sociological education is a specific idiomatic register; but also, didactics develops as a science thanks to sociology (e.g. by using data from the sociology of education, population studies, generational studies and sociolinguistics), so: why not “the sociology of didactics”?;
- didactics of geography, earth sciences – education around earth sciences introduces certain register and methods of research. But can we speak of a “geography of didactics”? It is difficult to doubt that there exists topography of education, i.e. education methods specific to dialectical, cultural, and regional areas. Since geocultural studies and *geopoetic* have already been recognized as situating discourses spatially and underpinning cultural and literary studies (Rybicka 2011), why not assume that “geography of didactics” is an equally legitimate collocation behind which there lies a perfectly legitimate educational practice and the field of its study?

In contrast, how can a semantic drift be made between the lexemes “pedagogy” and “didactics”? Primarily it needs specifying the meaning of “pedagogy of didactics”,

in which, when taken for a phraseological association, we see the dominant position of pedagogy as a subject and didactics as a complement. Thus we can presume that the main semantic content (in social practice: the dominant content and methods of education) will rather be constituted by all that relates to the pedagogisation of teaching and learning processes. However, we must not forget the analogous specificity of teaching “about pedagogy”, i.e. the nature of the pedagogical meta-language and registers, the forms of experiencing education, the transmission and construction of pedagogical meanings. The teaching “about pedagogy”, the relationship between pedagogical theory and practice included, must be, no doubt about it, performed by the whole complex narratives concerning this relationship. “Didactics of pedagogy” is therefore a perfectly legitimate linguistic collocation, carrying meanings different from those of “pedagogy of didactics”. And if so, this may also imply specific didactic measures in the sphere of teaching about education.

In view of the above considerations, it is worth noting that if discourse constructed in a certain way is to be followed by practices of perceiving and constructing real, educational social practices and ways of researching them, it is high time to notice the nuances of the discursive hegemony of certain scientific narratives. In the discussed case, this hegemonic discourse unfairly places didactics as a sub-discipline in a subordinate position against pedagogy. Didactics, as I have tried to demonstrate above, enters a semantically supportive collocation with every scientific discipline. Also having the feature of manoeuvrability. Pedagogy forms a relatively significant semantic cohesion (coherence of meaning in a subordinate or superordinate relationship) only with didactics.

## Conclusions

The drift of subjectivity of didactics as an autonomous science, which I attempted to explore in this text, is not purely semantic. In line with the discursive nature and potentiality of induced change in research and educational practices, it is also psychosocial in nature. That is because it can be perceived as an opportunity to change the practice of narrating science by establishing a real social practice for the multitude of researchers involved in academic teaching. After all, what does a purely theoretical reflection on the linguistically constructed positioning of didactics in sentence construction and, by extension, scientific narrative, bring us? Well, by presenting the semantic frame, it inverts the meanings of subordination and superordination, which discursively dislocates and diminishes the *subjectivity* of didactics. It reveals the discursive inconsistencies that have occurred so far. By habitually talking about the didactics of a foreign language or the didactics of chemistry, but no longer by analogy about the didactics of pedagogy, we are committing an eristic, rhetorical error. We show inconsistency grounded in a linguistic tradition, which brings consequences for the social (but in effect also scientific) understanding of

the place and importance of didactics in narratives about it. We subtract from the (ontological and epistemological) relevance of this “didactic proximity” between learners and the subject matter: knowledge, its areas of understanding, processing, emotion, and application (Szadzińska 2012). Since we perceive the world through language, and language forms our perceptions, this “semantic proximity” (or the currently existing discursive, or socially created “distance” implicit in defining didactics as a subdiscipline) is crucial for changing the extra-linguistic, epistemological perspective towards learning and teaching. This change should therefore be discursively redirected from far to near, as this *didactic proximity (semantic and cognitive)* of students to their areas and subjects of cognition in the respective disciplinary subject lies at the heart of education. Therefore, it is time for didactics to move from the foyer to the main stage of the Grand Theatre of Education and to actively (co-)participate in the performance. The end of the interval has come. It is time to get back into the spotlight. But will this discursively and newly constructed subject (i.e. didactics as autonomous science) have enough agency to perform independently on stage? Or will it continue to be a subject merely passively “made” by external factors and discourses? This strongly depends on plentiful social circumstances and factors, but certainly reflects existing – not only discursively, but also politically – patterns of power relations. However, without escaping from them, the subjectivity of didactics remains in a drifting phase, which can be regarded as its immanent feature, leading though to further development.

