Bakhtin's Notion of the *Internally* Persuasive Discourse in Education: Internal to what?

(A case of discussion of issues of foul language in teacher education)[1]

Eugene Matusov, Katherine von Duyke

University of Delaware
DE, USA

ematusov@udel.edu, kvond@udel.edu

Abstract

Bakhtin's notion of internally persuasive discourse (IPD) has become more and more influential in education in part because it helps us conceptualize learning. We abstracted at least three approaches to how this notion is currently used in the literature on education. First, the most prevalent approach in education, IPD is understood as *appropriation* when somebody else's words, ideas, approaches, knowledge, feelings, become one's own (e.g., a student's). In this approach, "internal" in IPD is understood as internal to the individual, as a psychological and personal deep conviction. Second, but less prevalent approach in education is IPD understood as *a student's authorship* recognized and accepted by a community of practice, in which the student generates self-assignments and long-term projects within the practice. In this approach, "internal" is understood as internal to the targeted discourse practice. Finally, in the third approach, IPD is understood as *a dialogic regime of the participants' testing ideas and searching for the boundaries of personally-vested truths*. In this approach, "internal" in IPD is interpreted as internal to the dialogue itself in which everything is "dialogically tested and forever testable" (Morson, 2004, p. 319). We argue that although the first two approaches are grounded in Bakhtin's quotes and can be descriptively important for IPD, they do not define IPD. The third approach, rooted in Bakhtin's central notion of dialogue, does describe IPD. We are surprised to find that searching for the bounds of personally-vested truths seem to be grounded in one's ontological plane of existence. When tested yet again, as projected actions in future contexts, the truth ideas take on another set of boundaries and perspectives. Therefore, dialogic IPD has a surprising ontological component that links ideas with the past and the future that activates student's professional discourse in the classrooms setting. Testing ideas within the bounds of a future imagined practice constitutes, in our view, a legitimate participation in professional discourse, as the evaluation of and setting a course for (future) ethical actions is an important part of any practice. We consider the dialogic approach and its implications for education by analyzing online class discourse among preservice teachers about issues of foul language in education.

Introduction

We were excited to analyze an intriguing and several weeks long classroom dialogue we had with University level students in this paper. In this dialogue, students were sometimes hesitant to follow our pedagogical attempts to guide the discussion in certain directions, and yet we noticed something shifted across the dialogue that seemed important for student's professional development. We struggled to find what exactly what that shift was, as the discussion theme (foul language in the classroom) stayed fairly consistent. In the analysis of what happened in class web-based discussions, we found useful Bakhtin's notion of internally persuasive discourse (IPD).

First we will consider how IPD is used in the literature. We argue that the ways in which IPD have been defined in the literature promotes certain ethical actions of the author/ teachers which shaped what student discussion can emerge and is considered to represent IPD. We will discuss and provide a critical analysis of the existing diverse pedagogical approaches to IPD. So secondly, we analyze our own class' online discussion in order to understand possible outcomes of a dialogic approach to IPD and its implications for education. According to our analysis, our students developed three distinct stances in their class discussion about issues of foul language in education originating from different ontological planes of their existence, which was a surprise to us as we expected the discussion to develop mainly as a debate among several perspectives. These stances were: 1) a clichéd authoritative discourse focused on how silence their future cursing students, 2) an IPD from their position as students learning about social functions and societal traditions with the regard to foul language in general, and 3) somewhat authoritative discourse that incorporated the multiple perspective they developed in the second stance and which projected their responses into future actions. We also analyzed dialogic relationships among these three distinct thematic discourses as well as considered shifts in one particular student (a case study). In our view, our students did not develop an IPD approach to teaching foul language issues as we modeled in the classroom, and which we tried to promote through dialogue. We consider possible reasons why this was so – perhaps such a discussion will remain unavailable to students until they can examine the classroom process they underwent themselves. We follow one case study, tracing his path through the three stances and noting his shift into a professional teaching discourse which takes a principled stand after considering several perspectives. We noticed this same shift to a lesser degree with other students. We ask, is there a link as students engage in an evaluation and projection of their future professional ethical actions? It seems to us that learning within an IPD approach activates actual participation in the discourse of the teaching practice.

Bakhtin's notion of the *internally* persuasive discourse in education: Internal to what?

Bakhtin defined internally persuasive and authoritative discourses in the following way:

> Internally persuasive discourse – as opposed to one that is externally authoritative – is, as it is affirmed through assimilation, tightly interwoven with 'one's own word'. In the everyday rounds of our consciousness, the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else's. Its creativity and productiveness consist precisely in the fact that such a word awakens new and independent words, that it organizes masses of our words from within, and does not remain in an isolated and static condition... it enters into interanimating relationships with new contexts. More than that, it enters into an intense interaction, a struggle with other internally persuasive discourses. Our ideological [becoming – EM] is just such an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values. The semantic structure of an internally

>persuasive discourse is not finite, it is open; in each of the new contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever new ways to mean (Bakhtin, 1991, p. 346).

IPD and its opposition to the authoritative discourse (AD) helps educators move away from the conventional notion of learning as a transmission of knowledge from the teacher (and/or the official text) to the student. Application of Bakhtin's notion of IPD allows us to develop a new overarching problematic in education. We have found three approaches to the application of IPD in education that each have their own problematics. We argue that each of the three existing IPD educational approaches is characterized by how "internal" in *internally* persuasive discourse is understood, what is "internal" here? "internal" to what?

Internal to the individual: Appropriation

In the first approach, internal is understood as an internal to the individual – it is an individual who has to be persuaded without any imposition or force from someone or something external to the individual source. Or, on the contrary, when a person freely accepts something, it is evidence of their IPD. Thus, for example, in studying Estonian and Russian students and their knowledge of history presented in schools under the Soviet regime, Wertsch (2002) distinguishes a student's mastery of discourse from a student's appropriation of discourse. In the former case, Estonian students could master successfully the official Soviet historical discourse: how the independent Estonian bourgeois republic voluntary joined the Soviet Union in the summer of 1940 as its response to the Nazi threat. The Estonian students could correctly reproduce official facts provided by the Soviet historiography, provide the correct reasons, and thoughtfully answer comprehension questions, without actually believing any of it. As Wertsch shows, they actually believed in a then unofficial counter-history; that the Soviet forceful occupation of Estonia was a result of the August 1939 Hitler-Stalin peace pact and division of the Eastern Europe by two totalitarian powers. In contrast, according to Wertsch's research, many Russian students not only mastered the official Soviet history but also believed in it. Citing Bakhtin's (1991, p. 346) famous paragraph about IPD (see above), Wertsch suggests that IPD is defined by appropriated words being half somebody else's and half one's own. He argues that the educational process of teaching the official Soviet history for Estonian students has been imposed on them by the Soviet authoritative discourse (AD); while for Russian students, it was guided by IPD. Thus, according to Wertsch, IPD is mastery with "appropriation" or mastery with conviction (sincerity).

