Chapter 8 A socio-linguistic approach to socialization: with some reference to educability

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If a social group by virtue of its class relation, that is as a result of its common occupational function and social status, has developed strong communal bonds; if the work relations of this group offers little variety or little exercise in decision-making; if assertion, if it is to be successful, must be a collective rather than an individual act; if the work task requires physical manipulation and control rather than symbolic organization and control; if the diminished authority of the man at work is transformed into an authority of power at home; if the home is over-crowded and limits the variety of situations it can offer; if the children socialize each other in an environment offering little intellectual stimuli; if all these attributes are found in one setting, then it is plausible to assume that such a social setting will generate a particular form of communication which will shape the intellectual, social and affective orientation of the children.

I am suggesting that if we look into the work relationships of this particular group, its community relationships, its family role systems, it is reasonable to argue that the genes of social class may well be carried less through a genetic code but far more through a communication code that social class itself promotes. Such a communication code will emphasize verbally the communal rather than the individual, the concrete rather than the abstract, substance rather than the elaboration of processes, the here and now rather than exploration of motives and intentions, and positional rather than personalized forms of social control. To say this about a communication system is not to disvalue it, for such a communication system has a vast potential, a considerable metaphoric range and a unique aesthetic capacity. A whole range of diverse meanings can be generated by such a system of communication. It happens, however, that this communication code directs the child to orders of learning and relevance that are not in harmony with those required by the school. Where the child is sensitive to the communication system of the school and thus to its orders of learning and relation, then the

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experience of school for this child is one of symbolic and social development; where the child is not sensitive to the communication system at school then this child's experience at school becomes one of symbolic and social change. In the first case we have an elaboration of social identity; in the second case, a change of social identity. Thus between the school and community of the working-class child, there may exist a cultural discontinuity based upon two radically different systems of communication.

The social origins of linguistic codes

I shall spend the rest of this section examining how different forms of communication arise. I shall argue that the particular form of a social relation acts selectively upon what is said, when it is said and how it is said. The form of the social relation regulates the options that speakers take up at both syntactic and lexical levels. For example an adult talking to a child will use a form of speech in which both the syntax and vocabulary are relatively simple. The speech used by members of an army combat unit on manoeuvres will clearly be different from the same members' speech at a padre's evening. To put it another way, the consequences of the form the social relation takes are transmitted in terms of certain syntactic and lexical selections.[1] Thus different forms of social relation can generate very different speech systems or linguistic codes.

I shall argue that different speech systems or codes create for their speakers different orders of relevance and relation. The experience of the speakers may then be transformed by what is made significant or relevant by different speech systems. As the child learns his speech or, in the terms I shall use here, learns specific codes which regulate his verbal acts, he learns the requirements of his social structure. The experience of the child is transformed by the learning generated by his own, apparently, voluntary acts of speech. The social structure becomes, in this way, the sub-stratum of the child's experience essentially through the manifold consequence of the linguistic process. From this point of view, every time the child speaks or listens, the social structure is reinforced in him and his social identity shaped. The social structure becomes the child's psychological reality through the shaping of his acts of speech.

The same argument can be stated rather more formally. Individuals come to learn their social roles through the process of communication. A social role from this point of view is a constellation of shared, learned meanings through which individuals are able to enter stable, consistent and publicly recognized forms of interaction with others. A social role can then be considered as a complex coding activity

controlling both the creation and organization of specific meanings and the conditions for their transmission and reception. Now if the communication system which defines a given role is essentially that of speech, it should be possible to distinguish critical social roles in terms of the speech forms they regulate. By critical social roles I mean those through which the culture is transmitted. These roles are learned in the family, in the age or peer group, in the school and at work. These are the four major sets of roles learned in the process of socialization. As a person learns to subordinate his behaviour to the linguistic code through which the role is realized, then orders of meaning, of relation, of relevance are made available to him. The complex of meanings, for example, generated within the role system of a family, reverberates developmentally in the child to inform his general conduct. Children who have access to different speech systems or codes, that is children who learn different roles by virtue of their family's class position in a society, may adopt quite different social and intellectual orientations and procedures despite a common potential.

The concept code, as I shall use it, refers to the principle which regulates the selection and organization of speech events. I shall briefly outline two fundamental types of linguistic codes and consider their regulative functions. These codes will be defined in terms of the relative ease or difficulty of predicting the syntactic alternatives which speakers take up to organize meanings. If it is difficult to predict across a representative range the syntactic options or alternatives taken up in the organization of speech, this form of speech will be called an elaborated code. In the case of an elaborated code, the speaker will select from a wide range of syntactic alternatives and these will be flexibly organized. A restricted code is one where it is much less difficult to predict across a representative range the syntactic alternatives, as these will be drawn from a narrow range. Whereas there is flexibility in the use of alternatives in an elaborated code, in the case of a restricted code the syntactic organization is marked by rigidity. Notice that these codes are not defined in terms of vocabulary or lexes. Jargon does not constitute a restricted code. However, it is likely that the lexical differentiation of certain semantic fields will be greater in the case of an elaborated code.

It is clear that context is a major control upon syntactic and lexical selections, consequently it is not easy to give general linguistic criteria for the isolation of the two codes. Derivations from the theory would be required in order to describe syntactic and lexical usage by any one speaker in a specific context.[2] The definitions given in the text would have increasing relevance to the extent that speakers could freely determine for themselves the nature of the constraints

upon their syntax and lexes. In other words, the less rigid the external constraints upon the speech the more appropriate the general definitions. The more rigid the external constraints then the more specific the criteria required. It is also important to point out that the codes refer to cultural *not* genetic controls upon the options speakers take up. The codes refer to *performance* not to competence in the Chomsky sense of these terms. They may be different *performances* for every degree of competence. It is certainly the case that these codes can be seen as different kinds of communicative competence as this concept is expounded by Dell Hymes:[3]

If a speaker is oriented towards an elaborated code, then the code will facilitate the speaker in his attempts to make explicit (verbally) his subjective intent. If a speaker is oriented towards a restricted code, then this code will not facilitate the verbal expansion of the speaker's intent. In the case of an elaborated code the speech system requires more complex planning than in the case of a restricted code. For example, in the case of an elaborated code the time dimension of the verbal planning of the speech is likely to be longer (provided that the speaker is not quoting from himself) than in the case of a restricted code.[4]

It will be argued that the events in the environment which take on significance when these codes are used, are different, whether the events be social, intellectual or affective. These two codes, elaborated and restricted, are generated by a particular form of social relation. Indeed they are likely to be a realization of different social structures. They do not necessarily develop solely because of a speaker's innate ability.

