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## Communication styles of subjects of education in the gender perspective. Critical discourse analysis<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Research into the issue of language in use not only enjoys a strong position in the sociology of culture, but also has a significant impact on the image and perception of pedagogy as well as a discursive functioning of the classroom. Communication is a social process inseparably connected with the process of the teaching of pupils as well as their learning and construction of knowledge (Klus-Stańska 2010). Teachers' styles of communication disclose androcentrism in the form of gender inequalities inscribed into the logic of the functioning of the classroom as a social field. This article presents the styles of communication teachers use in verbal interactions with pupils of both sexes. Communication interactions are hierarchised in terms of gender, which means that girls are located in different points of the field in question than boys. This is related to the fact that knowledge polarised from the point of view of gender is created in the discursive space of the classroom. The above is entangled with the teachers' power in combination with the power of the "traditional" *illusio*<sup>2</sup> legitimizing the used styles of communication.

The language in use, the situations of speaking, and the manner in which they are understood by the subjects of education are rooted in the structure of the social field, including the subfield<sup>3</sup> understood as the classroom. The relation between

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<sup>1</sup> This text is a summary of a modified subchapter devoted to styles of communication of subjects of education from my PhD thesis *Język i gender podmiotów edukacji. Krytyczna analiza dyskursu* [The Language and Gender of Subjects of Education. Critical Discourse Analysis].

<sup>2</sup> *Illusio* – practical faith, a well-grounded belief in the necessity to accept the existing social order. It is one of the significant categories of Pierre Bourdieu's social theory.

<sup>3</sup> I shall use the phrase "classroom field" as an equivalent of the "subfield" of the classroom.

the school culture and the symbolic culture is reproduced through verbal communication interactions. The teacher-pupil verbal behaviours positioning all the elements of the social field in the process of the daily discourse of the subjects of education in the classroom spaces how their ways of thinking, speaking, perceiving and experiencing gender hierarchisation. The verbalised school world of pupils of both sexes, constructed from the verbal “products” of the subjects, i.e. teachers and pupils involved in the process of teaching/learning, is entangled in a high complexity mode in the mechanisms of the symbolic culture, algorithms of the creation of knowledge, understanding of the teacher’s knowledge, gender habitus, and the attribution of the meanings of one’s location within the classroom field. The order of this world is hierarchized in terms of gender, and positions individuals according to the directives of the coherently and complementarily configured ubiquitous knowledge as a domination over the cognition, knowledge, (un)awareness, body, and creation of the individual’s identity. The “nature” of gender hierarchisation, which is both a being and a process, is shown through the manner in which language is used, which is constituted in the communication styles of the subjects of education, using Pierre Bourdieu’s social theory and Michel Foucault’s concept of power and the subjugation of individuals.

Language and communication styles are tools constituting and reproducing the existing order in every social field, including the classroom. In his works, Bourdieu presents a way of thinking about the world based on constructivist structuralism, where he pays particular attention to symbolic systems such as language and the existence of objective structures that are “pulsating” regardless of the consciousness and will of active subjects (Bourdieu 1984). I have adopted this approach in my research project, focusing on the manner in which gender differences are generated in communication styles by the subjects: female pupils, male pupils, female teachers, and male teachers. The author of the social field theory sees the social field as a space in which all actions, communication practices and language taking place in the field under analysis (the classroom), refer to this particular area of the social world. A significant feature of the social field is that it functions relatively independently of other micro-worlds (fields) in consistence with its own *nomos*. It is worth highlighting that the social field is a fragment of a structured social space materializing itself in compliance with its own order, which constitutes a space for the verbal activity of individuals (female teachers, male teachers, female pupils, and male pupils). The classroom is a small situational community, in which language and communication styles are categories with a special significance for the development of pupils. The process of learning as a part of and through communication interactions and the materialising gender socialisation brings effects, which are and will continue to be visible and perceivable in the pupils’ experience of the broadly understood social field located outside the classroom. Individuals in the social field: female pupils, male pupils, female teachers and male teachers occupy certain positions in compliance

