

... Turn your eyes inward ... learn first to know yourself. (*SE XVII*: 142, 143)

The main function of teaching is to encourage people to teach themselves [in the “creation of a new condition of knowledge – the creation of an original learning-disposition” (Felman, 1982: 31)]. This requires going beyond understanding teaching and learning as largely a cognitive, reasoning process.

Despite their seeming incompatibility, teacher/student interaction invites comparisons with psychoanalysis in its positing of an “intersubjective force” (Simon, 1995: 95) that which Lacan calls the demand for the “subject who is supposed to know” (*le sujet supposé savoir*), the teacher as “object of desire” (Litvak, 1995: 26) and the question of the transference erotic pedagogical relationship (“as soon as the subject who is supposed to know exists somewhere ... S.s.S [*sujet supposé savoir*] there is transference” *S XI*: 232).

Because “transference is the enacting of the reality of the unconscious” (*S XI*: 174, 267) because transference is “love of **knowledge**, not desire” (Sayer, 1991, p. 32) and because “The question of love is ... linked to that of knowledge” (*S XX*: 84) teaching is necessarily an affective, erotic experience. “I love the person I assume to have knowledge,” says Lacan (*S XX*: 64). [Michel Foucault, in *History of Sexuality* claims this function/structure of transference has long been institutionalised in Western culture. For many centuries, he claims, confession was the paradigmatic transference relationship: one went to one's confessor because he better understood one's inner dynamics, one's reasons for sinning and charity, and hence by administering appropriate penance could save the soul].

This study presents a psychoanalytic approach to critical education using Lacan's four-discourses model, considered in the light of Badiou's approach to truth and Hegel's dialectic. On this account, the successful implementation of critical learning - reading the world - is shown to require a “narrative capable of bringing to awareness, for further construction, things that are farthest from the mind” (Britzman 2009, p. viii).

The process involves making available the unconscious drivers that place students in particular spaces within the Symbolic order by providing discursive strategies for them to access foreign parts of their selves, particularly desire and the quests for authenticity and love. The paper argues that in critical learning, the logically impossible sublation of the 'not-all' (*pas-toute*) of the feminine principle of acceptance and inclusion and the masculine principle of denial and possession corresponds to the injunction to actualise student potential in opening up the borders of what is possible in learning.

Encouraging students to explore their responses to the work they do in the classroom enables them to discover more about themselves and about each other. "All the patient's symptoms have abandoned their original meaning and have taken on a new sense which lies in a relation to the transference; or only such symptoms have persisted as are capable of undergoing such a transformation" (Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, 1915)

Rather than conscripting only Hegel's concept of the dialectic to critical pedagogy, however, I interweave his ideas with those of Lacan and Badiou. Lacan, Hegel, Badiou and Freire envisage education as a site of revolutionary action in which love and desire are key components. Education is seen, not as a banking transmission (Freire, 1985) nor as a maieutic passive recollection of knowledge (Plato, 2005) but rather as "a generative process where knowledge itself is not absolute but socially constructed" (Todd, 2003, p. 5). Freire (1985) regards education as a praxis for rearticulating oppressive relations and Lacan (2007) elaborates two subjugating and two empowering discourses applicable to education.

Hegel maintains that, "*Education*, in its absolute determination, is therefore *liberation* and *work* towards a higher liberation" (Hegel, 1991, p. 225) and Badiou claims that education's practice is "to arrange the forms of knowledge in such a way that some truth may come to pierce a hole in them" (Badiou, 2005, p. 9).

Is it possible then to identify and mobilise a critical erotics that advances liberation?

Given that the break with conventional teaching must occur from within the existing system and that the project runs the risk of instrumentalising education in the name of challenging dominating discourses, can this complex ensue? Does it make sense to use a theory that insists on disrupting itself? Is this kind of liberatory teaching legitimate?

Despite the contradiction of using the reality principle in an effort to recapture an imaginary lost plenitude (Freud, 2005) These theorists say yes, for self-liberation must first occur before social gains can be realised.

And desire is articulable only in the register of the Symbolic, only within a signifying chain alienated by the Imaginary strictures of the ego, so that where putting things into words is at once our greatest treasure and our most enigmatic possession (Klein in De Bianchedi, *et al*, 1988). Boothby (1991) claims that the Lacanian subject is above all else the subject of language and Badiou (in Cho & Lewis, 2005, p. 2) insists that “new possibilities are possible” where the “event” (Badiou, 2001, p 41, *ff*) transforms persons by obliging them to articulate new ways of being.

“Love is an enquiry of the world from the point of view of the Two,” he says (Badiou, 1996, p. 49). Hegel too (1977) in his logic of sublation¹ argues for the power of radical transformative change, while Freire and Lacan affirm the dominant role that representation plays in constructing subjectivity and potential agency. All contend that a critical interventionist approach, using the subject’s language, is the basis of a liberatory education. But a particular discourse and a special love are required.

My aim is to bring the Gestaltist (Lacan, 2006) backgrounded (contextual, *feminine*) parts of students’ unconscious to their dispositionally-foregrounded (perceptual, *masculine*) consciousnesses to produce new subjectivities. There, where the ego in

¹ Hegel’s and Lacan’s similar notions of the negativity at the centre of the divided subject similarly open a space for radical freedom. Sublation (synthesis) does not eliminate the difference between self and other because at one or another time, sublation recognises that they are the same or radically different. The moment of identity is different from the self-identity of self and other, where in the discrimination between self and other, identity is made possible. In sublation, this possibility is actualised, though simultaneously, self and other remain differentiated in order that that actualisation take place.

its imaginary unity represses the greater part of the self and prohibits desire its full expression, there might flourish a fuller humanity. Where there is obsessive focus, there might flow a dispersed supplemental energetics. Where there is Imaginary representation, there might emerge a Symbolic transformative potential. Where there is silence, aggression and sadness, there might issue vigour, connection and joy.

And this happens. I teach the 'hard' classes of Foundation courses with a great deal of success. This study outlines what this learning involves for the classes. These responses are always a mix of the emotional, the physical and the intellectual and can be explicated by identifying the dynamics of identification – both as cause and effect - in each of Lacan's three psychic registers: The *Real*, the *Imaginary* and the *Symbolic*. The three orders are inextricably bound together and involved in individuals' perceptions and experiences. The conflicts between the registers and between components *within* each register (as well as genetic and environmental factors) dictate the approaches and responses the individual learner might take, and the attractions and values that the material to be studied might possess for the learner to manage, confirm and support his or her unconscious desires in an experience similar to that of psychoanalysis where:

The analyst must aim at the passage of true speech, joining the subject to an other subject, on the other wall of language. That is the final relation of the subject to a genuine Other, to the Other who gives the answer one doesn't expect ... (S. II: 246)

Recognising, encouraging and acknowledging students' responses to texts, discourses and other cultural artefacts, then, however initially disturbing, is ultimately liberating and empowering, offering greater *jouissance* for students and, through the potentially liberating effects of changes in attitudes and behaviours, an opportunity for beneficial social change. Recognition legitimates aspects of the self that may be unacknowledged or disowned. These aspects are not uniquely isolate in the subject: they have social implications. As a result of such pedagogical practice,

students come to define themselves differently, act differently and think and speak differently.