We can now ask what is responsible for the simplification and rigidity of the syntax of a restricted code. Why should the vocabulary across certain, semantic fields be drawn from a narrow range? Why are the speaker's intentions relatively unelaborated verbally? Why should the speech controlled by a restricted code tend to be fast, fluent, with reduced articulatory clues, the meanings often discontinuous, condensed and local, involving a low level of syntactic and vocabulary selection where the 'how' rather than the 'what' of the communication is important; above all, why should the unique meaning of the person be implicit rather than verbally explicit? Why should the code orient its speakers to a low level of causality?

A restricted code will arise where the form of the social relation is based upon closely shared identifications, upon an extensive range of shared expectations, upon a range of common assumptions. Thus a restricted code emerges where the culture or sub-culture raises the 'we' above 'I'.[5] Such codes will emerge as both controls and transmitters of the culture in such diverse groups as prisons, the age group

of adolescents, army, friends of long standing, between husband and wife. The use of a restricted code creates social solidarity at the cost of the verbal elaboration of individual experience. The type of social solidarity realized through a restricted code points towards mechanical solidarity, whereas the type of solidarity realized through elaborated codes points towards organic solidarity.[6] The form of communication reinforces the *form* of the social relation rather than creating a need to create speech which uniquely fits the intentions of the speakers. Restricted codes do not give rise to verbally differentiated 'I's'. If we think of the communication pattern between married couples of long standing, then we see that meaning does not have to be fully explicit, a slight shift of pitch or stress, a small gesture, can carry a complex meaning. Communication goes forward against a backcloth of closely shared identifications and affective empathy which removes the need to elaborate verbal meanings and logical continuity in the organization of the speech. Indeed, orientation in these relationships is less towards the *verbal* but more towards the extra-verbal channel. For the extraverbal channel is likely to be used to transmit intentions, purposes, and qualifications. It follows from this that speakers limited to a restricted code may well have difficulty in switching from this form of communication to other forms of communication which presuppose different role relations and so different social orientations. Thus a restricted code may limit certain kinds of role switching. However, it must be pointed out that a restricted code may be entirely appropriate for certain contexts.

An elaborated code will arise wherever the culture or sub-culture emphasizes the 'I' over the 'we'. It will arise wherever the intent of the other person cannot be taken for granted. In as much as the intent of the other person cannot be taken for granted, then speakers are forced to elaborate their meanings and make them both explicit and specific. Meanings which are discreet and local to the speaker must be cut so that they are intelligible to the listener, and this pressure forces upon the speaker to select both among syntactic alternatives and encourages differentiation of vocabulary. In terms of what is transmitted verbally, an elaborated code encourages the speaker to focus upon the experience of others, as different from his own. In the case of a restricted code, what is transmitted verbally usually refers to the other person in terms of a common group or status membership. What is said here epitomizes the social structure and its basis of shared assumptions. Thus restricted codes could be considered status or positional codes whereas elaborated codes are orientated to persons. An elaborated code, in principle, pre-supposes a sharp boundary or gap between self and others which is crossed

through the creation of speech which specifically fits a differentiated 'other'. In this sense, an elaborated code is oriented towards a person rather than a social category or status. In the case of a restricted code, the boundary or gap is between sharers and non-sharers of the code. In this sense a restricted code is positional or status *not* person oriented. It presupposes a generalized rather than a differentiated other.

In the case of an elaborated code the orientation is towards the verbal channel, for this channel will carry the elaboration of the speaker's intentions. In the case of restricted codes, to varying degrees it is the extra-verbal channels which become objects of special perceptual activity. It is important to point out that restricted code users are not non-verbal, only that the speech is of a different order from that controlled by an elaborated code. If an elaborated code creates the possibility for the transmission of individuated symbols, then a restricted code creates the possibility for the transmission of communalized symbols. I now want to turn for a moment to discuss differences in the type of social roles which are realized through these two codes.

Open and closed role systems

Let us first consider the range of alternatives that a role system (say that of the family) makes available to individuals for the verbal realization of different meanings. Here we need to distinguish between two basic orders of meaning, one which refers to inter-personal and intra-personal relationships and one which refers to relationships between objects; thus object meanings and person meanings. We could call a role system which reduced the range of alternatives for the realization of verbal meanings a closed type. It would follow that the greater the reduction in the range of alternatives, the more communal or collective the verbal meanings and the lower the order of complexity and more rigid the syntactic and vocabulary selections—thus the more restricted the code. On the other hand, we could call a role system which permitted a range of alternatives for the realization of verbal meanings an open type. It would follow that the greater the range of alternatives permitted by the role system, the more individualized the verbal meanings, the higher the order and the more flexible the syntactic and vocabulary selection and so the more elaborated the code.[7]

We can now take this simple dichotomy a little further by picking up the distinction between object and person orders of meaning. A role system may be open or closed with respect to the alter-

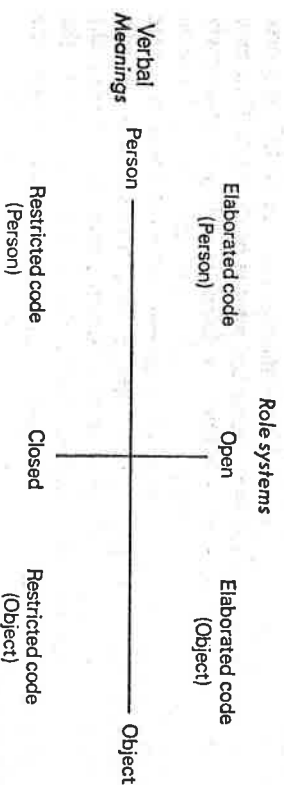natives it permits for the verbal realization of object or person meanings.