with the hierarchical order, which materialises and consolidates itself through the communication practices and styles. The above-mentioned subjects functioning in the classroom together with the *illusion* reproduce their roles in the classroom in compliance with gender hierarchisation through their daily participation and involvement in the consolidation of communication styles. This process is accompanied by a well-consolidated conviction and belief (*illusio*) that the communication practices and styles are as good as their consequences. In the social field hierarchised in terms of gender, one can notice the domination of some individuals over others, as discussed in much detail by Foucault in his concept of power as domination. The iconoclast as the father of the concept is considered, and perceives power as a network of relationships and power relations which are ceaselessly active. This activity can also be noticed in the communication styles analysed as a part of my research. In Foucault's way of thinking about power perceived as domination, teachers are entangled in a network of power relations through "having" power over the cognition and knowledge of pupils. The involvement of all the entities of the social field in the power relations is materialised in the day-to-day reproduction of communication styles.

Language and gender are categories that are inseparably connected with cognition, reflective awareness, understanding and (mis)understandings manifesting themselves in the communication space of the subjects of education under analysis. Gender constituting a social discursive-performative construct is one of the main concepts in the space of the understanding of the social reality, as well as in terms of thinking about other social actors and actresses. Gender hierarchisation as a part of this research project is shown through the manner in which language is used as constituted in the teacher-pupil relations and communication styles. The best method originating from the ethnographic tradition, allowing insight into the manner in which language is used and into its entanglement in the mechanisms that may contribute to the phenomenon of gender hierarchisation in the classroom, is ethnography of communication. The subject of analyses is the communication styles of teachers and pupils of both sexes, sketching the borderlines of the discursive positions of the subjects in question. As a part of the manners in which language is used, I have been examining aspects of the communication styles used between teachers/pupils, pupils/teachers, and pupils themselves (female pupils/male pupils, female pupils/female pupils, and male pupils/male pupils). However, in this paper, I am mainly focusing on the teacher-pupil communication styles.

Clear lines of the gender division (Karwatowska, Szypra-Kozłowska 2005: 139; Bochno 2009) that are reproduced and constructed in the daily life of the classroom, are located not only within the unconsciousness of the subjects of education, but also in the space-time of the magical impact of good faith – *illusio* (Bourdieu 1984). This illusion is a belief that the imposed creation of the "sense of gender position" in the social field is proper, indispensable, and beneficial for pupils – the future citi-

zens of a democratic country. Communication practices simultaneously determine the borders and parameters of knowledge, the gender habitus, and the inequality of the pupils' educational opportunities. The process of the construction of the way in which gender hierarchisation is consolidated in the communication styles of the subjects of education as the subject of research, as well as my reflections, are located in the perspective of structural constructivism.

Communication in the classroom is marked by specific features resulting from the authority of both the pedagogical institution and the particular pedagogues working with pupils in the primary schools. By reconstructing and analysing the communication styles of the subjects of education, I am checking whether they contain any traces of the materialization of the teachers' power. My primary goal is to identify communication styles – the manner in which they display the consolidation of gender hierarchisation in the classroom. Additionally, I want to show that *illusio* – one of the significant categories of Bourdieu's social theory – is a being accompanying and consolidating gender hierarchisation in and through the communication styles of the subjects of education. At the same time, I am trying to answer the question in what way the above-mentioned practical belief in the properness of the existing order, and the impact of language on the consolidation of the existing order, are connected with reflectiveness and the positions of the entities in the social field under study. Looking at the diversity of the subjects' positions, I analyse the coherence of the positioning effect of Basil Bernstein's codes with the consolidation of the social field which is hierarchized and positions entities through communication styles. In the process of socialisation, pupils learn to subordinate their actions, thoughts and wishes to the linguistic code, which not only enables and orders the fulfilment of a specific role in a concrete way, but also determines the way people think and speak about it. I deepen my analysis of the communication styles with the help of such elements of Bernstein's theory of linguistic codes as the positioning of individuals, roles, the determination of borderlines between individuals, and the reproduction of culture.