The goal of pedagogy, like that of analysis, is “the advent of true speech, Lacan’s *bien dire*, ‘well-saying’ (*Television*, 1990, p.41), where:

... well-saying concerns the relation between words and being, between words and who you are. [W]ell-saying can apparently be put on the level of something like a knowledge, but a knowledge which concerns the subject itself and a knowledge that is precisely that which science excludes. In well-saying, one intends to reach something like a verdict about one’s being. In that sense we could say that well-saying is equivalent to *well-knowing*, but the knowledge we refer to is not unconscious knowledge. ... well-saying produces something new which was not present before, a new knowledge about the subject, because the well-said subject is not the same subject as before being well-said (Sayer, 1991, pp. 30, 31).

and the subject’s realisation of her history in its relation to a future” (*Écrits*: 249). The new subject is enabled to change her mind.

As teachers, we can take these understandings further to re-imagine and recast selves and thoughts – by attending to the signifiers. For texts to matter, students’ lives and subjectivities and consciousnesses must connect to the texts ...

There are four discourses: the discourse of the master, the discourse of the university, the discourse of the hysteric and the discourse of the analyst. Critical literacy involves “reading the world”, understanding how people encode power structures and their role in these processes, maintain Freire & Macedo (1987). Herein lie the seeds of a new pedagogy - one recognising the authoritative Other² of contemporary education not as master but as representative of the community of subjects and reminding the subject of his obligation to engage in social intercourse.

² Lacan equates the big Other (with a capital O) with the Symbolic order of law and language.

Critical writers agree on the importance of subjective intervention in society, where “eros is a force that enhances our overall effort to be self-actualising [so that] the classroom becomes a dynamic place where transformations in social relations are concretely actualised and the false dichotomy between the world outside and the inside world of the academy disappears” (hooks, 1994, p. 195). Engaging critical literacy, then, elucidates how subjectivities with greater agency might be created to advance new ways of being.

Many students suffer frustration under educators whose “pedagogy has largely abandoned critical thought out of its obeisance to vocationalism or its tired allegiance to banalities that bore even the instructors who repeat them” (Jay 1987, p. 798). For these students, acquiring appropriate identities requires a recognition of lack (and therefore a compensatory construction of desire) which understanding temporarily arrests sliding signifiers in the pursuit of a greater subjective capacity. Where students are enabled to become conscious of the inhibiting parts of their subjectivities, and encouraged to recognise and acknowledge their own desires, then an exploration of new subjectivities and the construction of genuine learning may result. On this approach, desire is embodied as a “constellation of language, desire, power, and identity” (Kelly, 1997, p. 15) in culturally specific, mediated relationships among persons. Language is the necessary medium, as it constructs and constrains reality, and Lacan’s framework describes how language can be used to disrupt the fanciful, rational unitary nature of itself to allow the emergence of multiple, fluid and (necessarily) conflictual elements in building different subjectivities. This can be achieved in the classroom.

Educational practice is “a mode of social control” claims McLaren (1994a, p. 173) which elicits particular forms of subjectivity and particular ways of participating in society. Under contemporary capitalism, write Zavarzadeh and Morton (1994, p. 10) the postmodern classroom produces subjects who “think of themselves as being in control of their own actions, as masters of their own destinies, as the source of their own social values—in short, as ‘sovereign subjects’” Here, pedagogy, the accomplice of capitalism, valorises the ‘autonomous’, ‘creative’ and ‘entrepreneurial’ subject

who produces his own meaning through individual readings of texts. Under this regime, standardised knowledge becomes a commodity, “to be memorised and regurgitated like mental excrement” (Cho & Lewis 2005, p. 4). Yet the “crisis of the subject” (Morton & Zavarzadeh, 1991, p. 2) is just that which, fomented by capitalism, is “no longer capable of dealing with the new power/knowledge relations that shape the subject” (*id.*).

Lacanian theory suggests that subjects in their fixation to and by ideology defend and act out the ‘symptoms’ of their subjectivity, preferring death to change. Identifications organise psychic life with its desire for *having* and *being*. This recognition “should have sobering effects on teachers who believe that a simple, clear, and rational explanation of political activity can directly lead to different political identifications,” states Alcorn (1995, p. 339) who describes subjectivity as “a kind of code that can be understood and modified” (Alcorn, 2002, p. 19). In the classroom, these ways of being and acting are “effected through the management and domestication of desire” (Kelly, 1997, p. 1) and both Lacan and Freire observe that many people are willing to sacrifice their subjective potential in favour of the identities available from the dominant discourse’s discursive supermarket (Arendt, 1978, p. 4). For Lacan (2006, pp. 222-223) a “subject who loses his meaning in the objectifications of discourse” deprives himself of his capacity and responsibility for being human.

The ‘loss’ that accompanies the onset of language, paradoxically founds subjecthood, though it precipitates a “permanent search” (Freire, 2004, p. 106) for that knowledge that will aid its recovery. Freire states that only that knowledge which permits people to become “beings for themselves” (1985, p. 48) is of significance (1985, 2008a, 2008b). For Lacan too, the human subject is motivated by a continual search for meaning beyond that of biological survival. Jay (1987, p. 789) states that “the systematic bringing to discourse of unconscious thoughts (or resistances to thought) is the teacher’s primary task”, where the essential focus should be on “a pedagogy of production rather than consumption, in which education is a practice in the performance that makes knowledge” (*id.* p. 798).

What defines humans is their need to self-represent and interpret self and others through a symbolic mediation which is itself an emotional experience (Kohut, 2001: Laplanche, 1989; Pontalis, 1981). This just is the task of the critical literacy teacher: To acknowledge the ego-defence strategies of students' identificatory practices and to assist them to use these needs and desires to reconstitute lost emotional ties in ways that incorporate both (masculine) *having* and (feminine) *being*. It is possible to interrogate desire in this process as a vital aspect of students' and teachers' identities in considering "the promise of pleasure in teaching/learning relationships" (Simon, 1995, p. 95), and in "dislocat[ing] fixed desires" (Jay, 1987, p. 790). The aim of this critical education, then, is to offer a programme that promotes liberatory practices beyond those of traditional arrangements where the teacher remains in control, and so we argue for a disruption of those conventional practices that maintain and reproduce relations of domination (Janks, 2000, p. 176) in favour of those discourses that are "structured differently from the discourse of power" (Fink, 1995, p. 129).

Lacan (1901-1981) offers such a project. At first sight the philosopher and psychoanalyst appears, in his investigation of the psychological, i.e. individual, aspects of subjectivity, to approach social liberation from an end opposite to that of Freire.³ Closer examination, however, shows that Lacan insists upon a social substratum for the creation of the individual subject⁴ where he refers explicitly to his "mission of teaching" (Felman, 1982, pp. 24-25).

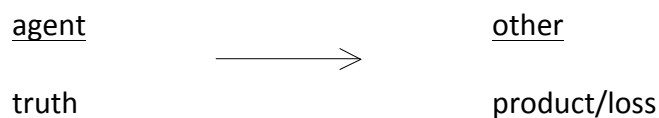
Undergirding his strategy, Hegel's (1770-1831) notion of sublation synthesises the contradictions of identification into a volatile subjectivity sustained by the subject's desire: inclusive, unmediated and open to feminine ways of being. Investigating the dialectic identifies desire as that which shapes subjects' aspirations and identities in the social domain. Most subjects are unaware that their subjectivities are shaped by the Symbolic order, claims Wolfe (2010) but where that relationship to the Other is

³ Paulo Freire (1921-1997) urges the essential nature of individual effort within the aggregate collectivity. Operating to redress inequality, he reveals how conventional literacy education is simply a colonisation "that refuses to ascribe any role to subjectivity" (Freire, 1994, p. 21).

recognised, the critical literacy educator is empowered to disrupt conventional and static modes of being and reconceptualise them through emancipatory educational practices. Together with the postmodernist philosopher, Alain Badiou (1937-) these theorists offer a strategy wherein the subjugating social practices of dominant modes of conventional education collide with interpersonal modes of being to sublimate entirely new ways of resistance and being. In the critical literacy classroom, this process is achieved through the process of transference.