Similarly, Freedman (Freedman & Ball, 2004) describes her interviews with Bosnian Croats and marks their passion nationalistic anti-Muslim and anti-Serbian views as evidence of their IPD, "Their internally persuasive discourses sound quite different from those of their Bosniak neighbors" (p. 26). In this appropriation approach to IPD, "internal" in internally persuasive discourse is understood as *internal to the individual*, as one's psychological conviction about ideas as one's own deep and passionate belief. In the same article, Ball analyzes a South African student who was severely bitten by her father in his effort to force her acceptance of Christian beliefs, which was characterized by Ball as AD. When the student learned about social constructivism in her college (by the guidance of the author) and got excited about these ideas, this was characterized by the author as internally persuasive discourse. Thus, in an addition to personal belief, IPD is characterized by the free acceptance of ideas, knowledge, and skills without any imposition or violence (physical or psychological).

Thus, this new concept of IPD, presented by Wertsch, Freedman, and Ball, extends learning beyond traditional educational issues of students' mastery of knowledge and skills , the classic notion of "transfer" (Beach, 1999; Tuomi-Gröhn & Engeström, 2003), to new problematics: How can the teacher make curriculum be *appropriated* by the student so the student cannot only master the learned knowledge and skills but also *freely*

accept, be passionate about, and sincerely believe in them? In this approach, IPD is defined as voluntary and deeply committed mastery.

We see positive sides of this appropriation approach to IPD; in its focus on students' subjectivity through their own ideas, perceptions and beliefs, and in students' freedom to have their own ideas. In our view, this focus on students' subjectivity opens up a possibility for a teacher to provide sensitive guidance to the students (Matusov & Smith, 2007) rather than to focus purely on the students' mastery of knowledge and skills. However, in our judgment, this focus is not sufficient to provide good education.

We raise the following three major oppositions to this first approach to IPD as internal to the individual. First, a student's deep understanding (mastery) of any idea is not and cannot be packaged and closed within an individual, nor is it the sole property of an individual. Any truth is an idea that requires critical replies to itself from other ideas, addressing alternative ideas to itself from the positions and voices of relevant others. To understand a truth of an idea is to reply to the past, present, and future alternative ideas with a personally and ontologically vested reflexivity that asks why what is accepted by myself as an individual is a more truthful idea and is better than the alternatives provided by others, – "better" for what and for whom. Understanding a truth ("правда" in Russian, "pravda") of an idea also means to find out the limitations of the idea and the limitations of the self as having a vested ontological interest in the truth, something which is impossible to do without help of others. In essence, investigating a truth of an idea is an inescapably dialogic phenomenon.

Second, as Freedman's research shows, the internal to the individual IPD can involve freely and deeply accepted nationalism, prejudices, chauvinism, racism, and fanaticism. This "appropriation" has low educational value. A person's own deep and sincere conviction is not equal to one that is informed or educated by the ideas, objections, concerns and values of others. Even more, it can be of a questionable quality all together from an educational point of view, in contrast to, for example, doubt. An open-minded honest commitment to ideas, knowledge, and skills requires the meeting of alternative ideas, the genuine listening to others, testing ideas, taking one's own and other people's positions seriously, and a commitment to searching for truth rather than to spread one's own dear ideas, manipulate others, and so on. In our view, all of that cannot be a sole property of the individual but rather involves the individual's participation in the specific public discourse and the discourse itself.

Finally, we argue that freedom of and open-mindedness in disagreements as the medium of origin for one's conviction is more important than voluntarism or imposition as the origin of one's ideas. An idea becomes true not because one freely and passionately accepts it, but because it is thoroughly investigated and tested (even if an idea is initially imposed on a person).

Internal to the discourse practice: Authorship

The second approach to IPD in education treats "internal" as internal to the discourse practice. Its concern is with a student becoming an active and recognized member of "a community of practice" (Gee, 2000, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The problematics of this approach is; how can the teacher help the students socialize into a targeted discourse practice to become accepted by a community of practice as an active insider and whose authorship is recognized by the community?

Founders of the Ukrainian-Russian pedagogical movement "The School of the Dialogue of Cultures", Solomadin and Kurganov (Kurganov, 2009; Solomadin & Kurganov, 2009) define the goal of education as students' authorship of their own work. Not only should the students' work have a unique, original, and embodied voice – as in the appropriation IPD approach – but it should also focus on the students' self-assignments and self-initiatives (e.g., students starting writers' clubs, generating their own science

hypotheses and testing them in their own experiments). According to these scholars and educators, to become educated means to join a community of practice (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991) and find an unique place in what the authors refer to as "a unique author position" in the discourse of the practice. Recently, we also argued for a similar position as "polyphonic pedagogy" (Matusov, Duyke, & Han, 2009, submitted), focusing on students' self-assignments and students' setting themselves for learning "journeys" by developing original long-term projects for themselves. This IPD approach is concerned with the acceptance of a newcomer by the community oldtimers, the recognition of the newcomer's voice as an authentic voice of an insider in the community, the newcomer's authorship and the development of the newcomer's contributions within a hierarchy in community (e.g., "novice," "expert," "talented," "promising," "original," "mediocre," "graphomaniac," and so on). In this approach, IPD is defined as recognized, self-initiated mastery.

In our view, the strong side of this authorship approach to IPD is its focus on students' activism and authorship and its recognition by a targeted community of practice. Transformation from school- and teacher-initiated assignments to self-assignments and self-journeys as the main educational activities for students to involve themselves in is a right step towards, in our view, of deepening education. However, we think that this step is not sufficient for quality education.

We see a major problem with this authorship approach because of the lack of an explicit critical stance to it (see other critiques in Hayes & Matusov, 2005). The approach implies that only the unilateral critique of community oldtimers and the most respected members of the community (teachers?) can judge the authenticity and quality of the newcomer's (i.e., students') authorship and contribution. This approach can be characterized as gatekeeping. In our view, successfully joining a community of practice through one's authorship is not equal to education. We think that education necessarily involves critical and open (non-hierarchical) dialogue about the practice. One's individual responsibility to dialogue involves answering diverse voices for one's own views. We argue that the questioning of the final causes of one's ideas and values about the quality of work and contributions, – whether held by oldtimers or not, – is more important for education than being accepted by the relevant community through skillful participation. In turn, we distinguish educational settings from apprenticeship or training settings.