Along with the consolidation of knowledge and the existing order, the language in use as an important element of the social field rooted in the dailiness also aims at the construction of space for the reaching of agreement. For this reason, I also look at communication styles from the point of view of the discursive separation of space for agreement in consistence with Bourdieu's logic of the field and the way in which it is reached by the subjects within the field of the classroom.

I seek with determination to arrive at a deepened understanding of the issues of language in the gender perspective, as well as the building of space for the reflective awareness of (not only) subjects of education in relation to the processes which materialize themselves in and through relations of power, in the aspect of the "grammar" of discursive gender policy.

## Teachers' communication styles

The standpoint of Deborah Tannen's linguistics in its general gender-related assumptions on the two distinct ways of communication: the male and the female one, is consistent with the logic of a gender hierarchisation in the language of the classroom. Clear differences in communication style may pose a threat to the heretofore accepted norms of the social functioning together with the socially accepted stereotypes and gains for their reproduction. Gender is a dynamic construct affecting the clash of attitudes and ways of perception of the individual as well as the group in which the individual co-creates communication interactions. The language of the classroom is an indicator of the diversity in the styles of female teachers, male teachers, female pupils, and male pupils alike. The style of communication is not only a substantial competence and a formal ability to communicate, but also the ability to express one's attitudes to the participants of the process of communication in two ways. The female and the male genderlects are determined by the gender distinctions in the utterances of girls/women and boys/men. In Tannen's theory in question, the primary place is occupied by the category of the difference in the relational competence, which emerges as early as in children's speech shaped in peer groups. Groups of girls, usually not very numerous, carry out the task of the establishment and maintenance of emotional bonds. Girls support each other and create a nice atmosphere, while the games they initiate end with a tie or a zero result (Tannen 1999). In the thus-configured communication climate, schemes of negotiation and solution of the possible conflicts involving the construction of simple and effective compromises are consolidated.

In contrast, the more numerous groups of boys are marked by a hierarchic structure, in which the individual giving orders and effectively supervising their fulfilment becomes the leader. The leader of the boy's group is considered a strong, intelligent, and consistent colleague with a sense of humour. Together with the discursive gender distinctions, the assumptions of the above theory are a foundation, on the basis of which we may reconstruct communication styles and separate them as a part of the typologies that order them.

The algorithm of dividing communication styles into female and male ones, which lies at the foundation of the genderlect theory, is only the basis for gender distinctions. Table 1 presenting a typology of communication styles contains two basic styles related to the theory of genderlect, which each include two classes of speaking. The female communication style applies to the verbal communication of female teachers and a separate style of speaking of the female pupils. In contrast, the male communication style covers the ways of speaking of male teachers, as well as the styles of male pupils. The excessively "tight corset" of the theory of genderlect made me construct a new relational typology of communication styles of the subjects of education, allowing for the highlighting and very detailed analysis of

the communication-related practices materializing themselves as a part of them as well as social phenomena entangled in the web of relational connections.

Table 1. Typologies of gender-hierarchised communication styles of the subjects of education

Typology no.	Typology (name)	Relational aspects of communication styles	Communication style
1.	<b>Genderlect theory</b> (frame of communication styles of subjects of education)	Female communication style (woman – man)  Male communication style (man – woman)	Communication style of female teachers Communication style of female pupils  Communication style of male teachers Communication style of male pupils
2.	<b>Typology I</b> Relational typology(refers to Bernstein's theory of linguistic codes)	Female teacher – female pupil, female teacher – male pupil, male teacher –female pupil, male teacher – male pupil  <i>Female pupil – female pupil, male pupil – male pupil, female pupil – male pupil, male pupil – female pupil</i>  Female pupil – female teacher, female pupil – male teacher, male pupil – female teacher, male pupil – male teacher	Communication styles of female and male teachers with female and male pupils do not contain an element of symmetry.  Communication styles of female and male pupils contain an element of symmetry.  Communication styles of female and male students with female and male teachers do not contain an element of symmetry.
3.	<b>Typology II</b> Typology of the teachers' communication styles	Teachers' communication styles. This typology was identified on the basis of the criterion of the teacher's power. All the above typologies concern the language of the classroom ordered in compliance with the gender policy.	Controlling/positioning/ disciplining style (further referred to as CPD) CPD with an element of teacher's sense of humour Dynamic style of CPD communication CPD style "young researcher" Subtle-gentle style