THE FOUR DISCOURSES

Presenting a strategy of critical education that promotes educational development and subjective awareness in an ethical manner, it is important to understand the ways in which discourses produce psychological effects in people. Lacan's model proposes four basic structures of discourse (Lacan, 2007) graphically represented by a quadripartite:



The quadripartite (Fink, 1999, p. 131)

The figure models a structure of power relations where a particular discourse expresses positionalities, creates and reproduces power relations and assesses "psychological and social effects" (Bracher, 1994, p. 5). Lacan defines 'discourse' as a "social link, founded on language" (Lacan, 1999, p. 17). Each discourse is characterised by four terms arranged in a matrix. The top left-hand corner represents the agent or institution who or which 'speaks' in the discourse. Beneath and barred from the agent is the unconscious truth that motivates him. The top right corner is the other (a person, institution or social structure) who is addressed or interrogated in the discourse, the arrow between them representing the one-way relationship. Beneath the other is that which is produced in the discourse. The four discourses rotate anticlockwise through the four positions, represented by the mathemes:

S_1 , the master signifier;
 S_2 , knowledge, or the signifying chain;
 a , the *objet petit a* or object cause of desire; and
 $\$$, the split subject (Bracher, 1994, pp. 109-110).

The masculine attitude inherent in the University discourse presupposes fullness in its obsessive denial of 'castration' and contradiction. It strives to create a complete and closed social universe of meaning as opposed to the radically feminine approach of the Hysteric's discourse which accepts loss and inevitable incompleteness, thereby creating a space for desire and development.

The four discourses are those of the Master, the University, the Hysteric and the Analyst. The discourse of the Master is unconditional, despotic and law-giving; the discourse of the University represents knowledge as an object; the discourse of the Analyst is that of the ethical listener (Wolfe, 2010, p.155) and the discourse of the Hysteric is that of the insatiable questioner.

The master signifier $\$$, supplies meaning to all other signifiers, binding them into a matrix of sense-making, although it, being empty of meaning, has no signified itself. Examples of contemporary master signifiers are: 'democracy', 'entrepreneur' and 'money', although the most important master signifier – and the one most in need of radical reinterpretation – is the self-identical, autonomous individual of modern thought: the 'I'. "The myth of the ideal I, of the I that masters, of the I whereby at least something is identical to itself, namely the speaker ..." (Lacan, 2007, p. 63) is a construct. This ego is an image of one's self that concurs with one's sense of self – but it is not the last word on the subject.

a . *Knowledge* (S_2) is the whole chain of signifiers under S_1 . Knowledge, on this account, is unconscious (*q. v.* Fink, 1995, pp. 35-58) and the subject is correspondingly passive with regard to it.

The *barred subject* (\$) is the subject who suffers lack, alienation and symbolic castration. The subject is artificial, constrained by Symbolic laws and rules, usually not knowing his own desire nor indeed, *wanting* to know. For Hegel, the subject comes into being only through recognition by another, who in turn is similarly recognised. This recognition is the aim of desire and the reason/cause for love in both its sense of admiration for another and in seeing in the other more than he is. Humans desperately “desire the desire of the Other” (Lacan, 1998, p. 235). Deriving from this is the feeling that that which is most intimate for the Subject is that which is external to him (for which Lacan coined the term ‘extimité’; *vide* Miller, *Extimité*, in Bracher, 1993, p. 77). The subject feels, as a consequence, not just incomplete, but also *split*.⁵ This scission occurs with the onset of speech and other acts of socialisation. For the masculine personality the split is experienced in terms of Lacanian sexuation as a symbolic castration: he no longer possesses what he once had; for the feminine personality, the feeling may be one of violation: she no longer is what once she was. Castration, being the price of admission into the Symbolic order, is universal, where the sexed positions are the two ways subjects are represented in the order. For pedagogy, this implies that the teacher in the position of the Master or the University discourse is operating from within a masculine domain and that students are often situated in the discourse of the Analyst or the Hysteric.

b. The *objet petit a*, the ‘little a’ of ‘autré’, is the object cause of desire. These are the others – people and objects, ideas and events – that subjects encounter and desire. ‘Desire’ here means the sex urge rewritten in the Symbolic order as the urge to acquire the primordial wholeness subjects imagine they have lost, while simultaneously retaining their self-consciousness – an impossibility. The object *a* presents in discourse as that which has been excluded by signifiers (Bracher, 1993, pp. 41, 42). Not believing they are nothing but unsatisfied desire, subjects continually seek *objets petit a*: money, a particular glance, a good job, or a collector’s item. Whatever form it takes, the search for the fulfilling *objet a* will

⁵ This ‘split’ is a misnomer because it implies that there could somewhere be an unsplit subject. But the fundamental split just *is* subjectivity (Fink, 1995, p. 45).

never be realised because the search is itself the cause of desire. For the masculine subject, the search is an unacknowledged quest for Eros, the perfect woman, who will complete him and repair his castration. For the feminine subject, who unconsciously recognises the doomed fate of this search, the desire is that for Thanatos, the wholeness of the pre-subjective union with the mother. Neither masculine nor feminine quest can be achieved, yet both are essential for subjectivity. Even though the *objet a* is excluded from discourse, it nevertheless “figures the lack of being that causes all desire, and it underlies affect as well” (Bracher, 1994, p. 114).

The discourses operate under different truth conditions of what is assumed and accepted to be truthful and meaningful. All four discourses operate within the classroom, and educators and learners speak within all four discourses.

I argue that the discourse of the Analyst and the discourse of the Hysteric provide unique perspectives from which to investigate and critique the dominant discourses of the Master and the University, abducting logical possibilities of emancipatory teaching and learning from the latter’s seeming authority and permitting the development of an authentic critical engagement in students’ lives.

Students and teachers interact in the varying discourses, but we claim the former are suppressed by the masculine discourses of the Master and the University and liberated when operating in the feminine discourses of the Hysteric and the Analyst.

No one speaks from within only one discourse (Fink, 1995, pp. 129, 130). Individuals move from discourse to discourse. A teacher takes on different roles and may speak within different discourses with respect to a single matter, even though each discourse has its own conditions and consequences. Accordingly, one ethical ideal for teachers is to identify the discourse appropriate for the role they adopt and to understand its demands and constraints. Analysing these schemata, then, offers an understanding of the interpellative force of the major pedagogical styles operating within educational institutions:

The Master's Discourse

$$\frac{S_1}{\$} \longrightarrow \underset{a}{S_2}$$

The Master's Discourse (Samuels, 2002, p. 48)

The discourse of the Master promotes consciousness, synthesis and self-identity (Lacan, 2007, pp. 62, 63) through its enactment of the autonomous individual. From the viewpoint of the sexual impasse, the Master's discourse is one of masculine power. Lacan (2007) based his theory of the Master's discourse on Hegel's (1977, pp. 111-119) master-slave dialectic, transposing the Hegelian Master into the Master Signifier, who insists on being recognised as such simply because of his achievement of that status. "The master must be obeyed – not because we'll all be better off that way or for some other rationale – but because he or she says so. The "law must be obeyed *because it is law* and not because there are good reasons to obey it" (Salecl, 1994, p. 163).