I am not sure whether I have managed to answer the questions posed at the beginning, or have merely added more doubt to them.

1. What causes discursive turns within power structures and narratives of subjectivity in relation to didactics?

These are certainly critical events, throwing us out of homeostasis, out of the rhythm of cultural and linguistic *usus*. Whether they will be heard depends on where the voice is coming from and how loudly. The scale of these effects will depend on the message of that voice and its form.

2. What needs to happen to dismantle the hegemony of the narratives present in doing science in favour of any change?

Too much for it to happen quickly and efficiently. This is a complex process consisting of multiple social narratives built up successively, overlapping and leading to minor symbolic or semantic displacements.

3. What levels of agency and subjectivity have an impact and apply here?

Undoubtedly, those that are born in the processes of bottom-up (often individual) actions performed by individual or symbolic entities in a continuous search for their own identifications. As Louise Althusser would say: subjects on a “continuous march” determined by systems (Althusser 2006: 26–27), or following Jacques Lacan in constant search of filling their – psychoanalytically understood – lack. The self-identifications born in this way are capable of permeating institutional regulation over time. And this phenomenon may apply

both at the level of scientific and teaching activities, and the level of construing new scientific discourses.

4. How does the transversal permeation of a specific power relation, in Foucault's terms, occur here? Neither the discourses nor the actions of individual subjects can escape power relations (symbolic and institutional), but they are certainly constantly drifting, oscillating and either hitting moments of acceleration or persisting in the force of inertia. The level of agency of the units-agents of change (or ongoing stagnation) is most likely to determine the change that is taking place, although its sustainability is much more likely to be determined by chance. It remains for researchers – of various disciplines – to identify and translate this randomness within their chosen philosophy of culture and education.

## Epilogue

Applying a grid of new meanings onto concepts and categories that are already known, only from a unique perspective, is an adventure once offered to me by Tomasz Szkudlarek. Professor Szkudlarek promoted my doctoral dissertation in pedagogy in 2010. The opening quote for this text comes from my monograph (Karpińska-Musiał 2021), in which I described, among other things, this cognitive clash and its significantly turbulent effects. It is still bearing fruit today. It has caused me to know what discursive subversion, hybridisation of disciplines, crossing the boundaries of sciences, cognitive experimentation and intellectual autonomy are all about. This is a great added value that has had its creative, but also turbulent, consequences. However, it is for these consequences that I am grateful to him and forever and irrevocably indebted academically. Thank you, Professor.

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### Summary

#### *Motion between the Stage and the Foyer: discursive shifts of the subjectivity of didactics in scientific narratives*

In this chapter, an attempt is made to subjectively use selected theoretical categories from the area of Critical Discourse Analysis to analyse the narrative location of didactics in the ranks of scientific fields and disciplines. Specifically, the author proposes to look at a selected fragment of the scientific discourse from the perspective of linguistic semantics, which, through linguistic collocations, induces a specific understanding, and thus also the practice (social praxeological function) of didactics as an educational process and as an autonomous (against pedagogy) area of scientific cognition. Thus, in this process of fluid (discursively) understanding, the eponymous movement of the subjectivity of didactics takes place, determining – in the social perspective – its primary functions in academic education, and in the linguistic perspective – a position in scientific narratives about it. The author concludes with a recommendation to draw attention to the social consequences of the discursive “moves between the stage and the foyer” of the theatre that is the academy, in the context of the drift of specific discourses related to education in fields of power that are not only symbolic.

### Keywords

subjectivity of didactics, shifts of identity, didactics, linguistic semantics, discourse, semantic drift.

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