Source: author's own research.

This network seems to be a coherent construct configured taking into account the gender-hierarchised power and knowledge relation. What is very clear is the way pedagogues practice traditional didactics affecting the process of the construction of knowledge and the assignment of meanings. The weak link of the above system is the low coefficient of the aesthetic-ethical linguistic sensitivity of the subjects in the classroom space (Grzechnik 2015a).

I referred the typology under discussion to the assumptions of Bernstein's theory of linguistic codes in the aspect of the reproduction of the gender-hierarchised culture in the communication space of the classroom (Bernstein 1975, 1990). Bernstein showed how linguistic codes are determined by the nature of the division of labour and the basic values having an impact on the culture and system of roles in the main socializing institutions – in particular family and school. The culturally-determined communication code depends on the position of the individual and family in the class structure. I intend to relate the communication styles to the culturally-constructed gender aspect so as to learn how the aspect of gender affects communication styles in the classroom. The identification of typology I and typology II also aims at finding out in what way the communication styles position subjects of education and how they influence the fulfilment of the role of the pupil (male and female) in the classroom field.

Another type of typology is a construct that is new in its configuration: typology II, which refers to a group of styles of speaking of female and male teachers. Such an ordering contains ways of the perception of communication styles and gender-hierarchised actions discussed in detail as a part of each of the styles under analysis. The teachers' ways of speaking can be categorised into the following styles: the controlling/positioning/disciplining style (CPD), the controlling/positioning/disciplining style (CPD) with an element of the teacher's sense of humour, the dynamic style of CPD communication, the style of "young researcher" and the subtle-gentle style being an opposite of the controlling/positioning/disciplining style (CPD).

### Teacher's controlling/positioning/disciplining style (CPD)

As a part of the CPD communication style, teachers ban, order, and give stylistically specific instructions related to the pupils' behaviour in the classroom. This sort of communication action seems to be of primary importance for the "controlling" ones. "Controlling orders" are directed at pupils in the form of imperatives or questions. The teachers ceaselessly underline their position in the discursive space with their intonation, rhythm and accents accompanying the style in question, at the same time managing knowledge, the way it is "acquired" and emotions (Galasiński 2008: 152, 153). Additionally, the location of the very class as a unit is much higher than the pupils' right to answer the teacher's questions in a way unhampered by anything or anyone. As a part of the thus-configured logic of the CPD style, per-

formative acts having the power to wound and simultaneously highlight the dominating position of the person disciplining and forming young subjects emerge spontaneously and freely (Kopciewicz: 2007, 2011). As a part of the management of the situations involving speaking, this style contains attributers such as an element of the teacher's criticism and the enforcement of keeping quiet and silence, which are more often assigned to female pupils than to the male ones (Grzechnik 2015b). Summing up the above manner of communication, we may say that this style, which dominates in the communication space of the classroom, exemplifies the domination entangled in prescriptive-prohibitive knowledge enriched with the power to control and performatively wound pupils of both sexes.

**NIH<sup>4</sup>**: Could you just look after yourself, no comments. (Male pupil U5 began to clap after the teacher's statement directed to female pupil Ua2).

**NIH**: If you want to say something, put your hand up.

U13: They could kill. (Male pupil U13 answers after putting his hand up).