In the relationship between the master and the slave, the speaking agent, located at the dominant position in the top left-hand corner, is the S_1 , the master signifier, usually the institution or the person acting as representative of the institution. The discourse of the master represents 'truth' without justification, with no appeal to wisdom or the good or the right, but just because 'truth' is what the Master proclaims it to be. In education, the learning that is engaged in under this discourse is irrelevant save only that it 'works'. This is Hegel's (1977) concept: The master is a master and the knowledge is knowledge, not because he or it deserves to play this role but because the master has power and the slave is obliged to obey.⁶

This structure is what Freire (1985) sees as the dehumanising relationship of the banking concept of education, devoid of all but the rehearsal of sterile knowledge. As an "authoritarian pedagogy" (Bracher, 2006, p. 87) this style of delivery to, and

⁶ The other addressed by the Master is S_2 , the place of the student. In educational settings, the teacher, or more usually, the institution's rules, regulations and values, is in the Master's place. Teachers often foreground and privilege signifiers which valorise their or other authorities' 'mastery', beliefs and values.

relationship with students need not be totally wrong, however. It is, as Žižek says (2007a) “the founding gesture of every social link”, the *point de capiton* (Lacan, 1997, pp. 258-270) which is often simply unavoidable. It is the beginning of all teaching as infants and young children can survive and undergo socialisation only *via* accepting the other’s directives, because identifying with commands provides the developing individual with his deepest foundations of security and engagement (*q.v.* Alcorn, 1994, pp. 2-28 and *ff*; Freud, 2005, pp. 13-31 and *ff*; Greenspan, 1997, pp. 41-53, 211-230; Kohut, 2001, pp. 37-56). The individual depends on others for survival and well-being, needing to trust and give his love to them.

In education, this discourse tends to the kind of erotics that enters the domain of sexuality - which writers like Gallop (1997) and hooks (2003) dubiously insist is not necessarily destructive. The discourse adopts a mode of connecting with the other, intent on possessing, knowing and absorbing, which behaviour is “impotent, though mutual, because it is not aware that it is the desire to be One, which leads to the impossibility of establishing the relationship between ‘them-two’” (Lacan, 1999, p. 6).⁷

Master signifiers (S_1) act rather like the tail wagging the dog. Certainly, identifying with the other’s wishes and commands provides subjects with recognition and validation, and the protective identification with and affection for caregivers often transfers to teachers (and other authority figures) and those practices that reinforce identity recognition (like high grades). Nevertheless, students subjected to the discourse of the Master generally do not know the underlying message of the knowledge that they are receiving and promulgating – this is irrelevant. What they do gain is *savoir-faire* – know how.

At the bottom left of the quadripode lies the agent’s hidden truth - \$ - the split subject. This indicates the truth that the Master/teacher cannot recognise: that he is

⁷ In this and in the University discourse, what is expressed is the desire to possess or be possessed – Bracher’s (1993, pp. 22- 40) *active narcissistic desire*: identification with exemplary figures or their qualities; *passive narcissistic desire*: where the other loves the subject; *active anaclitic desire*: the desire to possess; and *passive anaclitic desire*: being desired by the other. These are strategies which may well gratify participants but they are empty forms of identity and do not access genuine desire.

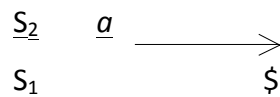
just another flawed human being, no better than the slave/student. It means too, that the Symbolic order can never be complete, closed or uncontroversial.

On a deep structural level, Hegel's point is that personality (self-consciousness) can be actualised only through *mutual* recognition – one becomes a subject, achieves autonomy, by being recognised as such by another subject (Hegel, 1977, p. 111). The master-slave dialectic is a failed attempt to achieve subjectivity, (Hegel, 1977, pp. 113-119) because in the life-and-death struggle to obtain the other's recognition, the other is seen as an impediment to this goal.

In *Seminar XVII*, Lacan identifies the discourse of the Master as the reverse of the discourse of the Analyst. Also, the discourse of the University is *l'envers*, the 'other side' of the Hysteric's discourse of critical and creative thought. This dynamic is an example of a paradox that underlies every aspect of Lacan's theory: the sexual impasse. From a psychoanalytic viewpoint, the Master and University discourses are radically masculine, with obsession their dominating feature, while the Analyst's and Hysteric's are radically feminine. Masculine discourse fails to hear the feminine and must positively decline to acknowledge the feminine because the masculine personality defines himself through repression of the feminine.

To produce educational change from this discourse, it is not enough to rebel against the master signifiers because that simply replaces one master for another. The receiver of the master signifiers reproduces the function of knowledge (S_2) and produces the a , the surplus suppressed excess of pleasure (institutional knowledge). Students cannot realise their own desire in this discourse but must reproduce the identifications of the masters. Love is possessive or identificatory but never transgressive or empowering. The dignity of desire is denied.

The University Discourse



The University Discourse (Grigg, 2001, p. 62)

Shifting the Master's discourse a quarter turn to the left maps on to the relation of the University discourse. Here, knowledge (S_2) is in the dominant position. Like the Master's discourse, of which it is a perverted form, this knowledge is not authentic but *bureaucratic* knowledge. The University discourse is the expression of the Master's discourse as it provides content to that which lacks it. Nevertheless, the truth of this discourse, like that of the Master's, is power.

The agent/teacher in the University discourse addresses the a , which latter is "our first role in discourse," (Bracher, 1994, p. 115). This object of desire is interrogated in order to explain and therefore to justify it. What drops out is the barred subject; students positioned here are obliged to construct themselves as biddable subjects, as "(alienated) subjects ($\$$) of this system" (Bracher, 1993, p. 55) into which the teacher "seek[s] to maintain his identity through enforcing the system that constitutes a crucial dimension of his protective sense of self"⁸ (Bracher, 2006, p. 90).

The 'product' in the University discourse in the bottom right position is the alienated and divided student (Lacan, 2007, pp. 172-175). By participating in this 'rational' discourse, (Berlin's "cognitive rhetoric" (1988, p. 480)) teachers and students alike are caught in the acquisition of trivial knowledge and skills that, while empowering in offering recognition and identity in the classroom, produce little agency or significance in life beyond the institution (Bracher, 2006, p. 90). Furthermore, "as a discursive practice, rationalism's regulated and systematic use of elements of language constitutes rational competence "as a series of exclusions" – of women,

⁸ "The teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects" (P. Freire (1985). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin. p. 47).

people of colour, of nature as historical agent, of the true value of art" (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 304). That academics speak from the position of expertise (S_2) is axiomatic; that students are exploited (Lacan, 2007, pp. 147-148) and can only "weave [themselves] into it (*id*, p. 204) reproducing "something cultural" (*id*, p. 190) is alarmingly ubiquitous. Making the student's product (desire) into a subject of study further alienates the subject from his desire. Teachers identify and address the goals of specific disciplines, practising the 'scientific' methodology and interpreting the rules in such manner as to divide the subject who must repress his desire through being obliged to submit himself to society's 'objective' desire.