Figure 1

Now in the area where the role system is open, novel meanings are likely to be encouraged and a complex conceptual order explored. In the area where the role system is closed, novel meanings are likely to be discouraged and the conceptual order limited. Where the role system is of the closed type, verbal meanings are likely to be assigned. The individual (or child) steps into the meaning system and leaves it relatively undisturbed. Where the role system is of the open type, the individual is more likely to achieve meaning on his own terms and here there is the potential of disturbing or changing the pattern of received meanings. We can begin to see that in the area where the role system is open, there is an induced motivation to explore and actively seek out and extend meanings; where the role is closed there is little induced motivation to explore and create novel meanings. Let us take this a little further. Where the role system is open, the individual or child learns to cope with ambiguity and isolation in the creation of verbal meanings; where the role system is closed the individual or child forgoes such learning. On the contrary, he learns to create verbal meanings in social contexts which are unambiguous and communalized. Such an individual or child, may experience considerable tension and role conflict if he persistently attempts to individualize the basis of his syntactic and vocabulary selections, and thus attempt to create or point towards an open role system. Notice that what is a source of strain here, is precisely that which an individual or child learns to do if he is socialized into an open role system. Thus a source of strain in restricted codes is precisely the role relationship appropriate to an elaborated code.

We have now outlined a framework which shows a causal connection between role systems, linguistic codes and the realization of

different orders of meaning and relevance. Emphasis has been laid upon the relationship between roles and codes. It is possible for a person to be able to write in an elaborated code but not to be able to speak it, for he may not be able to manage the face to face requirements of the role (over and above the matter of dialect). This may apply, for example, to a bright working-class boy whose early socialization has offered little training in the social role. In the same way, object and person forms of an elaborated code not only create different orders of meaning; they are realized through different role relations. It may well be that the cultural tension between the sciences, especially the applied sciences, and the arts reflects the different role relations which control object and person forms of the elaborated code.

The organization of education often produces cleavage and insulation between subjects and levels and this serves to reduce role and code switching between person and object modes of the elaborated code and from restricted to elaborated codes.

If we ask what are the general social forces which influence the development of elaborated and restricted codes and their two modes, the answer is likely to be found in two sources. These shape the culture and role systems of the four major socializing agencies, the family, the age group (or peer group), the school and work. One major source of the movement from restricted to elaborated codes lies in increases in the complexity of the division of labour. This changes both the nature of the occupational roles and their linguistic bases. The two modes of the elaborated code may well be affected by the movement of economies from goods to service types. The shift from a goods to a service economy may well promote the development of the person mode of an elaborated code. The second major source of code orientation is likely to be the character of the central value system. Pluralistic societies are likely to produce strong orientations towards the person mode of an elaborated code, whereas monolithic societies are likely to strengthen the orientation towards the object mode. It should be remembered that persons can be treated as objects.

Linguistic codes and educability

I have been trying to show how the nature of the division of labour and the character of the central value system affects linguistic codes and through the way they affect the culture and role systems of the major socializing agencies, especially the family and school. Social class position regulates the occupational function, the intra-familial and inter-familial relationships and responsiveness to the school. Thus

we can expect, broadly speaking, to find both modes of an elaborated code within the middle class together with restricted codes. In the lower working class we could expect to find a high proportion of families limited to a restricted code. We might further expect that upwardly mobile working-class children would move towards the object rather than the person mode of the elaborated code.

Where children are *limited* to a restricted code, primarily because of the sub-culture and role systems of the family, community and work, we can expect a major problem of educability whose source lies not so much in the genetic code but in the culturally determined communication code.

Children limited to a restricted code learn a code where the extra-verbal tends to become a major channel for the qualification and elaboration of individual experience. *This does not mean that such children's speech output is relatively reduced.* The verbal planning of the speech, relative to an elaborated code, involves a relatively low order and a rigidity in syntactic organization. The inter-personal and intra-personal, although clearly *perceived and felt*, are less verbally differentiated. The concept of self developed through a restricted code does not, itself, become an area of enquiry as in the case of an elaborated code, particularly one whose orientation is towards persons. In the case of an elaborated code, such a code points to the possibilities which inhere in a complex conceptual hierarchy for the organization and expression of inner experience. This is much less the case where experience is regulated by a restricted code, for this code orients its speakers to a less complex conceptual hierarchy and so to a lower order of causality. What is made available for learning through elaborated and restricted codes is radically different. Social and intellectual orientations, motivational imperative and forms of social control, rebellion and innovation are different. Thus the relative backwardness of many working-class children who live in areas of high population density or in rural areas may well be a culturally induced backwardness transmitted by the linguistic process. Such children's low performance on verbal IQ tests, their difficulty with 'abstract' concepts, their failures within the language area, their general inability to profit from the school, all may result from the limitations of a restricted code. For these children the school induces a change of code and with this a change in the way the children relate to their kin and community. At the same time we often offer these children grossly inadequate schools with less than able teachers. No wonder they often fail—for the 'more' tend to receive more and become more, while the socially defined 'less', receive less and become less.

I want to make one final point. A restricted code contains a vast potential of meanings. It is a form of speech which symbolizes a communally based culture. It carries its own aesthetic. It should not be disvalued. We must ensure that the material conditions of the schools we offer, their values, social organization, forms of control and pedagogy, the skills and sensitivities of the teachers are refracted through an understanding of the culture the children bring to the school. After all, we do no less for the middle-class child. The problem does not stop there. Housing conditions must be improved, social services extended and pre-school education developed.

We cannot say what a child is capable of, as we do not have a theory of what an optimum learning environment looks like; and even if such a theory existed, we are unwilling to re-direct national expenditure towards physically creating it for children on the scale required.

II

Family role systems, social control and communication

I shall now look more closely at the relationships between role systems and linguistic codes, as the connection between social class and linguistic codes is too imprecise. Such a relationship omits the dynamics of the causal relationship. In order to examine these dynamics it is necessary to look at the nature of the role system of a family and its procedures of social control. The basic requirement of such an analysis is that it is predictive and so gives rise to measurable criteria for evaluating the interelationships between role systems, forms of social control and linguistic orientations.

It is possible to evaluate family role systems by reference to the principles which for any one family control the allocation of decision-making. Thus we could consider the effect of the allocation of decision-making on the extent and kind of interactions between members of the family.