U16: Yes, they could. (Male pupil U16 answers without putting his hand up). [...] (*history lesson No.1*)

**Na7B**: I would like each of you to be able to enumerate these five elements, rather than just talk like that, summing up. [...] (*science lesson No. 1*)

**Na2P**: Hey, you have just written your tests and you're now afraid that the blackboard will attack you, or what? (*Polish lesson No. 1*)

**NIH**: No, as your spine will bend utterly unnecessarily.

U1: My mum says that it is bent already.

**NIH**: And this is not good at all.

U5: You are bent all the time.

Ua2: Or twisted?

**NIH**: Could you just look after yourself, no comments. (Male pupil U5 began to clap after the teacher's words addressed to Ua2) (*history lesson No.2*)

The above fragment of a female teacher's statement indicates that the element of criticism as a part of the interaction of questions and answers "inspires" her to provide a fast reply.

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<sup>4</sup> The code key for the female teachers, male teachers, female pupils and male pupils participating in the study – used in the transcriptions of the recorded lessons and in the observation log. Bold font was used as an additional assistance to mark male and female teachers: **NIH** – teacher of history, **Na2P** – teacher of Polish, **Na3B** – female form tutor1, **N4M** – teacher of music, **Na5S** – teacher of music, **N6R** – teacher of religion, **Na7B** – teacher of science, **Na8** – female form tutor 2; Ua1, Ua2, Ua3, Ua4, Ua5, Ua6, Ua7, Ua8, Ua9, Ua10, Ua11, Ua12, Ua13, Ua14, Ua15, Ua16, Ua17, Ua18, Uax – female pupils; U1, U2, U3, U4, U5, U6, U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18, Ux – male pupils.

A great majority of male and female teachers have a huge need to talk. As for male and female pupils, slightly more male than female ones try to be allowed to speak, while a decisive majority of boys are very clearly determined to present themselves in the communication space (Bochno 2009). When encountering communication difficulties imposed by the teacher, boys decisively fight for their “due” discursive position in the classroom. The female and male teachers’ communication with pupils is qualitatively different depending on the pupils’ gender (Kopciewicz 2007).

### The controlling-disciplining-positioning style with a sense of humour

A variety of the above style is a manner in which the teacher communicates with their pupils differing from the controlling-disciplining-positioning style with only one small detail, i.e. their sense of humour (sometimes positioning the pupils). In the space of this style, the sense of humour can be used by both teachers and pupils.

U16: Strange sounds.

**N4M:** Why? Because when you laugh, your diaphragm works intensively. It massages your internal organs, which has a beneficial effect on the entire body.

Yes?

U16: If laughter is good for you, let’s laugh together.

**N4M:** OK. Everybody laughs out loud. (Laughter).Ok, thank you. Let us leave something good for our health for the break. (*music lesson no. 3*)

### The “dynamic” teaching style

The teacher’s manner of talking presented in the fragment below is marked by, along with numerous orders, “forcing the pace” and you can notice “in no time” that the combination of dynamics with a frequent use of the conditional mode constructs a stylistic specificity of the expressed speech acts. In the example under analysis, this category refers to the “colloquial” speech, which offers the listeners a cold and not very nice intonation enhanced with a non-specific distribution of accents. The several minutes long dialogue fragment quoted below has the power to annihilate any space for the question/answer interaction in the discourse of the classroom:

**Na7B:** Quick, quick. Perhaps OU14 has something to say. People, wake up!

**Na7B:** Physical and chemical transformations. Fast pace.

Ua6: Oooh.

**Na7B:** Have I asked you to grumble? Unless someone wants to lecture today. Instead of revising in your free time, you keep talking.

U16: What is the subject?

**Na7B:** I advise you to revise.

Ua6: Well I was absent, so how can I revise? [...]

**Na7B:** Hey! Stop moaning. We are getting to work. Caution! [...] One person answers, and then we ask fast. Maybe Ua6.

Ua6: I was absent.