Students parrot what they receive and 'submit' work for grading rather than seeking out their own knowledge, their own desire. Yet because this is not their knowledge nor genuine identity, this discourse splits students from themselves and from their desires. Teachers perpetuate 'knowledge' in this discourse because it affords identity-validation for them (and their students) yet it denies both the opportunity to explore knowledge together as partners.

Like the Master's discourse, the University discourse cannot move beyond claims to authority. Attempting to counter this discursive control by rebelling is not effectual, Lacan says, revolution simply reproducing another Master discourse and propagating a new set of master signifiers.

Withstanding the power of the University discourse is difficult, living in an age where scientific knowledge is highly prized. There is always the danger that conscious knowledge, with its underlying master signifiers, becomes the dominating edifice and students (and teachers) its unwitting servants. One way that Bracher (1993) suggests to subvert the tyranny of this discourse is to expose and deconstruct the master signifiers constituting its truth, critiquing its ideological assumptions and valorisations.

The erotic position promoted by this discourse is as for the Master's discourse and adds a technicised focus divorced from any affect whatsoever, institutes education

as an evidence and rubric-based enterprise which dismisses desire entirely (Lacan, 1998).⁹ To suggest that “the grounds of knowledge are made rationally and that rationality will somehow win out, provided that the knowledge is persuasive enough, that the teacher creates sufficient scaffolding, and that the learner is able to use what is provided” (Pitt & Britzman, 2003, p. 761) is, I believe, to deny the essential nature of the learning interaction.

The Analyst’s Discourse



The Analyst’s Discourse (Fink, 1999, p. 37)

Again, this discourse is formed by turning the previous discourse a quarter-turn to the left. As a psychoanalyst, Lacan unsurprisingly gives the Analyst's discourse a special eminence, though he insists that psychoanalysis is "but one discourse among many, not *the* final, ultimate discourse" (Fink, 1995, p. 129). This discourse, privileged over the others by Bracher and Cho, “completes the other three” (Lacan, 2007, p. 54) because it temporarily halts the rotation of the other discourses as it emphasises desire and jouissance.¹⁰ Accordingly, Lacan discusses it last. In this discussion, however, I return the Analytic discourse to its original third position because of differences between education and psychoanalysis. Importantly, this and the Hysteric’s discourse are the two sites where critical education may be enacted.

The psychoanalyst helps the analysand to a cure by assisting the latter to symbolise

⁹ Standardised knowledge and attainment procedures which ignore (i.e. repress) the affective dimension in favour of ‘pastoral’ care paradoxically oblige teachers to invest in genuine caring relationships in order to achieve educational success for their students. An ideal standards-based knowledge, with perfect student-teacher relationships, posits love as supplementary to requirements. Where love does appear, then, it signifies a lack in this relationship. *Ergo*, the lack of love is a lack in knowledge; i.e. the relationship defined as a relation of knowledge is a failed relation.

¹⁰ ‘Jouissance’ is difficult to define, so it is usually left untranslated. Minimally, it means a painful pleasure, a sexualised enjoyment, but one that has an “almost intolerable level of excitation” (C. Levy-Stokes (2001). *Jouissance*. In *A Compendium of Lacanian Terms*. (Eds. H. Glowinski, Z. Marks & S. Murphy). London: Free Association Books, p. 101). Jouissance is destructive of the Imaginary and therefore of the ego and its defences.

her trauma and thereby learning to cope more effectively with her problem(s). Within critical learning, in similar fashion, the teacher attempts to symbolise affect through feelings into self-knowledge and relations to the world. This is the beginning of the critical learning project: feelings, fantasies and anxieties, defences and desires are “the flora and fauna of teaching and learning” (Britzman, 2009, p. 82) and the plethora of metaphoric condensations are the tools through which critical education transforms feelings, attitudes and ideas into “a radical and original uncertainty and a promise” (Britzman, 2006, p. 43). When this happens, “the Two, and not only the One, are at work in the situation” (Badiou, 2004, p. 203)

Teaching, the third of “the impossible professions”¹¹ (Freud, 2002, p. 203) and in many ways corresponding to the Analyst’s discourse, shows the analyst/teacher located in the top left-hand corner as the *objet petit a*, making herself not the subject supposed to know, but rather “the cause of the analysand’s [or student’s] desire” (Lacan, 2007, p. 38).

“The discourse of the Analyst promotes psychological change by placing in the dominant position of the sender’s message the *a* belonging to the receiver of the message ... precisely what has been excluded from symbolisation and suppressed by the discourse of the Master” (Bracher, 1993, p. 68).

The discourse, the inverse to the Master’s discourse, challenges the authoritarian denial of castration as it addresses split subjects, assisting them to (temporarily) escape the confinement of the Symbolic order.¹² But Lacan adds a cautionary note: the discourse of the Analyst “doesn’t resolve anything” (Lacan, 2007, p. 54). Rather than attempting to master the “irreducible representative of the unconscious” (Cho,

¹¹ The other two are government and psychoanalysis. It is not uncommon to find adult students who have been subjected to all three professions in the forms of the justice system, schooling and counselling. The subjugating ‘lessons’ they ‘learn’ stem from the Master and University discourses.

¹² The Analyst’s discourse is the first of those that Bracher identifies as “critical pedagogy” which, like:

resistance pedagogy ... aims at liberation from the oppressive forces and structures that constitute racism, classism, colonialism, and sexism. But in addition to liberating students (and others), it also aims to help them develop their full potentials, become empowered (M. Bracher (2002). *Identity and Desire in the Classroom*. In *Pedagogical Desire. Authority, Seduction, Transference, and the Question of Ethics*. (Ed. j. jagodzinski). USA, p. 110).

2009, p. 52) The discourse “structures relations in such a way that it causes there to be new knowledge of the unconscious” (*id*). Teachers, speaking from a position of negativity, opposed to all notions of mastery, interrogating rather than lecturing, listening more than speaking, here assist their students by encouraging them to actualise their autonomy through discovering and writing their own (contingent) ethical rules.

In doing this, they help students move from the masculine position in which submission to authority is obligatory, to a feminine position (the Hysteric’s discourse) wherein they may partially escape these bounds, by taking on the role of the *objet petit a*, and asking, ‘What do you want?’

McLaren observes that the project provides students with “opportunities to devise different assemblages of self by dismantling and interrogating the different kinds of discursive segmentarity that inform their subjectivities, subverting those stratified and hierarchised forms of subjectivity that code the will, and developing nomadic forms of individual and collective agency that open up new assemblages of desire and modes of being-in-the-world” (1994, p. 214).

Similarly, Janmohamed claims that The abstraction required for authentic reflection opens up “a space in which a new subjectivity can begin to articulate itself, and the process of reflection creates a degree of autonomy for the subject to the extent that the decision to begin the reflective process is not positively determined by the existing dominant social structure” (Janmohamed, 1994, p. 245). This “incipient constitution of a new identity” he writes, “is an act of power” (*id*).

The teacher in the Analyst’s discourse is not in a position of authority or power, as in the Master’s discourse, nor is she in the place of expertise, as in the University discourse. Here, the teacher, like the analyst, addresses students from the position of the *petit objet a*, standing in for what is lacking –students’ own alienated desires. Like the analyst, the teacher assists mainly through listening and helping the student to speak and to understand – not control or resist – unconscious formations.