Let us postulate two types of families—positional and person-oriented families.[8]

1 Positional families

If the area of decision-making is invested in the member's formal status (father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, age of child or sex of child), this type of family will be called positional. (It is not

necessarily authoritarian or 'cold' rather than 'warm'.) In such a family there would be a clear separation of roles. There would be formally defined areas of decision-making and judgments accorded to members of the family in terms of their formal status. In such a family type we could expect close relationships and interactions between the parents and grandparents. Further, we could expect that the parents would closely regulate the child's relationships with his age peers (if middle-class) or the child's relationship with his peers would be relatively independent of the parents' regulation (if working-class). Thus, in certain positional families, the socialization of the child might well be through his own age mates. Positional families, it is suggested, would give rise to a weak or closed communication system.

2 Person-oriented families

By contrast we could consider a family type where the range of decisions, modifications and judgments was a function of the psychological qualities of the person rather than a function of the formal status. In such families there is clearly a limit to the interactions set by age development and status ascription. However, status ascription would be reduced (age, sex, age relations) compared to positional families. Unlike certain positional families the socialization of the children would never be left to the child's age group. The behaviour of the child in his peer group would be subject to discussion with parents rather than to their legislation. Person-oriented families would give rise to a strong or 'open' communication system.

Discussion: positional-personal family types and open and closed communication systems

1 Person-oriented families—open communication system

In these families the limits on the extent to which decisions may be open to discussion would be set by the psychological characteristics of the person rather than by his formal status. Simply, the ascribed status of the member, for many activities, would be weakened by his achieved status. The children, for example, would achieve a role within the communication system in terms of their unique social, affective and cognitive characteristics. Clearly, if there is reduced segregation of role and less formal definition, then the parents and the children operate with a greater range of alternatives, that is,

with greater role discretion. Inasmuch as the role discretion (the range of alternatives of the role in different social situations) is wide, then individual choices can be made and offered. Verbal communication, of a particular kind, is generated. It is not just a question of more talk but talk of a particular kind. Judgments, their bases and consequences, would form a marked content of the communications. The role system would be continuously eliciting and reinforcing the verbal signalling and the making explicit of individual intentions, qualifications and judgments. The role system would be continuously accommodating and assimilating the different intents of its members. Looked at from another point of view, the children would be socializing the parents as much as the parents were socializing the children; for the parents would be very sensitive towards the unique characteristics of the children. These would be verbally realized and so enter into the communication system. Thus there would develop an 'open' communication system which would foster and provide the linguistic means and role learning for the verbal signalling and making explicit of individual differences, together with the explication of judgments, their bases and consequences. Of fundamental importance, the role system would promote communication and orientation towards the motives and dispositions of others.[9] Note also that in such a family the child learns to *make* his role rather than this being formally assigned to him. Children socialized within such a role and communication system learn to cope with ambiguity and ambivalence, although clearly there may well be pathological consequences if insufficient sense of boundary is provided.

2 Positional families—closed communication systems

In this type of family we said that judgments and the decision-making process would be a function of the *status* of the member rather than a quality of the person. There would be segregation of roles and a formal division of areas of responsibility according to age, sex, and age relation status. Boundary areas instead of generating discussion and accommodation might well become border disputes settled by the relative power inhering in the respective statuses. The children's communication system might well be 'open' only in relation to their age mates who would then become a major source of learning and relevance. If socialization is reciprocal in person-oriented families it tends to be unilateral in positional families. The role system here is less likely to facilitate the verbal elaboration of individual differences, and is less likely to lead to the verbal elaboration of judgments, their basis and consequences; it does not encourage the verbal

exploration of individual intentions and motives. In a person-oriented family the child's developing self is differentiated by the continuous adjustment to the verbally realized and elaborated intentions, qualifications and motives of others. In positional families the child takes over and responds to status requirements. Here he learns what can be called a communicated role as distinct from the individualized role of person-oriented families. In positional families, the range of alternatives which inhere in the roles (the role discretion) is relatively limited, consequently the communication system reduces the degree of individual selection from alternatives. Of course, within positional families, there is sensitivity towards persons but the point is that these sensitivities are less likely to be raised to a level of verbal elaboration so that they can become objects of special perceptual activity and control. Within positional families the child develops either within the unambiguous roles within his family *or* within the clearly structured roles of his age-mate society or both. Thus these children are less likely to learn to cope with problems of role ambiguity and ambivalence. They are more likely to avoid or foreclose upon activities or problems which carry this potential.

Social control and family types

It is clear that these two family types generate radically different communication systems which we have characterized as open and closed. It has been suggested that there are important socializing and linguistic consequences. I want now to outline differences in their forms of social control with again special reference to uses of spoken language.

We have said that inasmuch as a role system is personal rather than positional in orientation, then it is a relatively more unstable system. It is continuously in the process of assimilating and accommodating the verbally realized but different intentions, qualifications and motives of its members. Tensions will arise which are a function of the characteristics of the role system. Special forms of arbitration, reconciliation and explanation will develop. These tensions only in positional families. The last resource will be managed in terms of relative power which inheres in the respective statuses. Social control will be based upon linguistically elaborated meanings rather than upon power. However, it is clearly the case that power in the end is still the ultimate basis of authority.

In positional families where the status arrangements reduce the instability which inheres in person-oriented families, social control

will be affected either through power or through the referring of behaviour to the universal or particular norms which regulate the behaviour to the universal or particular status. Thus, in person-oriented families, social control is likely to be realized through verbally elaborated means oriented to the person; whilst in positional families, social control is likely to be realized through less elaborated verbal means, less oriented to the person but more oriented towards the formal status of the regulated (child).

It is of crucial importance to analyse the procedures of social control for I want to show, amongst other things, that person-oriented families, very early in the child's life, sensitize him towards and actively promote his language development in order that they can apply their favoured modes of social control. In positional families the modes of social control depend less upon individually created and elaborated verbal meanings and so within these families there is less need to sensitize the child towards, and promote the early development of, verbally elaborated forms of speech.

Modes of social control [10]

I shall distinguish initially between imperative modes of control and control based upon appeals. Two forms of appeal will be further distinguished. Underlying these distinctions in modes of control is the role discretion (the range of alternatives) accorded.

1 Imperative mode

This mode of control reduces the role discretion accorded to the regulated (child). It allows the child only the external possibilities of rebellion, withdrawal or acceptance. The imperative mode is realized through a restricted code (lexicon prediction): 'Shut up' 'Leave it alone' 'Get out' or extra-verbally through physical coercion.