**Na7B:** But. When did you come back to school? Today?

Ua6: Well, no. But I was absent during this one. [...] I have this subject, but have not learnt it. [...]

**Na7B:OK.** So that is a minus for today, and if you still fail to know it by the next class, you will get a one. [...] Please, fast, one, two. And instead of revising, you are sitting like some magpies!

Ua6: Miss, this is the world of the matter?

**Na7B:** Yes.

Ua6: Then I was present.

**Na7B:** I have not put the minus in to the log yet, make it fast!

Ua6: So: matter.

**Na7B:** Ask her a question. In no time, one, two! [...] We are forcing the pace!

**Na7B:** If you dawdle relatively fast, maybe I'll give you some time for an experiment, but if your pace is hopeless, there will be no experiment at all [...].

**Na7B:** [...] Forcing the pace, as there is still the experiment.

**Na7B:** Coagulation. [...] OK, point two. Ok, so who is writing? OK.

Ua10:Me. (A female pupil puts her hand up).

**Na7B:**Move on, move on! [...]

**Na7B:**Please. Can you stop yelling? (to the boys). Move to the side. (*science lesson No. 2*)

In the space of the teacher's style under analysis, the female pupils answer in a shy, quiet voice. They also speak rarely, as they are rarely invited to take a voice. When a female pupil is instructed to take a voice, she is obliged to answer a rather bulky stream of the teacher's questions, as shown in the fragment above.

The female teacher **Na2P** has an expressive communication supremacy: she speaks a lot and in a loud voice, co-creating a clear dynamics of communication style together with the girls and boys, as can be seen in the next fragment.

U16: But you want it fast?

**Na2P:** Move on, hey! Listen, faster, or else you will sit here until Easter.

U14: So is it Easter tomorrow? (*Polish lesson No. 3*)

The "grey" dailiness of the classroom intertwined with the creation of gender divisions is a category manifesting itself interactively and very clearly in the presented fragments of "language games". These divisions were for example visible in the tendency to lower grades for the female pupil's utterance.

**Na7B:** So, how would you grade your friend?

U16, U12: Five.

**Na7B:** No, sirs, four at the most.

U16: Five!

**Na7B:** I said something! (Loudly and expressively) Give me your copybook, fast! (*science lesson No.2*)

The pupils were allowed/instructed to assess their friend's utterance: "So, how would you grade your friend?"; They graded her at "five". The teacher decided to give the pupil a "good", and when her fellow pupils "asked" the teacher for a very good grade, she protested loudly and decidedly: "I said something!". The teacher manages the situations of talking, and decides about the logic of the assessment of the pupils' utterances and the mode of sanctioning pupils for their insubordination.

### The controlling-disciplining-positioning style – "young researcher"

In the empirical material, another communication style was identified: I called it CPD-"young researcher", as it is a mix of the CPD style and a style oriented at a "young researcher" (mainly the male one – and a female one to a lesser degree) of the surrounding world. As a part of this manner of speaking and communicating with pupils, the teacher arouses their curiosity and cognitive sensitivity, which is only partially combined with a free spontaneity of the pupils' exploration of the reality. The style of communication in question contains much more "CPD" than the "young researcher". It is the only style of teachers' speaking which accepts the aspect of exploration in thinking and speaking in the process of the construction of knowledge by the male pupils – and very rarely by female ones as well (Grzechnik 2014).

**N4M:** I don't know if you realise, but in the Middle Ages, there was a torture, a punishment, consisting in tearing out someone's tongue.

U16: Tearing it out?

**N4M:** Yes, they tore out the convicts' tongue as a punishment. I would probably do this to you today.

U1: Aaah, to me?

U10: It would do you good. (*music lesson No. 3*)

All the above – four – teachers' communication styles include a space reserved for a verbal, clear, often hurting, positioning, and subjugating category directed straight at the pupil, which I have called for the purposes of this project teachers'

performative straightforwardness. It is a specific variety of the “pedagogical performative art” about which we should talk and write. However, no trace of this straightforwardness was found in the style discussed below – one that is so different to the other ones and laughed at by the pupils.