In this discourse, the student may resist the authoritarian monologue of the Master through producing 'traumatic' knowledge. This knowledge, hidden under the *petit a* in the position of truth, is ambiguous. Here knowledge and truth collide, causing a collapse in previous knowledge under the weight of that which invokes an "event, which compels us to decide a *new* way of being" (Badiou, 2001, p. 41). So, it is not the teacher's knowledge, "sustained by the analyst's implicit knowledge, S_2 " as Bracher asserts (Bracher, 1994, p. 124) nor that which Žižek claims, "of course, refers, to the supposed knowledge of the master" (Žižek, 1998, p. 80) but rather, it is that which Badiou (2001, p. 43) describes as "punch[ing] a 'hole'" in knowledge. Badiou maintains that something contingent occurs in the encounter with genuine knowledge that forces its reworking.

On this account, knowledge is performative in that an "event" obliges the subject "to invent a new way of being and acting in the situation ... in fidelity to [the] event" (*id*, p. 42). This process, Badiou calls a truth: "... the real process of a fidelity to an event: that which this fidelity *produces* in the situation" (*id.*). Truth is something new, "it is ... the sole known source of new knowledge. We shall say that the truth *forces* knowledges" (*id*, p. 70).¹³ This new knowledge is not conscious knowledge (Lacan's *connaissance*) nor that of *savoir faire*, but the unconscious knowledge of *savoir* (Evans, 1996, p. 94). And the knowledge is also that which creates the subject: "The subject ... in no way pre-exists the process. He is absolutely nonexistent in the situation 'before' the event. We might say that the process of truth induces a subject" (Badiou, 2001, p. 43). This new truth "deposes constituted knowledges" (*id*, p. 50) which Badiou terms 'opinions', "representations without truth" (*id*).

Pedagogy, on this account, accepts "the mind's movements, reveries, trespasses, transgressions" (Britzman, 2006, p. 6) asking students and teachers to remember "their own antinomies, awkwardnesses, and hesitations in learning" (Britzman, 1998, p. 26). It aims at manipulating discourse so that master signifiers are produced by

¹³ Badiou's claim is that love changes a relationship so that the lovers acquire a new knowledge and vision, not about each other's affection, their essences or sexuality but about the world. The two lovers are not made one, but live out the consequences of their love as two, seeking knowledge *with* each other.

the subject rather than imposed on him from an other, eliciting this response because it relinquishes all claim to mastery and is "more open, fluid, processual" (Bracher, 1994, p. 124). "This pedagogical approach," says Shoshana Felman, "which makes no claim to total knowledge, is, of course, quite different from the usual pedagogical pose of mastery, different from the image of the self-sufficient, self-possessed proprietor of knowledge, in which pedagogy has traditionally featured the authoritative figure of the teacher" (Felman, 1982, pp. 34-35).

Truths "themselves complete the circle by resulting in new knowledge.... and the dialectic is complete as truths are eventually codified into knowledge and the previous situation is lifted onto a higher plane thus constituting a new situation. Then the process presumably starts all over again with new events disrupting the findings of previous truth-processes ..." (Cho, 2009, p. 118).

Teachers in the Analyst's discourse may try to change students' customary ways of thinking by not only listening but also discussing and negotiating. Dialogue with students is achieved by avoiding the ego's censorious barriers (often characterised by narcissistic projections of love or hate on to or from the teacher). The process usually begins with the undermining of the student's hold on his ideal ego (in which the student sees herself as worthy of love) through interrogating the master signifiers of the University discourse and their debilitating effects on the student. The teacher declines to validate the master signifiers that validate the student's sense of completeness, but rather, refracts the student's demand so as to reveal and illuminate what has been denied. This Badiouian/Lacanian/Hegelian strategy of pursuing truth radically transforms the circumstances according to the event. Accordingly, learning in the Analyst mode encourages existing knowledge to be rethought through the perspective of the event, prompting new knowledge. The teacher presents knowledge in such a way as to invite students to rethink it - where this happens, the student's own desire is set in motion through the teacher's expectation of achievement.

Teachers may engage initially in the Analytical discourse before moving to another

discourse – the discourse of the Hysteric. This remaining ‘possible profession’ - one that succeeds in actualising the subject's freedom in the world – is critical learning.

The Hysteric’s Discourse

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \$ & \longrightarrow & \underline{\$}_1 \\ a & & S_2 \end{array}$$

The Hysteric’s Discourse (Bracher, 1994, p. 123)

The final discourse is formed once more by rotating the previous discourse a quarter-turn. The Analyst’s discourse leads to the Hysteric’s discourse because often in the analytical process the analysand (\$) becomes hystericised. Here, analysands/students are motivated not by the University’s collective goals but by the truth of *their* desire and the product that emanates (S_2) is *their* knowledge, which until now has been repressed. Only in this discourse do hysterics occupy the agent’s position and interrogate the master signifier (S_1) in their own voice, exposing the Master’s incomplete knowledge. This is the discourse of true critical learning because here students challenge the *status quo* to ascertain where they belong.

Why is this discourse feminine? Why do I privilege it as a space for critical transformation? On my reading, the first two discourses valorise the masculine stasis and pretence of possession, and even the Analyst’s discourse places the teacher in a dominant position. I suggest that the fullest development of authentic learning (leading to the construction of (contingent) identities) operates in the Hysteric’s discourse¹⁴ where students function structurally as feminine. I believe that the impossible moment of Hegelian sublation occurs here: dissolving, denying and

¹⁴ In this discourse, Symbolic transformations ‘unfix’ perceptual determinations by altering the direction, content *and form* of Imaginary positionings. Streams of questioning between interlocutors continually generate, collapse and rebuild identifications *via* the activity of linguistic oblation. This produces Symbolic stability at the same time as it defers immediate gratification of desire. Subjects renounce violence in order to gain their desire in a new form and at a later time. This serves to establish an economy of objects of desire in a never-ending substitution of signifiers, forever promising, while never completely delivering (Lacan, 2006, p. 698 and *ff*). Internal contradictions will eventually cause the discourse to dissolve in the process of regeneration, because when a truth is established as a new understanding, the Hegelian sublative process cycles from its new position in the Master’s discourse once more.

including difference in that indefinable break where the Symbolic permeates the Imaginary (Lacan's (2006) R Schema) and where the Master's Law is evacuated to produce genuine knowledge.

The denied knowledge is that the Other, like women (like men) is lacking. That feminine subjectivity is active rather than passive. That nothing is given, necessary or permanent. That true subjectivity is feminine. That subjects just *are* desire and that their desire is to be free to choose their desire and their identity in the telling of their own wants and traumas in speech and writing. It's risky, it's dangerous and it's liberating. We teachers need to hollow out our egos.

That moment of change occurs precisely where the masculine position of determinability, measurability and 'completeness' coincides with the feminine position of the 'not-all' (Žižek, 1993, p. 56; 2002, p. 44). The incommensurable feminine, with its 'not-all' of subjectivity and its knowledge of the always-already incompleteness of the Other, is that time and locus of sublation which This contains the capacity for liberation. The discourse of the Hysteric, at the moment of sublation, negates differences, yet preserves them so that subject/object, male/female, Imaginary/Symbolic, and positional/dispositional dichotomies are (re)fused.

The sublation, in fine, describes the process that collapses the Other from its regime of certainty, playing a causal role as contradiction of the existing system and as production of new knowledge. It is a radical restructuring of the relationship between teacher and student where occurs "an immanent construction of an indeterminate disjunction" (Badiou, 2003, p. 55). It is not the "transference of knowledge from the one teaching to the learner" (Freire in Cho, 2009, p.146) It is not sexualised love and it is not the rescue fantasies (Britzman & Pitt, 1996, p. 118) of those teachers who derive narcissistic gratification from mothering their charges. It is the Lacanian and Badiouian "them-two" who, hand-in-hand, face the social world in critical inquiry.