2 Appeals

These are modes of control where the regulated (child) is accorded varying degrees of discretion in the sense that a range of alternatives, essentially linguistic, are available to him. Thus social control which rests upon appeals does permit, to different degrees, reciprocity in communication and hence linguistically regulated learning. These appeals may be broadly broken into two types and each type further classified into sub-types. The two broad types are positional and personal appeals.
(a) *Positional appeals.* Positional appeals refer the behaviour of the

regulated (child) to the norms which inhere in a particular or universal status. Positional appeals do not work through the verbal realization of the personal attributes of the controllers (parents) or regulated (children). Some examples now follow:

'You should be able to do that by now' (age status rule)
'Little boys don't cry' (sex status rule)
'People like us don't behave like that' (sub-cultural rule)
'Daddy doesn't expect to be spoken to like that' (age relation rule)

Positional appeals are not necessarily disguised forms of the imperative mode. Consider the following situation where a child is learning his sex role. A little boy is playing with a doll:

Mother: Little boys don't play with dolls.
Child: I want the dolly.
Mother: Dolls are for your sister.
Child: I want the doll (or he still persists with the doll).
Mother: Here, take the drum instead.

Compare this with a situation where the mother says: 'Why do you want to play with the doll—they are so boring—why not play with the drum?'

The essence of positional appeals is that in the process of learning the rule the child is explicitly linked to others who hold a similar universal or particular status. The rule is transmitted in such a way that the child is reminded of what he shares in common with others. Where control is positional, the rule is communalized. Where control is positional, the 'I' is subordinate to the 'we'. Positional control is realized through a specific linguistic variant. As will be shown later, positional appeals can be given in restricted or elaborated codes. They can be complex linguistically and conceptually as in the case of a West Point or public school boy who is reminded of his obligations and their origins. Where control is positional, the child (the regulated) learns the norms in a social context where the relative statuses are clear-cut and unambiguous. Positional appeals may lead to the formation of shame rather than guilt. In the case of positional appeals, however, certain areas of experience are less verbally differentiated than in the case of personal appeals. Positional appeals transmit the culture or sub-culture in such a way as to increase the similarity of the regulated with others of his social group. They create boundaries. If the child rebels he very soon challenges the bases of the culture and its social organization and this may force the controller (parent/teacher) into the imperative mode.
(b) *Personal appeals.* In these appeals the focus is upon the child as an individual rather than upon his formal status. Personal appeals

take into account interpersonal or intra-personal components of the social relationship. They work very much at the level of individual intention, motive and disposition and consequently are realized through a distinctive linguistic variant. This again can be within restricted or elaborated codes. It will be the case that the areas of experience verbally differentiated through personal appeals are very different from the experiences controlled by positional appeals. The following example might help to bring out the distinctions.

Imagine a situation where a child has to visit his grandfather who is unwell and the child does not like to kiss him because the grandfather has not shaved for some time. One mother says to the child before they go:

Mother: Children kiss their Grandpa (positional)
Child: I don't want to—why must I kiss him always?
Mother: He's not well (positional reason)—I don't want none of your nonsense (imperative)

Another mother says in the same context: 'I know you don't like kissing Grandpa, but he is unwell, and he is very fond of you, and it makes him very happy.'

The second example is perhaps blackmail, but note that the child's intent is recognized explicitly by the mother and linked to the wishes of another. Causal relations at the interpersonal level are made. Further, in the second example, there is the appearance of the child having a choice (discretion). If the child raises a question more explanation is given. The mother, so to speak, lays out the situation for the child and the rule is learned in an individualized interpersonal context. The rule is, so to speak, *achieved* by the child. The child, given the situation and the explanation, opts for the rule. In the first example, the rule is simply *assigned* in a social relationship which relies upon latent power for its effectiveness. Here we see another difference between positional and personal appeals in that rules are assigned in positional control and achieved in personal control.

Where control is personal, whole orders of learning are made available to the child which are not there if control is positional. Where control is personal, each child learns the rule in a context which, so to speak, uniquely fits him, and a language through which this is realized. Where control is positional, learning about objects, events and persons is reduced and the child comes to learn that the power which inheres in authority may soon be revealed. Where control is personal, as distinct from where it is positional, the status differences are less clear-cut and ambiguities and ambivalences are verbally realized. I should point out, although I have no time to

develop this, that there may well be pathological consequences of extensive use of personal appeals.

Finally, if positional appeals do lead to the development of shame, personal appeals may lead to the formation of guilt.

In the case of person-oriented appeals, the rights of the controller or parent which inhere in his formal status are less likely to come under attack than in the case of positional appeals. For in the case of personal appeals, what may be challenged are the reasons the controller gives or even a specific condition of the controller or parent (e.g. 'Do you always have a headache when I want to play?'). Thus personal appeals may act to protect the normative order from which the controller derives his rights. For here there is an attenuation of the relationship between power and the rule system. In the case of positional appeals which shift rapidly to the imperative mode of control, the formal rights of the controller or parent may well be challenged, and with this the whole normative order from which the controller derives his rights can come under attack. Imperative/positional forms of control under certain conditions may lead the socialized to turn to alternative value systems. Further, where control is personal, the basis of control lies in linguistically elaborated individualized meanings. This may lead to a situation where the child attains autonomy although his sense of social identity may be weakened. Such ambiguity in the sense of social identity, the lack of boundary, may move such children towards a radical closed value system and its attendant social structure. On the other hand, where control is positional and, even more, where it is imperative, the child has a strong sense of social identity but the rules which he learns will be tied to specific contexts and his sense of autonomy may well be reduced. Finally, a child socialized by controllers who favour positional or imperative procedures becomes highly sensitive to specific role relations in the context of control. Such a child may be bewildered, initially, when placed in a context of control where personal procedures are used, as he may lack the orientation and the facility to take up the different options or alternatives which this form of control makes available. Person-oriented forms of control may induce role strain where the child has been socialized through imperative or positional forms of control.