### The subtle-gentle communication style

The last speaking style I have identified and reconstructed is the subtle-gentle style, recognising and respecting the dignity of the other human being, of each girl and boy. This style, categorised in typology II of the teachers’ styles, has not been accepted by male pupils. Only girls, who fully accept the positions occupied in the discursive space in compliance with the assumptions of Bourdieu’s social theory, have an enthusiastic attitude to it. The process of learning of calm female pupils is disturbed by the loud behaviour of boys which has a destructive impact on the course of the lesson. Sensitive, calm, balanced, tactful, patient, valuing the culture of words and open to pupils of both sexes, the teacher finds it problematic to maintain discipline in the discursive space of the classroom. Her communication style shows that she is almost an ideal teacher: she is open, patient, and very competent in the scope of the building of communication interaction, taking into account its ethical and aesthetic aspects.

Each of the above styles contains elements of the teacher’s individuality, which translates into a stylistic specificity of statements, which is different in each of the communication styles of the teacher.

**Na2P:** U3! It is too loud. Will you stop talking?

**Na2P:** What is happening? Such a silence. I think that we should be making recordings at each lesson, I can see. (*Polish lesson No. 2*)

The above fragments of statements of a male and a female teacher are a suggestion that the presence of a camera fits the logic of the basic communication style of the teacher, which is mainly aimed at positioning, controlling, and disciplining the pupils.

**Ua5:** Why?

**Na2P:** I’m talking about this silence and peace. Have you finished writing? (*Polish lesson No. 4*)

**NIH:** Children are shutting their mouths. You will now be able to talk to your heart’s content.

**NIH:** Marysia, you are writing this down from the blackboard! (Female pupil Ua3 obediently nods several times.)

**NIH:** (To Ua12) I shall make you change your seat in a moment. (*history lesson No.4*)

**Na2P:** Ua7! What subjects are you discussing?

Ua7: He asked me what this is. Flowers.

**Na2P:** So you are not talking at the same time? (*Polish lesson No. 2*)

The female pupil Ua5, although she plucked up courage to ask a question, speaks in a whisper, quietly, hesitantly, and unclearly. Female pupil Ua7 has little confidence and is a calm girl, who has very good results at school and speaks quietly and shyly.

The way of the construction and description of the identified typologies allows for a deepened analysis and interpretation of the consolidation of the phenomenon of gender hierarchisation in the classroom in communication-related practices of the subjects of education.

In the style of speaking of pupils, both in the classroom and in the school corridor, one can almost hear their “call” for symmetry in their communication with the teachers, and as a part of it, for more attention, openness to young minds and linguistic ethical and aesthetic sensitivity. The gender aspect of communication styles together with the *illusion* is transferred outside the classroom. The power of the language of the subjects of education will probably accompany the pupils of both sexes in the future (Marody 1982).

Observing as a part of the ethnography of communication the manners of communication of the subjects in the classroom, I had a feeling that the linguistic actions constructed and delivered by the sender – the teacher – were implemented mechanically and unconsciously. However, the total or partial unawareness, constantly strengthened by the *illusio*, guarantees many subsequent repetitions and interpretations as correct, proper, and necessary. This specific manner of communication activity is related not only to speech acts, but also performatives (Butler 1997). Their location in communication styles is consistent with the principles of the activity of the social field (classroom), which are aimed at the consolidation of gender hierarchisation, and the subjugation of cognition, which takes away the “freedom” in the process of the creation of knowledge from not only the female but also the male pupils and determines, on a daily basis, the boundaries of the grounding in the worlds they become acquainted with and reproduce every day.