Internal to dialogue: Testing ideas and responsibility

In defining IPD, educators often cite Bakhtin's famous phrase that "the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else's." They seemed to understand this idea *diachronically*: initially words were someone else's and through appropriation these words become ours. So, the words are half-someone else's only in history. Thus, everything that is truly appropriated by the individual is IPD. Our understanding of Bakhtin is different. We think that Bakhtin's famous phrase should be taken *synchronically*, namely, that in internally persuasive discourse, we are aware of someone else's voices shaping our words. This means that we are aware that our words cannot be understood without the consideration of the words of others – the meaning of our words emerge and exist on the border of our and others' voices. In IPD, words are "half-ours and half-someone else's" not in the past, but in the present because they are defined by, at least, by two distinct voices: our own and someone else's. This can be true in the phenomenon of double-voicedness, described by Bakhtin (1999), where internal dialogue is with imaginary others, or as direct contact through open dialogue with real others. However, in our view, this "half-ness" of our words and our awareness of it are not enough to define dialogic IPD.

In our view, Bakhtinian philologists (Holquist, 1990; Morson & Emerson, 1990) have developed a *dialogic approach* to IPD. They consider Bakhtin's (1991) description of

IPD in the context of his overarching notion of dialogue (Bakhtin, 1999). In the second edition of his book on Dostoevsky, Bakhtin added chapter 4, which arguably merges the notions of dialogue and IPD. Morson defines IPD as a dialogic regime, in which "truth becomes dialogically tested and forever testable" (2004, p. 319). Here, "internal" in IPD is internal to the entire dialogue rather than to the individual or to some discourse practice to be learned. A participant's word is persuasive not because the participant is passionate about it, nor because the participant fills the word with his or her own unique intonation, nor because the participant considers the word genuinely as his or her own, nor because it is original and authored by the individual, but because it is dialogically tested and forever testable. Teaching in a dialogic IPD approach means that the student's learning emerges through their guided engagement in historically and topically valuable internally persuasive discourses where the students become familiar with historically, culturally, and socially important voices, and learn how to address these voices, and to develop responsible replies to them.

We argue that although the first two approaches to IPD are well grounded in Bakhtin's quotes, they do not define IPD within Bakhtin's central notion of dialogue. In our view, although the appropriation and authorship approaches to IPD, which focus on students' ownership of their ideas and contributions have strong points as listed above, they are not sufficient and, at times, even unnecessary for defining IPD. Students can be passionate about their own personal or communal prejudices and can actively author these prejudices as self-assignments in very creative ways – this fails to be IPD as described by Bakhtin which would include all relevant others, but rather, with the subjective view of internal can support prejudices which try to escape scrutiny by becoming a totalizing discourse. Another important difference between the third and dialogic IPD approach from the other two is that doubts, questions, and challenges can also be important parts of IPD, which are lost to the dialogue when the educative focus is only on affirmative statements of conviction, passion, ownership, belief, or the original authorship (self-assignment). Non appropriated words, such as the double-voiced words of the Estonian students, and a non concern for student self-assignments can be IPD in the dialogic approach. The problematics of this dialogic approach to IPD involves the following issues: Why should the students and I, their teacher, care about the curriculum? Whose voices are important for this dialogue outside ours in this classroom? Are some ideas better than others? Better for what and for whom? How do I take a responsible position on this issue? What are my responsible deeds in light of what I know now?

Below we provide a description and analysis of a discourse among our students that we found interesting, if not pedagogically beautiful; from our experience of the dialogue as instructors. Now, after the class we both taught is over, we feel nostalgic about this experience. We first felt that this experience redefined what we wanted to strive for in our educational practice. In this paper we want to reflect on our pedagogical experience, why we are so attracted to it, and how it has acted to redefine our understanding of learning. We have found that Bakhtin's literary notion of "internally persuasive discourse" (IPD) has become useful for our analysis. We do not think that what we did with our class constitutes an idealized or "perfect" model of this dialogic IPD, and we want to reflect on our shortcomings as well, but rather our pedagogical experience led us to redefine our goal of education. We see the goal of our pedagogical practice as engaging students in an historically unfolding dialogue of a subject matter ,rather than as the acquisition by students of certain knowledge, skills, and/or disposition (as it is often considered in con-ventional education).

"Watch your language, Mister!": IPD by pre-service teachers around issues of foul language in education

Imagine yourself as a teacher in a middle school. Your middle school students (let's say in 6th grade) are working on an educational computer game (let's say "Oregon Trail") in peer groups. All of your students are highly engaged with this game. You hear very good learning discussions between the students about planning, decision making, and history (Bigelow, 1996). For some reason in one computer station, you hear that a peer group is frustrated because their computer is frozen in the middle of their game. You hear the students are agitated, loud, frustrated, and angry. Then they curse at the computer using foul language (let's say loud calling the computer "a f***ing piece of junk!"). What would you do as a teacher and why?

We posed this question to our pre-service teachers (mostly first-year college students) as part of their professional diversity class. In this class, our students work in a practicum with minority children in two afterschool programs in local community centers (twice a week for 1.5 hours for 9 weeks). We first asked this question as an intellectual homework exercise in an online essay that we call a weekly "mini-project." Then we addressed it again as a class by having two students act out the "cursing kids." We asked students to develop a response to the same scenario in small groups of 5–6, then select a volunteer "teacher" who addressed the "kids" at the front of the class. At the next class meeting we discussed these diverse possible approaches of dealing with this situation as well as other options, their PROs and CONs, and the students' preferences for each of these approaches.

This dialogic provocation (Matusov, 2009) generated an intense and prolonged discussion on the class web that we call Webtalk (Matusov, Hayes, & Pluta, 2005). The web discussion on issues of foul language lasted for one month (of a 4-month semester), involved 28 students (out of 30, or 93%) and both instructors (the professor, Eugene, the first author, and the TA, Kathy, the second author), and involved 102 entries which centered on the following three main emergent themes[2] which we abstracted from the discussion (the titles of the abstracted themes are ours, some web postings had more than one theme):

1. **How can we, teachers, shut up cursing kids?** (15 participants, 50%; 19 webtalk entries, 19%);
2. **Questioning the authoritative tradition of dealing with foul language** (28 participants, 90%; 77 webtalk entries, 75%);
3. **What should education about foul language involve?** (13 participants, 43%; 28 webtalk entries, 27%).