I have briefly outlined, with special reference to communication, imperative, positional and personal modes of social control. It is very clear that in any one family, or even in any one context of control, all three modes may be used. It is also likely to be the case within a family that parents may share control modes or each may use a different mode. We can, however, distinguish between families, or at a greater level of delicacy between parents, in terms of their

preferred modes of control. It follows that we could also distinguish the modes of control which are used in any one context. We can summarize the consequences for learning which inhere three modes as follows:

Mode	Learning	Level of learning
Imperative		Restricted code
Positional	Hierarchy Role obligation and Differentiation	Restricted code / Elaborated code
Personal	Interpersonal Intra-personal	Restricted code / Elaborated code

We can now link positional families with closed systems of communication with positional, imperative modes of control. We could, in principle, distinguish between positional families whose preferred mode of control was imperative (the lower working class?) from positional families where the preferred mode was positional appeals with relatively little use of physical coercion. We could distinguish positional families according to whether the dominant code was elaborated or restricted. In the same way, we could link person-oriented families with open communication systems operating with personal appeals. We could again distinguish between such families in terms of the dominant general code, elaborated or restricted. The latter tells us about the degree of openness of the communication system and its conceptual orientation. Thus the roles which children learn in these various families, their conceptual orientations, their perception of and use of language, should differ.11

Social class, positional and personal families and social change

On this analysis we might find positional families who were deeply embedded in their community operating essentially with imperative modes of control and where the children were socialized through unsupervised age peers or mates. Here we could expect the development of restricted codes (object), the hard core of the language/educability problem. It should also be possible to locate, within the working class, families who were moving towards personal forms of control within the general rubric of a restricted code. These families, we would expect, would be less tightly embedded within their local community, perhaps through rehousing or where the parents were actively confronting the complex relationships between their local sub-culture and the cultures of the wider society. Here we might

find an orientation towards a restricted code (person) or a movement towards an elaborated code (person).

A further point is worth making. Within working-class positional large families we should expect a marked difference between boys and girls in their use of language. Girls, especially older girls in such families, tend to take on mothering roles. They also, of equal relevance, mediate between parents and sibs. Their role then is more complex as it combines a normal sib role with that of mediator, and with that of controller. Further, girls are less tied to the activity-oriented, group-dominated peer group social structure such as that of the boy. Thus girls, especially older girls in such families, are likely to be person-oriented and to have to rely more upon forms of control based upon linguistically elaborated meanings than upon physical coercion. Finally, they are placed in a situation involving a variety of role and code switching, e.g. girl-girl, girl-boy, girl controlling girls, girl controlling boys, girl mediating between parents and other sibs. These factors are likely to develop the girl's orientation towards a more differentiated, more individualized use of language.12

Within the middle class we should be able to isolate positional and person-oriented families, who, on this argument, should orientate their children *initially* (formal education could change this) to the two modes of object and person of an elaborated code. In the earlier section of this paper suggestions were made as to the social origins of elaborated and restricted codes in terms of the increases in the complexity of the division of labour and the character of the central value system. We shall now turn our attention to the social conditions which may produce positional- and person-oriented families within the middle class and the working class.13

The literature strongly suggests that the traditional working-class family is of the positional type. For here we find insulation between working-class and middle-class sub-cultures and social relationships (a product of the class system); high population density within limited territories; low rate of social mobility (through educational failure) producing intra-group marriage; social solidarity arising out of similarity of economic function and interests; unemployment; reciprocity of services and mutual help between families arising partly out of low income (in the USA common ethnic origin and sub-culture) sustaining the transmission of this particular sub-culture. The weakening of the positional family type, closed systems of communication limited to a restricted code, would result from the play of forces which would differentiate the family from its community and so weaken the transmission of collective beliefs, values and the subsequent detailed regulation of behaviour.

In England, since the war, this has begun to happen as a result of:

(1) Greater affluence, greater geographical mobility and, therefore, greater responsiveness to a wide range of influences which has been partly assisted by mass media.

(2) Rehousing into areas of relatively low population density.

(3) A change in the power position of the wife through her independent earning capacity.

(4) A change in attitude both towards education and child development on the part of the working-class groups and therefore greater responsiveness to education and subsequent social mobility.

(5) A change in the solidarity between workers arising out of, until recently, full employment and higher earnings.

(6) A shift in the division of labour away from goods to that of a services economy. This is part of a long-term trend from a goods to a service economy, an economy which is now more person- than object-oriented.

These different forces are beginning to weaken the transmission of the communally-based, socially-insulated, working-class sub-culture and have created the conditions for more individualized family systems.[14] This is not to say that the working-class sub-culture has been eroded and replaced by middle-class beliefs, values and norms; only that there now exist the *conditions* for more individualized and less communalized relationships.

In the USA (and one is really not entitled to discuss this) the situation is much more complex. Apart from attempts of the school which so far have not been outstandingly successful, the most important influence upon change of linguistic code is probably the Civil Rights Movement. This movement and its various organizations are bringing about a change in the negro's view of his own sub-culture, his relation to the white culture and his attitude towards education. This movement has produced powerful charismatic leaders at both national and local levels, who are forcing negroes to reassess, re-examine their structural relationship to the society. This confrontation (despite the violence) is likely to make new demands upon linguistic resources and to challenge the passivity of the old sub-culture and its system of social relationships. The language of social protest, with its challenging of assumptions, its grasping towards new cultural forms, may play an important role in breaking down the limitations of sub-culturally bound restricted codes.

On the other hand, middle-class changes in the orientations of family types might well reflect changes in the character of middle-class occupations; in particular, the movement from entrepreneurial

to managerial, professional and service type occupations. At the same time, the indeterminacy of the value system has individualized choice and changed the basis of authority relationships within the family. The 'science' of child development and its popularization through books, papers and journals, has also had an important influence, given the above conditions, in shaping role relationships and communication within middle-class families. It is likely that the personalizing of socialization agencies has gone further in the USA than in the UK. It is important to point out that family types may also be very influenced by the nature of religious and political beliefs. On the whole, pluralistic societies like the USA and UK are likely to produce strong tendencies towards personalized socialization agencies, whereas societies with monolithic centrally planned and disseminated value systems are likely to develop highly positional socializing agencies generating object-oriented linguistic codes.

Let me now retrace the argument. We started with the view that the social organization and sub-culture of the lower working class would be likely to generate a distinctive form of communication through which the genes of social class would be transmitted. Secondly, two general types of linguistic codes were postulated and their social origins and regulative consequences analysed. Thirdly, it was suggested that the sub-culture of the lower working class would be transmitted through a restricted code whilst that of the middle class would realize both elaborated and restricted codes. This causal link was considered to be very imprecise and omitted the dynamics of the process. The fourth step entailed the construction of two types of family role systems, positional and personal, their causally related 'open' and 'closed' communication systems and their procedures of social control. The fifth step made the causal link between restricted and elaborated codes and their two modes with positional- and person-orientated family role systems. Finally, factors affecting the development and change of family types were discussed.