Authority (S_1) seeks to validate and rationalise the Master's power. Both these discourses obscure their hidden truth – the master signifier of the *status quo*. But within the Hysteric's discourse, it is the student, the colonised, the subjected, the feminine, who speaks. The Hysteric actually speaks from an ethical position because, as she interrogates subjection by asking, 'What do you, the Other, want from me?' (Dolar, 1998) she challenges this Other in saying, 'You are lacking!' in her critique of the other's discourse. The feminine Hysteric questions the Other in a reversal of the Master's discourse, "unmask[ing] the master's function" (Lacan, 2007, p. 94) and rebelling against the constraints of the Master's and University's subjugation.

It is this discourse, I suggest, that most fully allows subjective desire to emerge, situated as it is on the limen line between the Imaginary and the Symbolic. It is this discourse that encourages that Badiouian love that glories in the interconnection between learner and teacher. A caveat: although she undermines these positions, the Hysteric/student never fully nullifies them, which is in any case impossible: Complete mastery, total identification, is always unsuccessful because they are efforts to recover the Imaginary fullness of Being.

What is significant for critical learning in this discourse is that students are positioned to change things. They can query, and subsequently learn, what the Other demands of them: how they might fit into society's rules and regulations. They may access their own knowledge (S_2). They may recognise that the Symbolic is a human construction, and therefore flawed and choose to change it or themselves. They may learn that subjectivity is never whole and never completely subjected to the Symbolic. They *do* learn that subjectivity can be created only through intersubjective relationships, and that desiring to desire is not a failed subjectivity, but rather, a willing acceptance of change as well as a demand for recognition (Zizek, 2007b, pp. 161- 173). This is Badiou's, Lacan's and Hegel's point: that once passed through the mutation of sublation, students subjects should desire the unity of Imaginary completeness no longer. They need no longer seek restoration because they have transformed themselves into free individuals choosing their own ways.

This is not the end. Just as internal contradictions collapse the pretensions of the Master, University and Analyst discourses, so too do the inconsistencies of this discourse generate an eventual dissolution and a new cycle. This is the logic of sublation: that when new knowledge is instantiated, it continues the cycle of (re)generation (new Kuhnian paradigms). Only, standing in the Master's discourse this time around is the subject herself in her new identity.

[Ask students to theorise how knowledge is constructed in moments of unresolve and to consider how knowledge is made, what knowledge "wants," what knowledge "forgets," and what knowledge "costs." Thus, the course investigated "strange" experiences in education rather than the sedimented received knowledge one might expect to find.

Ask students to produce several one to two-page critical response/position papers on issues concerning the structure, content, and practice of the course.]

In the discourse of the master, students are structured as *passive* narcissistic subordinated subjects. This position provides considerable identificatory satisfaction and derives from the original plenum of recognition afforded by the mother and subsequently by other master signifiers in the Symbolic Order. These master signifiers are accepted as having unquestioned value and profound idealistic content and provide students with a sense of security, well-being and a definite identity. This leads to an *active* narcissistic ascription of recognition and approval through adopting and embodying metaphors and metonyms associated with the master signifiers, usually those connected to societal approval. This is not "true speech" because in this process learners seek meaning not in the symbolic order - but from an other, in answer to a question, from *the subject who is supposed to know*.

Under the rationalist paradigm, the "subject supposed to know" is perceived as devoid of self-interest while knowledge is presented as "Objective Truth" untainted by the teacher's own concerns, beliefs, and situatedness. Liberal humanist ideals which emphasise fairness, equality, and impartiality devalue and deny teacher desire by advocating disembodied pedagogy.

When represented in popular culture, teacher desire is usually equated with the sexual. Indeed, Jo Keroes notes that "It is no accident that works about teachers sport titles like *Professor Romeo*, *The Professor of Desire*, *The Prime of Miss Jean*

Brodie, or *To Sir With Love*, nor is it coincidental that in such works desire often turns out to be motivated by the attractiveness of the one who is 'supposed to know,' by the lure of the sexy mind."⁶ Yet, aside from the erotic pull between teachers and students, teachers are rarely represented as having desires of their own, private passions and pleasures, or even families or interests outside the classroom.⁷ In popular film the ideal teacher is an empty symbol of selflessness, who learns to love his/her students unconditionally. Dale Bauer notes that in the movies "teaching is always [presented as] commitment without content, passion without purpose."⁸ In addition to the sexual connotations, we are uncomfortable talking about teacher desire because it suggests a breakdown in the rational mechanism of teaching/learning, a loss of control, and the presence of favoritism and hidden agendas.

As Lacan points out, where there is a subject who is supposed to know, there is transference and the pursuit of knowledge is bound up with this transference as "the enacting of the reality of the unconscious ..." (*S XI*: 174).

... however empty this discourse may seem, it is so only if taken at its face value – the value that justifies Mallarmé's remark in which he compares the common use of language to the exchange of a coin whose obverse and reverse no longer bear any but eroded faces, and which people pass from hand to hand "in silence." This metaphor suffices to remind us that speech, even when almost completely worn out, retains its value as a *tessera*.

(*É*: 209)

This is not to say that the student submits only empty speech in the pedagogical situation, but where there is a subject supposed to know (the position – an imaginary position - of the teacher in the Discourse of the University, the master holding the S_1 , urging the students to learn more and more) transference takes place. Recognising the emptiness of the discourse as a *tessera*, a token, prompts the analyst/teacher not to answer the student's question, but to return the token to the student to see beyond his or her own illusory autonomy and desire for closure to his or her implication in "history". Because "what is at stake is not reality, but truth" (*É*: 213) [– which is the recognition of the rhetorical dimension underpinning every

cognition] in order that he or she [at least] might “reorder past contingencies by conferring on them the sense of necessities to come” (É: 213).

For Lacan, the only teaching worthy of the name occurs "where the most hidden truth becomes manifest in the revolutions of culture." He also teaches that the most hidden truth, like the purloined letter of Poe, is always out in the open where anyone can see it. The most hidden truth is language, and the way to this truth is

"the only education we can claim to transmit to those who follow us. It is called-a style" (Ecrits 458).

However, style in this context is not a question of the right words in their proper order or of asserting linguistic authority and mastery. On the contrary, it means the disclosure of a relation to language as the Other through an exhibition that is never entirely in the hands of the exhibitionist. The force of pedagogy lies close to farce, and so the pedagogue has always been a comic figure. But if teaching frequently evokes laughter, it is sometimes the critical laughter of a resistance that knows its relation to the "slippage" in pedagogy between cognition and performance. It knows truth as the necessity of "failure" in the only teaching "worthy of the name."