We used the notion of interproblematicity (Matusov, 2010, in press), which is the mutual interest of two or more participants in the same problems, inquiries, puzzlements, and concerns as the unit of our analysis. The three extracted interproblematicity themes were not mutually exclusive and one webtalk entry could have one, two, or all three themes. The first theme was initiated by the students at the beginning of the foul language webtalk discussion – the instructors did not participate in this theme. This theme faded out after the first half of the discussion (after 16 days). The second theme was provoked by the instructors 3 days after the foul language webtalk discussion was launched. The students immediately supported it and initiated their own discussions around this theme. This theme continued until the end of the discussion. The third theme was also introduced by the instructors after 3 days but it was not replied to by the students for some time.

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[2] It is completely incidental that we abstracted 3 and not 4 or 2 themes here. The themes do not correspond to the 3 approaches discussed above but, as we argue further, they constitute overall IPD discourse.

However, almost immediately after that, the students initiated their own, "weaker", version of this theme discussing the boundaries of education and their multiple roles with the children (in the practicum). Later on the students also discussed a "stronger" version of this theme focusing on what should be the curriculum in teaching about cursing and foul language use. This theme continued to the end of the discussion. Below we try to provide fragments from each theme and communicate why we are so excited about the pedagogical quality of this discussion. We recognize that it might not easy for readers to catch our excitement without reading the entire webtalk discussion (and participation in the relevant class meetings). But we will try. In selection of the Webtalk excerpts, we tried not to romanticize the discourse and the participants' contributions and not to impose pre-existing grand narratives on them.

Authoritative discourse: How can we, teachers, shut up cursing kids? (Theme#1)

Below is the entire initial student posting that provoked our class webtalk discussion on foul language. Amy (here and below we use pseudonyms for the students and the children mentioned in the discussions) titled her web posting as "Ways to address cursing in the classroom." As indicated by the time of her web entries, Amy wrote her posting immediately after she submitted her required weekly mini-project which had asked the students to consider their teacher response to cursing in a classroom, but before our class scenario and class discussion of the issue. Such web postings are assigned by the instructors (the students are expected to do a minimum number per week). The content of the posting, however, was not dictated by the instructors. The students could choose to reflect upon any aspect of the curriculum (Matusov, et al., 2005). The fact that this student chose to reflect upon her weekly miniproject and to bring it up for whole class discussion on the Webtalk[3] was a typical but not systematic event initiated by students – these reflections were not required by the instructors. Conrad was the first student who replied to her.

> *Amy*: I myself am not exactly sure how I would handle cursing in the classroom. It is obviously inappropriate and the situation needs to be addressed, but what would really make kids stop? I do think that the situation depends greatly on how old the student is. But, my main question is, is telling them its wrong enough to making them stop regardless of age, I would like to think that it would work, but lets be realistic here. Also at what age is it appropriate to start using curse words? Is it ever okay in the classroom, high school? college? I was just wondering what everyone else was thinking, I want to know what you thought! (Webtalk, March 9, 2009)

> *Conrad*: I think kids who curse in class are only looking for attention, or to get their friends to laugh or what have you, that's why I did it, and it was funny. I think the best way to deal with a student who curses to get attention is to give them all the attention they want. I don't mean yell at them in front of the class, I mean make them get up in front of the class, explain why they thought it was okay to use that word (without using the word in the explanation of course) and then send them to the office after they think they're not getting any real punishment, because I'm mean like that. But I really do think that making them stand in front of the class and explain themselves IN DETAIL (no cause it was funny answers here) might dissuade them from doing it again, if only to spare the embarrassment. Is this a bad idea? (Webtalk, March 11, 2009)

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[3] We preserve the original grammar of the web postings. The instructors told the students not to pay attention to the grammar but only on comprehensibility of their postings by their classmates and the instructors, focusing on the content of the messages rather than on their form. By this instruction, the instructors wanted to relax the students to create a safe learning environment focusing on exploration of ideas rather than on perfection of the form.

Although, it was we, the instructors, who initiated the discussion on foul language through a pre-planned mandatory mini-project and pre-planned class discussions, the students' engagement in the class and web discussions of the issues of foul language was *ontological* (Matusov, 2009; Sidorkin, 1999) in our judgment, as students initiated and supported many additional contributions when they were not required to do so. The nature of their contributions was emotional, consumed, intentional, and committed. We think it was due to their *ontological anxiety* (Matusov, 2009) around this issue. The students seemed to perceive the issue of use of foul language in school as realistic, potentially dangerous, and problematic for them. Students reported the common experience of students using foul language in their school experiences, and they view such use as potentially challenging the authority of the teacher. Indeed, in the class discussions, our students were concerned with what their students' parents, school administrators, and other children might think of them, if they, as teachers, openly ignored the use of foul language in their classroom (or even, in school in their presence in general). Not only were our students afraid of experiencing critique of their classroom management and complaints about them, they were also afraid of potential punitive administrative actions taken against them for their failure to stop foul language. Students projected potential adversarial relations of non-cooperation with their future students if they attempted to stop their use of foul language. All of that made our students anxious and seek help from their classmates and us, their instructors. Please notice that both postings ended with the students' questions.

The second web posting by Conrad struck us as being almost desperate. Conrad suggested the deliberate use of public humiliation with additional institutional punishment if the public humiliation alone did not "work" although, he seemed to have some doubts evident in his ending question that it might be an extreme measure. It reminded us of the use of scarlet letter in Colonial America (Hawthorne, 1850). We felt his strong statement and ambivalence reflected both his sense of accountability and disempowerment by school systems for his student's language use, his certainty that allowable punitive measures would be ineffective, and his discomfort in needing such a heavy handed approach with students.

In our judgment, the *interproblematicity* (Matusov, 2010, in press) of this theme discourse – i.e., what was considered to be problematic for the participants in the theme of the discourse, – were: 1) what course of action can be *the most effective* in preventing the students from use of foul language, and 2) a communal sense of what course of action was *appropriate* in this problematic situation and with certain ages of the future students (i.e., the issue of conventionality). The possible critical considerations of the foundations for these inquiries were taken outside of the brackets of the interproblematicity by the participants. For example, is suppression of foul language always good?, what makes language foul?, who decides that and how?, can foul language be good (good for what and whom and why) or is it always bad (bad for what and whom and why)?, is non-foul language always good?, what exactly makes language good or bad?, are societal conventions and normative attitudes are always good?, are they contradictory at some points?, are the societal conventions and norms at odds with common practices?, is suppression of foul language is educational, and so on? All these (and other questions) are almost taboo for students to ask of this theme. Please notice the social boundary against explicit language, what we term a language wall, which affirms this social taboo and forbids questions in the first posting, "It is *obviously* inappropriate…" (the italics is ours). The students thus reassured themselves in their pedagogical actions by relying upon social taboos, a pattern which was noticed among in some other postings by other students in this theme.