III

Some consequences of change of habitual linguistic code

I should like finally to consider some possible consequences of linguistic code switching. In contemporary societies, both in the West and in the newly developing societies, educational institutions are faced with the problem of encouraging children to change and extend

the way they normally use language. In terms of this paper, this becomes a switch from restricted to elaborated codes. A change in linguistic code implies more than a change in syntactic and lexical selection. The view taken here and in other papers is that linguistic codes are basic controls on the transmission of a culture or sub-culture and are the creators of social identity. 'Changes in such codes involve changes in the *means* whereby order and relevance are generated. Changes in codes involve changes in role relationships and in procedures of social control.

In another paper I have distinguished my position from that of Whorf[15], but I believe that there are distillations or precipitations from the general system of meanings which inhere in linguistic codes which exert a diffuse and generalized effect upon the behaviour of speakers. What I am tentatively putting forward is that imbedded in a culture of sub-culture may be a basic organizing concept, concepts or themes, whose ramifications may be diffused throughout the culture or sub-culture. The speech forms through which the culture or sub-culture is realized, transmits this organizing concept or concepts within their Gestalt rather than through any one set of meanings.

The following diagram sets out the application of this essentially Whorfian thought to the linguistic codes and their social controls discussed in this paper.
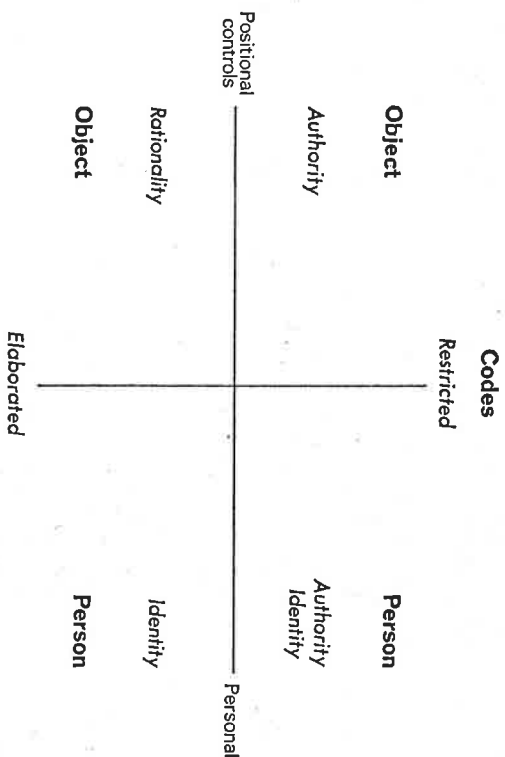
Codes

	Restricted	Elaborated
Positional controls	Object Authority	Object Rationality
Personal	Person Authority Identity	Person Identity

Figure 2

Positional—Restricted Code (object)
The basic organizing concept here would form around the concepts of authority or piety.

Personal—Restricted Code (person)
The basic organizing concepts here would be authority/identity in a state of unresolved tension. By 'identity' I simply mean a preoccupation with the question of 'who am I?'

Positional Elaborated Code (object)
The basic organizing concept here would centre about the concept of rationality.

Personal Elaborated Code (person)
The basic organizing concept would refer to the concept of identity.

On this view an educationally induced change of code from a restricted code (object) to an elaborated code (object) involves a shift in organizing concepts from authority/piety towards one of identity. From an organizing concept which makes irrelevant the question of personal identity to an organizing concept which places the notion of identity in the forefront of the personality. Individuals who are in the process of making such a switch of codes are involved in a basic cultural change at the level of meanings and at the sociological level of role. We need to know much more about the social and psychological consequences of radical shifts in linguistic codes.

It may be that the switch from a restricted code (object) is more likely to be towards an elaborated code (object) than towards the person mode of an elaborated code. In concrete terms, we might expect working-class children to move towards the applied sciences than towards the verbal arts. This shift from authority to rationality for working-class children may involve a less traumatic change in their role relations, systems of meanings and control, than a shift from authority to identity. Authority and rationality are both positional in the sense that the individual works *within* a framework, within a system or structure, without a critical problem of ambiguity of ends. Where the organizing concept transmitted by the code is that of identity, the individual is faced with ambiguity at the level of ends and often means. This speculation on no account should be taken to mean that it is more appropriate for individuals limited to a restricted code (object) to be guided towards the applied sciences or routine low level supervisory functions, where persons are often treated as objects. Only that it may be expected that they may well make these choices rather than choose the verbal arts. They are more

likely to be concerned with object-processes than inter-personal and intra-personal processes.

One might further expect the individuals starting from restricted codes (person) will move towards elaborated codes (objects). Individuals in this quadrant, if they switch to elaborated codes, are likely to be restless in their search for belonging, or they might accept some belief system which creates it for them. It is thought that many may become teachers, writers, community protest leaders or perhaps become involved in drop-out movements or deviant groups. This code switch involves major problems of culture conflict.

There are relatively few individuals who are capable of managing equally both modes of an elaborated code, although one suspects that the social sciences contain many of these. The meanings, roles and controls entailed in these two modes are somewhat antithetical. At the basis of the meanings of an elaborated code (object), is the notion of one integrated system which can generate order. In an odd way it is objective idealist in character. At the basis of the meanings of an elaborated code (person) is a pluralism, a range of possibilities. It is subjective idealist or romantic in character. *Another way of seeing this might be to suggest that the major latent function of an elaborated code (object) is to remove ambiguity, whilst the major latent function of an elaborated code (person) is to create it.*

These are poorly worked out thoughts.[16] My excuse for including them is to point out the need for discussion of more general issues involved in the changing of forms of speech.

Conclusion

I have attempted within the confines of this paper to work on a broad canvas in which particular problems of language and education may be placed within a much broader setting. The paper is really a plea for more extensive research into the social constraints upon the emergence of linguistic codes, the conditions for their maintenance and change and above all their regulative functions.