Lacanian psychoanalysis believes that the symbolic has an impact on the Real. Language, the Symbolic, inevitably incites the formation of what is beyond language, “what escapes any formalisation and any representation,” the Real (17). This process can be referred to as the repression (of desire) into the unconscious. “Like the Symbolic agency, on which the Real’s existence depends, the Real is external to the subject, and, as such, it is also truly Other, a radical difference that we cannot reduce to our usual (imaginary) ways of understanding” (17). Since its existence depends on the external Symbolic, the unconscious is also “not interiority, nor an ‘inner world,’ an underground [hence it is not the *subconscious*], or an inside full of mysteries we carry and that could be anatomically localisable” (18). “Language being external to man, the bits of linguistic matter we can detect in the unconscious are also outside ‘us’” (18). “The unconscious is the discourse of the Other, structured like a language” (18). Under the discourse of the analyst:

<u>a</u>	<u>§</u>
S ₁	S ₂

the symbolic can overwrite the real:

<u>Symbolic</u>
Real

In the clinic, the analyst invites the analysand to move from a fixation in the Real – where something is not symbolised - for a substitute through the employment of ever more signifiers, undergoing “dialectisation” – becoming drawn into the analysand’s discourse and set in motion.

We can think of the Real as being progressively (though never totally) symbolised in the course of a person’s life. In teaching, the teacher can play the role of object *a* in the analyst’s discourse

Importantly, the idea of transference, central to psychoanalysis, elaborates the role that the notion of mastery and control plays in the lives of subjects, and where desire “usually discussed in terms of transference” (Cohler & Galatzer-Levy, 2006, p. 248) is often expressed. Much of what occurs in education is transference, “the uncertain exchange of confusion, love and words” (Britzman, 2009, p. xi) that passes between students and teacher. The psychoanalytic assumption is “that there can be no learning without transference” (*id*, p. 3) and that “[a]ll that education has to give is the offer of the transference” (Kohon in Britzman, 2009, p. 17). Psychoanalysis, therefore, provides a model for education to exploit this urge for mastery towards creative and liberatory ends. Transference, little understood and yet so widely manipulated within schooling, otherwise results in inappropriate identifications with constraining models of aggression and domination.

Lacan calls transference “the enactment of the reality of the unconscious” (Lacan, 1998, p. 146) which manifests in consciousness as a strong attachment to (or dislike of) a person or thing. This connection occurs when the subject identifies an other with the Symbolic order. This prompts a reawakening of embedded narratives that

underpin ego-identification. The subject internalises the Symbolic order as an ego-ideal through which he views the world thence forward, covertly orchestrating “to a significant degree, [his] relations with and perceptions of external Others” (Bracher, 1999, p. 130).

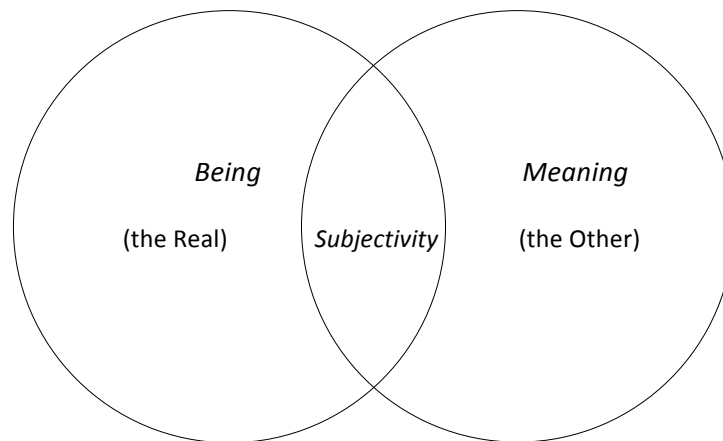
The relations of the transference involve the student’s efforts to position the teacher as a particular other so as to reproduce a relationship which had provided profound gratification,¹⁵ either pleasure or nonpleasure, in the past (Bracher, 1999). Usually, this circles around the original experience of being recognised and loved (Lacan, 2005). The opportunity is thus provided for subjects to not just revisit and relive prior relationships, but also to reinvent the foundational scripts that have made them what they are. Indeed, Lacan considers the transference so significant for the development of subjectivity that he calls it “the ortho-dramatisation of the patient’s subjectivity” (Lacan, 2006, p. 184). The point is that transference experiences between analyst and analysand and between teacher and student - *listening, speaking, reading and writing* - are profoundly Symbolic acts that found subjectivity in ways that go beyond Bracher’s (1994) focus on just writing and Appel’s (1996, p. 139) emphasis on “physical contact and preverbal bodily sensation”. It is the special skill of the analyst or teacher to use the transference to shift the dispositional (Imaginary) underpinnings of the analysand’s or student’s position, *through talk*,¹⁶ and it is “the foundational technique of psychoanalytic pedagogy” (Cho, 2009, p. 53) to metaphorise and metonymise terms from their positional fixations in fields of experience.¹⁷

¹⁵ “In naming [desire], the subject creates, brings forth, a new presence in the world” (Lacan, 1991b, p. 229).

¹⁶ Speech is the dimension through which the desire of the subject is authentically integrated on to the symbolic plane (Lacan, 1991a, p. 183).

¹⁷ Metaphoric substitutions posit equivalence between dissimilars within the *positional* (contextual) domain while metonymic displacements provide merely slidings of similars in the same *dispositional* field. Activities involving the former offer the potential to disimbricate the figure (experience, and thus evaluation and affect) from its ground and thereby the opportunity to realise different significance and associations, free from captivating dependency. (R. Boothby, 2001, *Freud as Philosopher*. New York & London: Routledge).

The intersection in the figure below shows where the subject¹⁸ is positioned: neither unselfconscious animal nor complete human, yet incomplete. Her gain is the partial satisfaction of the drives and “that unique human feature, unknown to any other living species: the replacement of organ pleasure by representational pleasure” (Castoriadis, 2007, p. 98).



Being and Meaning (modified from Lacan, 1998, p. 211)

Subjectivity is the individual position between unconscious Being and the way culture (Meaning) and the individual as perceptual agent dialectically interact. This constitutes the subject as possessing agency, though for Freire and Lacan, this subjectivity is never complete due to the compelling nature of both forces. Political and social attempts to define the subject are by their very nature oppressive and dehumanising, denying individuals status as “subjects” or as “critical signifiers” (Freire, 2004, p. 37). It behoves us as teachers then, to bring to the classroom a degree of disclosure of students’ unconscious thought processes (Jay, 1987, p.789). How this is achieved is by enacting students’ desires through identification under the operation of discourse. It is never ending.

Our desire is the desire of the Other, Lacan informs us in typically cryptic fashion. This could mean: that we desire the other; that we desire what the other desires; that we desire to be the object of desire; that we desire to desire as the other does,

¹⁸ Not, as Lacan (1998) puts it, in the *Being* set, which is the space of the pre-cultural proto-subject.

and that we desire what we have been enjoined to desire. These provide only fleeting satisfaction though they are promulgated daily in the classroom under the discourses of the Master and the University. These discourses fix our students in a hegemonic field of positionality and bind them to Imaginary identifications. The Analyst discourse (partially) and the Hysteric discourse, however, enable students to enter the circulation of desire through the free play of signifiers in the clash of feminine negativity (of not-all) against masculine positivity (of phallic fullness) in sublimative transgression and temporary synthesis of contraries. With the exercise of Badiouian love, the scholarly jousting of signifiers and the exploration of unconscious desire encourages a critical pedagogy that unbinds the subject to yesterday's lost-forever and skips forward towards tomorrow's not-yet. If critical literacy is to achieve its objective of democratising opportunity, educators need to encourage practices that allow students' desire to surface. We teachers need to recognise that in the beginning, before the Imaginary, was the Word. And students need to be encouraged to find and use their own words in a liberating praxis. Then, two other foreclosed desires might emerge: A desire to maintain our own desire and a desire *that* the other desire her own desire.