After Bakhtin (1991), we called this discourse of the theme#1 *authoritative discourse* (AD). Bakhtin defined the authoritative discourse as oppositional to the internally persuasive discourse, "the authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it

our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally" (p. 342). Bakhtin usually used examples of forceful impositions by institutions, authoritative texts, teachers, political power, church, and so on as examples of AD. Following these examples, many educators associated impositions with AD and AD with impositions (Matusov, 2007). For example, Ball (in Ball & Freedman, 2004)described a South African student in a teacher education program talking about her past as a school student being beaten by her father and teachers. Although it is true that violence can be a part of "authoritative discourse" when it is used for forcing a person to accept certain ideas, violence alone does not always and does not necessarily constitute authoritative discourse. We disagree with such interpretations of Bakhtin's notion (or if Bakhtin would agree with such version of his notion, with Bakhtin himself). Thus, our goal is not to figure out here what Bakhtin really meant by his literary concept and how well it is translated accurately into education, but rather what understanding can we derive that is important for education. We argue that AD can be defined by its language walls which block critical investigation into the basis of a statement or even inquiry about it. It can be done through imposition as described by Bakhtin, but also in voluntarily accepted traditions or, as it is done in this web post theme #1, as a voluntary commitment to block any critical analysis of what the students experienced as convention and norms. Nobody forbade our students, preservice teachers, to ask critical questions – they just collectively did not in this first theme – and, actually, tried to make it difficult for each other through rhetorical tools emphasizing the certainty of their assumptions. The absence of imposition does not necessarily preclude authoritative discourse[4].

One might argue that although it was narrow, the students in this discourse were still critical within their thematic framework. We agree that the discourse within theme#1 involves some testing of ideas. For example, Conrad wanted to test his idea of public embarrassment of his future students to see if this sounded appropriate to our class community (and beyond), "Is this a bad idea?" which he brought to our collective judgment. However, we argue that this testing of ideas was uncritical. We use the framework developed by Argyris and Schön (1978) in the field of organizational learning to claim that the discourse with theme#1 involves only Learning #1. Argyris and Schön define Learning#1 as the problem solving of how to return a system back to some pre-established norm (like in a thermostate) – the elimination of the gap between the real state and the known ideal state. Learning#2 is referred to critical examination and re-definition of the norms and values themselves. We argue that such critical examination and re-definition, associated with Learning#2, was absent in theme#1.

Internally persuasive discourse in a student role: Questioning the authoritative tradition of dealing with foul language (Theme#2)

Early on in the web discussion on foul language, the students started exploring the authoritative traditions of societal dealings with cursing and foul language. They did it "in

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[4] Similarly, we argue that imposition of ideas, statements, and situations per se does not yet imply evidence of AD. Elsewhere (Matusov, 2009), we discuss the phenomenon of *dialogic objectivization*, in which imposition becomes a part of internally persuasive discourse. For example, when parents bribe a young child to try to eat an unattractive smoked fish, which the child claims is something undesirable, this imposition through bribing a child with a chocolate candy is NOT a part of AD when parents use the bribe to encourage the child to test an idea that he or she really does not like the smoked fish. In my (the first author) personal experience, when I was 5-year old and was bribed by my parents to try a smoked fish that probably looked and smelled "fishy" for me at the time, I realized that I liked it even without chocolate candies. However, if I had not liked it after tasting it, my parents would probably not have insisted me to eat it more. In our view, this discourse involving imposition is still a part of IPD.

a student role", learning themselves about foul language, as in contrast to "in a teacher role," learning what and how to teach about foul language to their future students.

As we tracked back, initially, the students raised issues on the index cards[5] (IC) in the second class meeting on foul language. Below is professor Eugene's (the first author) reply on webtalk to these IC contributions in his new thread which he entitled, "From IC: Do you (Eugene) curse often?" followed by one of the students' replies:

> *Eugene* (the instructor) Dear folks, Mike asked me a question on his index card, "Do you (Eugene) curse often?"
>
> Linda made a very good point on her index card, "I believe that the amount that a person swears has a great deal to do with their home life and how they were raised."
>
> Indeed, it is interesting to know why Laura is not swearing [Laura reported that in our class discussion] and why she has an unconditional negative attitude to swearing. Is it coming from her upbringing or not? (Laura, feel free to reply or not to reply, depending on your comfort).
>
> Cathy noticed on her index card that people on the South in the US are more respectful to their teachers and others.
>
> As we know from research, religion, culture, social class, gender play roles in attitude and practice of swearing. I grew up in a Jewish (ethnically, not religiously) family in the Soviet Union with strong state Antisemitism. In my generation (but not in my parents), many Jews tried to behave differently from ethnic Russians by swearing and drinking much less than general population. So, I do not curse often, especially in Russian (I do it more in English), but having many Russian friends in past, I'm very tolerant to swearing of other people.
>
> What about you? How much your upbringing play role in your attitude to foil language?
>
> What do you think?
>
> Eugene
>
> PS According to sociolinguistics, ON AVERAGE, working class people swear more than middle class people. Males swear more than females (again, ON AVERAGE). (Webtalk, March 12, 2009)
>
> *Linda*: As I wrote on my card I really do believe that a persons use of foul language truely depends on how you were brought up. My parents never swore in my house and so I never did which is why still today swearing is not used in my house. While I will say every once in awhile I will swear, when that does happen I do pause to think why it is I used that word. My mom always says that when people swear it is because they are not intelligent enough to come up with another word to use. For this reason I think that we all should try and avoid foul language and try and to use words that express the actual feelings we mean to portray rather than the generalized connotations that come along with curse words or foul language. (Webtalk, March 12, 2009)

In this exchange, the participants explored developmental, sociological, and cultural aspects of the phenomenon of people's use of foul language rather than just to say that something is (conventionally inappropriate or appropriate). The convention itself was noticed to be different for different communities (e.g., the South of the US versus the

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[5] At the beginning of each class meeting, each student picked up an index card (IC) for what the professor (the first author) called, a "mind attendance roll," as opposed to conventional attendance rolls which only count to see if the students was physically present in their seats. On the one side of the card, each student wrote name and date and two things that he or she thought learned in the class, and on the other side, the student could write a question and feedback on the class (which was optional). The professor assured the students that these cards provide him with the idea on their attention in the class, which helped him and TA to review the lesson and develop better guidance.