Notes

1 See Erving-Tripp, S. (1964), 'An analysis of the interaction between language, topic and listener', in *The Ethnography of Communication*, Gumperz, J. J., and Hymes, D. (eds), *American Anthropology*, special publication, Vol. 66, No. 6, part 2. Also

Erving-Tripp, S. (1967), 'Sociolinguistics', Working paper No. 3, Language-Behaviour Research Laboratory: See Gumperz, J. J. (1964), 'Linguistic and social interaction in two communities', *American Anthropology*, Vol. 66, see above. The work of Dell Hymes should also be consulted. See Hymes, D. (1967), 'Models of the interaction of languages and social setting', *Journal of Social Issues*, 23.

2 Research carried out by the Sociological Research Unit shows that there are considerable differences between middle-class and working-class children at five years and seven years of age in their ability to switch grammar and lexis in accordance with the nature of the context. See also Hawkins, P. (1969), 'Social class, the nominal group and reference', *Language and Speech*, 12. Henderson, D., 'Social class differences in form-class usage' in *Social Class, Language and Communication*, Brandis, W. and Henderson, D., Vol. I of the Sociological Research Unit, University of London Institute of Education, Monograph Series, *Language, Primary Socialisation and Education* (ed.), Bernstein, B., London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970.

3 Hymes, D. (1968), 'On communicative competence', in Diamond, S., *Anthropological Approaches to Education* (in press).

4 Bernstein, B. (1962), 'Linguistic codes, hesitation phenomena and intelligence', *Language and Speech*, 5, and in this volume.

5 In different ways Vygotsky, Sapir and Malinowski have drawn attention to the simplification of grammar and the lack of specificity in lexes where social relationships are based upon closely shared assumptions and identifications.

6 Durkheim, E. (1933), *On the Division of Labour in Society*, London, Macmillan.

7 Our research shows that the speech of middle-class children compared to working-class children at five years of age is more likely to show greater differentiation in the open set lexical choices within the nominal group, *and* that these children are more flexible in their use of the grammatical options they take up within the nominal group. The working-class children are more likely to select pronouns as heads (especially third person pronouns). Where pronouns are used as head, the possibility of both modification and qualification is considerably reduced. Further, our research shows (as does that of Loban, W. (1966), *Language Ability*, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education) that middle-class children are more likely, in certain contexts, to use more frequently than working-class children, modal verbs of uncertainty or possibility. See Turner, G. and Pickvance, R. E., 'Social class differences in the expression of uncertainty in five-year-old children', *Language and Speech* (in press).

8 This distinction between positional and personal forms of control was set out by the author initially in an unpublished manuscript

(1962 and in a paper 'Family role systems, socialization and communication', given to the Conference on Cross-Cultural Research into Childhood and Adolescence, University of Chicago, 1963. At that time the term 'status' was used instead of positional. The terms 'positional' and 'personal' have also been used by Hanson, D. (1965), 'Personal and positional influences in informal groups', *Social Forces*, 44. However, Hanson's discussion is somewhat differently focused for he sees positional relationships as contractual, and personal relationships as non-contractual.

9 See Bernstein, B. and Henderson, D. 'Social class differences in the relevance of language to socialization', *Sociology*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Jan. 1969. Also Bernstein, B., and Brandis, W. 'Social class, communication and control' in *Social Class, Language and Communication*: Brandis, W. and Henderson, D., Vol. 1, in Sociological Research Unit Monograph Series, *Language, Primary Socialization and Education*, ed. Bernstein, B. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970. See also: Kohn, M. L. (1959), 'Social class and the exercise of parental authority', *American Sociological Review*, 24, 352-66; Kohn, M. L. (1959), 'Social class and parental values', *American Journal of Sociology*, 64.

10 A coding manual for social control has been developed and applied to the speech of mothers and their children. This manual gives a range of delicate sub-divisions within imperative, positional and personal forms of control. The coding manual, constructed by Bernstein, B. and Cook, J., is available from the Sociological Research Unit, University of London Institute of Education.

11 It should be clear that in this discussion I have drawn upon a range of work in the literature of sociology and social psychology. In particular, Bott, E., *Family and Social Network*, Tavistock Press, 1957; Foote, N. N. (ed.) *Household Decision-Making: Consumer Behavior*, Vol. 4, Ch. 5, New York: Univ. Press, 1961; Nye, F. I. and Berardo, F. M., *Emerging Conceptual Frameworks in Family Analysis*, New York: Macmillan, 1966; Bronfenbrenner, U, 'Socialization and social class in time and space', *Readings in Social Psychology*, eds Maccoby, E. *et al.*, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1958.

12 Henderson's research, quoted above, as other research, indicates a marked superiority in the form-class usage of working-class girls compared to working-class boys. It is possible, however, that our very *eliciting techniques* may well create contexts for girls in which they can demonstrate a socially promoted superiority. We have reason to believe that such superiority in girls is not wholly the result of earlier biological development. The girls (five years of age) of middle-class mothers who score low on an index of reported communication, offer speech where the lexes of middle-class girls whose mothers score high on an index of reported communication. The findings of Bernstein, B. and

Brandis, W (referred to above), indicate that there is a sub-group of *middle-class* mothers (positional) who explain less and who are more coercive in the socializing of the *girl* than the socializing of the boy. Thus, different uses of language by boys and girls may partly derive from family and age group role learning. They may also be a function of the eliciting contexts constructed to obtain speech.

13 A very interesting attempt to distinguish between entrepreneurial and bureaucratic families can be found in Miller, D. and Swanson, G. E., *The Changing American Parent*, New York: Wiley, 1958.

14 A good account of this movement is given by Goldthorpe, J. and Lockwood, D. (1964), 'Affluence and the class structure', *Sociological Review*. For a general analysis of the effects of the interrelationships between the division of labour and the central value system upon the structure of socializing agencies, see Parsons, T., *Personality and Social Structure*, Ch. 8, New York: Free Press, 1964.

15 Bernstein, B. (1965), 'A socio-linguistic approach to social learning', in *Penguin Survey of the Social Sciences*, Gould, J. (ed.), Penguin Books.

16 The ideas presented in this section have been developed by Douglas, M. Reader in Social Anthropology, University College, London in her paper 'The contempt of ritual' given as the Aquinas Lecture, Blackfriars, Oxford, March 1967.