It is noticeable that the styles discussed on the basis of the rich empirical material are a variety of the colloquial style, as they are marked by a wealth of specific features, such as the verbal transfer of the message, increased expressiveness and impressiveness involving ellipses, nominal sentences and exclamations, as well as a high degree of changeability of contrasts of cultural seriousness and sense of humour entangled with control and subjugation of the subject. Another argument

in favour of the “school colloquiality” (Klus-Stańska 2010) of this style of speaking is the constant expectation of fast verbal contact and the related use of phraseological, syntactical and situational clichés, and stereotypes (formulas). What is important for the entire climate of the analysis and interpretation of the styles of communication is the absence, in the teachers’ speech acts, of a developed syntax based on the wealth of special terminology related to the description of the surrounding reality, which is constructed by the subjects of education. Along with the “school colloquiality”, an official, school-based, thoroughly normative form of the transfer of knowledge emerged that is coupled with schematism, an inviolability of the linguistic *illusion* and mechanisms ruling the field of discourse. Knowledge consistent with the hierarchical order prevailing at school is closely entangled with the impressive function of language persuading pupils to undertake actions and present attitudes expected by their teachers. The teachers, managing the situations of speaking, are well oriented as to what pupils need, or at least they are convinced about it and believe that this is really so.

### Summary

In the course of my research project, I sought to answer the question of whether I could confirm the results of the previous research carried out by other researchers, or show that the discursive gender positioning of pupils in the classroom under study does not exist.

Summing up, I would like to offer three basic conclusions. Firstly, we may decisively say that the phenomenon of gender hierarchisation is consolidated as a part of the teaching and learning process in the teacher-pupil communication styles, being a set of actions. The classroom as a social field is a space in which knowledge combined with the teachers’ power consolidating the pupils’ gender polarization is created. Knowledge is supplied in the “best and special” way, i.e. stereotypically, naively, and traditionally. What is the driving force and the impetus of the hierarchisation is the multiplier effect<sup>5</sup> coupled with the consolidating power of the *illusion* of the potential of the set of all the features of the teachers’ communication styles. What validates these “traditional” communication styles is not only the teachers’ and the ubiquitous power (Foucault 1994, 2009), but also the location and nature of knowledge filled with “gender colloquiality” together with a very serious role it plays at school.

Secondly, the communication styles constructed by teachers and directed at pupils position every subject of education in the classroom in a different way. It is very likely that the language and communication styles of pupils and teachers, manifest-

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<sup>5</sup> A category taken from the language of economy, marked by the intensification and strengthening of power through the combination of the particular factors.

ed as a consolidation of gender differences, effectively influence the construction of “ordered possibilities” and the selection of “obvious” positions of girls and boys in the broadly understood social field of the future.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the results of my research show that verbal school-based interactions are an exemplification of a set of reasons behind the absence and annihilation of a chance for a consensus. In one of his works, Zdzisław Aleksander describes a chance for intergenerational dialogue of contemporary subjects of education concerning pupils of both sexes aged 15 years (Aleksander 2009), for which in the light of my research with reference to 12-year-old girls and boys there is little place at school. On the basis of my ethnographic research, we may notice the above chance, but the way subjects of education communicate with each other does not contribute significantly to the construction of a space enabling its development and a strong position in the classroom field. What materialises itself against the background of gender polarised communication styles located in the discursive space of the classroom is the phenomenon of an absence of linguistic ethical-aesthetic sensitivity and trust, unsatisfactory quality of the teacher-pupil relations, and discouragement. On the basis of the above truth, we may conclude that the understanding and successful communication between subjects of education seems to be impossible.

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## Summary

*Communication styles of subjects of education in the gender perspective.  
Critical discourse analysis*

This article explores the communication styles of teachers in the classroom in the gender perspective. Ways of speaking show how power and knowledge are constructed by

verbal interactions. Schoolchildren are positioned in a traditional order in the discursive space of school, with the first one being the teacher, the second one – the boys, and the third one – the girls. The quality of communication styles does not facilitate the reaching of a consensus between teachers, schoolgirls and schoolboys.

### Keywords

gender hierarchisation/inequality, communications styles, consensus, school

*English translation: Anna Moroz-Darska*

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