North in the US, males vs. females, Jews in Russia vs. ethnical Russians in Russia, working class vs. middle class, intelligent vs. non-intelligent). The issue of the reasons for this difference emerged in this thematic discourse. Thus, Professor Eugene talked about Russian Jews' opposition to the host culture due to Russian Anti-Semitism reflected in their lesser use of foul language, while Linda repeated her mother's beliefs that the use of foul language reflects a lack of intelligence. These diverse explanations and discussions threads were not just juxtaposed with each other but actively informed and dialogued with each other. We suspected that Linda's statement about the lack of intelligence in people who curse, provoked disagreements in students who curse often but do not consider themselves having a lack of intelligence. For example, Karen directly replied to Linda,

> *Karen*: I agree with Linda that the amount a person swears has a lot to do with their home life and how they were raised. But i think it also is affected by your environment as you get older, and the people you are around. As a kid, my parents never swore around me, and it was not a huge issue at home. My friends from home also do not swear excessively, for whatever reason, and I try not to curse frequently at home because I have an 11 year old sister, who I do not think I should be speaking in that way in front of. However, when I came to school [the University – the authors], my friends here swear a lot more than my friends at home, so I found myself starting to talk more in that way. I still notice that when I am at home I curse less than I do at school, mostly because of who I am around. So I think that current environments can also have something do with how much people curse.

Karen's tacit counter-argument to Linda was that cursing has something to do with socialization in a community of choice rather than with intelligence. It is interesting that Karen started with agreement with Linda and then turn to her disagreement started with the marker "but" – as we discussed in the class how to provide supportive but constructive feedback to each other and future students. In the following webposting, Conrad expanded the topic of socialization and added in his newly initiated discussion thread that he titled, "You've heard the bad and the ugly...":

> *Conrad*: Now time for the good...
>
> All I've heard all week are all the bad things about cursing, but the majority of the class said it is appropriate or acceptable at some point in time.
>
> I think their are some good points to cursing. It helps you bond with your peers and cope with the day. Everyday when I show up for work and see Mark, the other fellow in my department, the first words out of my mouth are, "What's good, you fat f***?" To which he'll respond with something along the lines of, "Not s*** you pansy mother f***er!"
>
> Now, we work in a butcher shop, not a law firm, but we still can't curse around our bosses. I believe our ability to curse around each other allows us to build friendships faster than we do with managers, and helps us cope with unruly customers and the regular stresses of the day.
>
> So what are the situations other people think are appropriate, or when do you think it's helpful to curse? (Webtalk, March 13, 2009).

For the first time on the web (but not in class!), the students turned to explicit discussion of possible positive aspects of cursing and foul language – before that they made either negative or neutral judgment statements about it. TA Kathy turned a discussion on foul language around and instead of asking why people curse that implies the normality of non-use of foul language, she asked for the "purpose of not cursing" (the subject of her posting):

> *Kathy* (instructor): I wonder what people think the purpose of not cursing might be? Why do we feel that it should not be part of some settings? When there are strong lines of appropriate and not appropriate, does it serve some necessary purpose – i.e., excessive swearing leads to blindness, or it has deleterious brain effects. Or, is the line drawn simply because people have traditionally felt it should be so. And could that be enough of a purpose? (Webtalk, March, 16, 2009)

> *Mike*: I don't really know if there is a purpose of not cursing. I can't help but wonder if somebody just decided certain words were not appropriate to say. Regardless, we feel that it should not be part of certain settings because that is what we are taught and we accept that. In other words, a line is drawn because of a traditional view which has been passed down over the years. (Webtalk, March 19, 2009).

> *Randy*: I think Mike makes a really good point. I don't really understand why certain words are viewed as inappropriate, and some way more than others. I would guess that cursing is viewed so negatively because that is what the older generations were taught and this view keeps being passed down. I think that some foul language is inappropriate regardless of the time or place if it has to do with race or sexuality. Other foul language used to express feelings or opinions i think has been viewed so negatively because of tradition. These words don't necessarily hurt anyone so what is the big deal?? (Webtalk, March 19, 2009).

In his reply, Mike made very visible the conventionality of the non-cursing societal norm that might not have any rationality behind it but we still have to respect it as a tradition. This point allowed Randy to raise the issue of acceptance with this conventionality and challenge it. She seemed to reject Mike's demand for respecting tradition just because it is a tradition. Even more, she pointed out (and by that time it was already established by the other participants on the webtalk) that under certain circumstances cursing and foul language might have important positive effects. She did not deny its negative effects as well – when foul language is used for promoting negative stereotypes (we think she meant racism and sexism), but in her final question-exclamation, she seemed to call for, at least, revision of the conventional norms. It is interesting that from a certain point of view, Mike apparently argued for the value of authoritative discourse, respecting a societal tradition, while Randy promoted the value of internally persuasive discourse, demanding answerability from any societal conventional norm.

We argue that this theme of questioning the authoritative tradition of dealing with cursing is an internally persuasive discourse because it involves testing ideas and involves Learning#2, that of considering underlining assumptions, values, and goals. In the examples and fragments above, Karen implicitly tested Linda's idea that cursing is associated with a lack of intelligence by showing that cursing might rather relate to socialization in a community of one's choice (the point that was deepened by Conrad). Similarly, Randy challenged Mike's unconditional acceptance of tradition in demanding answerability to people (i.e., norms and traditions are for people and not people are for traditions and norms). In her response to Randy and Mike, Stacy brought up a point about the historical changes of what has been considered to be foul language and provided evidence undermining even further Mike's position, "This really takes me back to 4th grade when my teacher read us the book 'Frindle.' Frindle was another word these kids came up with for I think it was pen. It got to the point where socity accepted this word and put it in the dictionary. Is this what happens with curse words? Society just decides they are unacceptable?" (Webtalk, March 20, 2009). However, Kelly defended Mike's position by claiming that school has to be the agent of the current societal norm, whether the students and teachers agree or not, "When you enter a school, cursing is seen as inappropriate. Whether the teacher or students curse in their home environments is their own business. Cursing has traditionally been seen as negative and rude" (Webtalk, March 22, 2009). There was no final period in these debates – only temporary stops, as we expected the

students to continue discussing these important educational issues (and they did, as they reported to us at the end of the class – they kept discussing these issues with their friends, parents, and colleagues outside of the class).

We view these IPDs as coming from "a student role" because the students position themselves as students of the particular social science curriculum (i.e., about foul language here). Their perspective is as students who are learning about the nature of cursing and foul language and the societal norms about it. Despite the fact that they mentioned schools, teachers, and students in these discourses, we do not see them asking questions from a teacher educational perspective of, "What should I teach my future students about foul language, and how and why?" We do not criticize our students for engaging in IPDs in a student role rather than in a teacher role. Elsewhere (Matusov, 2009), we argue that good teaching requires from teachers to be constantly involved with their students in authentic "*epistemological learning*" – learning around the curricular subject matter in addition to "*pedagogical learning*" – learning around what and how to teach better (i.e., IPD in a teacher role). Deep pedagogical learning is impossible without teacher's constant engagement in epistemological learning (Matusov, 2009). In this case of foul language, it is possible for our students to consider what they should teach their future students about foul language (i.e., pedagogical learning) without engaging themselves in this (epistemological) learning.

Authoritative discourse in a teacher role: What should education about foul language involve? (Theme#3)

The Professor and the TA introduced the theme in class and again on webtalk of what education about cursing should involve. However, initially, their webpostings were ignored in the sense that the students did not reply to them. Although, as it was evident from the unfolding web discussion, the issues raised by the instructors resonated with the students, and they probably did not know how to address them until Theme#2 fully emerged and guided them through the various stances towards foul language that were raised. The following is one of the first webpostings by the Professor in the Theme#3 that he provokingly titled, "From IC: How to shut up kids' cursing in the classroom?":

> *Eugene* (the Professor): Dear folks–
>
> > Of course, nobody asked on his or her index card how to "shut up" cursing kids but some of you expressed your desire not have cursing kids in your classrooms. Although it is understandable to not have this "nuisance," especially if you do not see any positive value in cursing and worry about what negative things school administration and parents might say about you as a teacher, I think we should carefully examine our desire as teachers.
> >
> > It can be OK for a policeman or a police woman to desire having citizens who never break the law and rules, but it can be a bit problematic if a doctor wants to see only healthy patients (why are they in a hospital?!) or if a teacher wants to have only students who produce correct answers (why are they in school?!). Of course, it is not a case that a doctor should be happy when people are sick or that a teacher should be happy when mistakes and ignorance happen, but the [doctor and] teacher has to feel interested in curing and teaching rather than to desire and to hope that neither curing nor teaching is needed.
> >
> > That is why I think we should be careful in saying, "not in my classroom!" "I wish my students never curse!" "How to make them never curse?"
> >
> > I think we, teachers, should ask ourselves, "What should I teach kids about cursing? How I should teach them about that [what's that?!]?" Usually, cursing is not such an emergency that we should automatically prioritize action versus education (like in case of a kid bleeding). We should focus on education, on "why?" questions, rather than on

enforcing rules (which is a role of police). Yes, teachers can and should do policing but it should be never the primary role of a teacher. Policing should be for education, not instead of education.

I think we should teach kids not that 2+2 is 4 as a rule but why 4 is better answer here than 3 or any other answer. The same [is] about cursing. If you think that cursing is not good (in general or in a particular moment and place), better to prepare a lesson on that to answer why you think that way. This is, my view, real education.

For example, Melanie wrote, "I believe that cursing is schools/aftershool programs is wrong. It is not the time and the place for it." If you agree with Melanie, can you provide a convincing argument for:

1) Why schools and afterschool programs that the kids spend huge chunks of their lives are not appropriate places for cursing?

2) What are appropriate time and place for kids' cursing? Why are they appropriate and how they are different from school/afterschool programs?

What do you think?

Eugene (Webtalk, March 12, 2009)

This webposting remained without a reply. However, when the Professor asked about their course of action with potentially cursing children at the Centers at their class practicum, the students initiated their own discussion about their roles and their boundaries with the children at the Centers. The instructor started the thread entitled, "How would you response to cursing kids at the Center?" with the following posting following the in-class skit addressing the problem of cursing, "Dear folks, you saw yesterday how Alexis replied to the cursing 'kids'. I particular like that she got at the kids' level rather than talked with them from above and that she legitimized their anger and frustration and focused on how else they could express it. What might your response to cursing Center kids be? Can you justify it? What do you think? Eugene" (Webtalk, March 13, 2009). A student replied,

> *Conrad*: If I was confronted with the problem a child cursing in the center, I'm not sure how I'd handle it. I think that their are two roles you play at the center, one being "The Friend" and the other "The Instructor", and that I would have to make the choice as to which role to assume. As the friend I might just laugh about it, maybe say something like, "Don't let the staff hear you say that." As the instructor I would probably handle the situation more like Alexis did [i.e., the enacted simulation of the cursing problem in our class – the authors]. At the present time I'm more inclined to think I would play the "friend" role. (Webtalk, March 13, 2009)

> *Kristin*: I agree [with Conrad's pervious webposting], that our role at the centers should be more of "the friend" role. They have the supervisors and instructors there that they look at in "the instructor" role, and I think it should be that way. However, if I were to hear kids cursing at the center, I would tell them that it is not appropriate there, and as Alexis did with the "kids" on Thursday, just get on their level, figure out what is bothering them, and help them deal with whats wrong in another way. (Webtalk, March 13, 2009).

There are several important points that the students made here. First, Conrad admitted (and many students followed this) that the situation is problematic for him, as an educator. Second, he noticed several potential conflicting roles for himself at the Centers in an afterschool program with children: as "a friend" who is concerned with the solidarity with kids ("laughing with") and safety of kids ("Don't let the staff hear…") and as "an instructor" for kids (or, probably, better to say, "a policeman"?) who like Alexis in our class tried to eliminate cursing. Third, he prioritized being "a friend" at the Center (he did not explain why). Fourth, Kristin elaborated the role of "an instructor" as what she was

going "to tell" them and how help the cursing children with a problem at hand and, thus, to eliminate conditions for cursing.

In the Theme#3, the students' approaches to teaching about cursing oscillated between what specifically "to tell" the cursing children why they should not use foul language (in this particular setting or in general) and not knowing what "to tell" kids. Thus, Candy wrote in her webposting to the thread entitled "Why cursing is bad?" started by Professor Eugene, "Dear Lauren, you wrote, 'For the few troublemakers in the class who like to get attention [by using foul language], it would obviously take more to get them to understand why they shouldn't curse.' How would you explain to a cursing kid why he or she should not curse? What would you say? But try to push yourself in your guidance and not stop at 'because it's inappropriate' – why not [to curse]? What do you think? Eugene" (Webtalk, March 16, 2009),

> *Candy*: I think it would take alot to push us to something other than 'it's inappropriate'. All the recent classes we've had have taught us how to respond to such issues. I think I would address the issue with the student about how cursing is not okay in the classroom. Using those words can be hurtful to other people and have a negative connotation. I would explain that it be acceptable in other places, but I as the teacher will not tolerate cursing. I would also address the classroom as a whole and let them know that cursing is something that offends and hurts people because of what is being said. The definition of the word is hurtful to who you are directing the curse word to. I would explain that if you feel the need to curse, then you should find some other way to express your anger or how you are feeling because cursing will not be tolerated in the classroom. (Webtalk, March 25, 2009).

Please notice that Candy used ideas from Theme#2 to develop her teaching message for potentially cursing children at the Centers.

However, some other students' still remained confused in not only what "to tell" cursing children but what kind of language regime to establish with the children at the Centers and in their future classrooms. Alice redefined the title of another discussion thread, started by Eugene, with her own telling subject, "confused!",

> *Alice*: I really like the analogy of a knife to a surgeon and a knife to a criminal compared to foul language [presented by Professor Eugene in his other Webtalk posting].
>
> I agree it presents a hard problem for teachers because while codeswitching[6] may be their personal view on FL [foul language], others may be extremely offended by this. It is very hard to please everyone, but i do not think anyone should feel uncomfortable in a classroom. After thinking deep into this topic, i am really confused on what approach i would take as a teacher. I do not think people who curse should be silenced completely, but I also understand why it is offensive. (Webtalk, March 19, 2009).

We consider the Theme#3 discourse as authoritative discourse because despite the instructors' attempts, the students did not go beyond Learning#1 (i.e., of what to tell the cursing children and the opposition between them as "a friend" and as "a teacher"). They did not consider the foundation of their own assumptions about education might be not about transmission of the societal idealized norms to their future students but rather investigation, testing, and examination of ideas and their foundations (as they themselves did in Theme#2). They did not ask why they prefer to be "friends" with the children at the Centers and why these two roles are so oppositional for them and if they could be otherwise. They were eager to solve the problem of cursing *for* the children rather than *with* them. In our judgment, we failed to guide the students in this direction by revealing and problematizing their assumptions and hidden values, probably, because we did not

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[6] The concept of codeswitching as one of possible curricula for education on foul language was presented by the instructor in the class.

recognize this urgency at the time of the class – only current analysis revealed this failure for us.

Was this overall 3-theme discourse IPD? What is IPD?

In our view, our presented analysis may provide something of a wrong impression and misrepresentation of the overall discourse as consisting of the three simultaneously paral-lell, juxtaposed, autonomous, and self-contained themes. In reality all three themes were intertwined and dialogically connected in the following ways:

1.   Many postings included several themes at once (for example, from our point of view, Krisitn's posting above fits Theme#1, focusing on how to shut up cursing children, and Theme#3, focusing on educating about cursing and role of the teacher);

2.   Some themes were in a dialogic response to another theme (especially, Themes#2 and #3 were in dialogic opposition to the Theme#1);

3.   Some theme referred to another theme (especially, Theme#3 referred to Theme#2 and sometimes Theme#1, see, for example, the beginning of Conrad's posting about him being cursing at his workplace);

4.   When the students were not ready to respond to an issue presented by the instructors on the Webtalk (and in class), they completely ignore it, leaving silence in the class or a hanging message on the Webtalk (or they replied to a peripheral issue or redefined the topic) (e.g., when Eugene pushed and educational aspects of the foul language initially);

5.   We doubt that before this discussion, the students would go through an examination of the basis for values about foul language on their own (e.g., "Through this class, I was forced to take a look at life through someone else's eyes. I felt like every class I would think to myself "wow, I never thought about it like that before!" It has, without a doubt, opened my eyes to many issues and concerns that I had never given much thought to before. With this new knowledge, I will hopefully be more understanding of others who are different than myself. After doing my final project on total immersion in schools, I am very interested in this. I will continue to research this further and now will probably ask future schools that I work in about their policies and may even have suggestions for how to make it better" Last week's mini-project, Kim, May 28, 2009);

6. Creation of a public arena for exploration which was supported by the instructors (e.g., "I learned more about myself. As i explored these issues i formulated ideas about how i would teach my class. these are things that no class has brought up until 2597, and i doubt they ever will bring up. the way the class was structured, with the discussions and voting, allowed everyone to voice their point of view. i learned how others view issues too. i thought that the way of voting was a great way for people to get their opinion out without being put on the spot. as someone who doesnt usually like to talk aloud in class, i felt very comfortable. aside from the things we talked about in class, i learnd that its not too scarey to participate in class" Last mini-project, Alice, May 19, 2009.);

7.   Two thirds of our students reported to us that they discussed this issue of the foul language with people outside of the class (e.g., "Originally I was made to take this class because it was a requirement for my major but Im very glad that is ver a requirement because honestly this was my favorite class this semester. It allowed to to see all the diversity that I will have in my classroom and the different teachings and approaches I may use as a future teacher. I don't think there is really much improvement needed for this course but I do feel that time management in the classroom would be better just because we are always in the middle of something when class ends and can't continue because the lack of time. I know that I have learned a lot because I often discuss with friends and families the issues and topics that were brought up in class" Webtalk, Ally, May 19, 2009; Some students defined evidence of learning in the class by their discus-

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[7] The course number.

sions of class topics outside of the class, "I know that I have learned from this class because now in my everyday life, I refer to this class. I talk about it with friends, family, etc. I have a positive outlook on diversity in the classroom, and I really feel like I am able to handle these situations if they were to arise. The evidence for me is simply that I am able to talk about these topics outside of this course in an effective way that shows me that I really understand it" Last week's mini-project, Lisa, May 19, 2009. Although, one student reported at the end of the class that this discussion was too long, "I think that while some topics could be discussed over two days, I think other discussions, such as cursing, went on too long for my liking and got boring by the end of it" Webtalk, Cory, May 18, 2009);

8. Integration with other issues discussed in the class (e.g., in the following posting a student connects our past discussion of educational consequences of taking required classes and the issue of foul language, "Thats an interesting idea to have swearing and non swearing classrooms. I agree with you that kids tend to swear because they are not supposed to. It is kind of like when we talked about required classes in the beginning of the year. People usually don't want to have to take the required classes simply because they are told they have to take them. I wonder if students would go into the swearing classroom because of the peer pressure to swear because it is 'cool'," Webtalk, Chandra, April 21, 2009);

9. The students' taking diverse positions in the discussion of the foul language. In the discussion, the students engaged in a great variety of positions including: a position of a class policeman/policewoman, a classroom policymaker, a position of a cursing child in their own family, a position of a cursing person among peers, a position of a cursing person at a workplace, a position of dealing with a cursing sibling, a position of an investigator of the origin and nature of a societal tradition suppressing cursing, a position of an educator considering what to teach his or her students about foul language, a position of an older friend of cursing children, and so on. Multi-positioning allowed students to explore the issues from different angles and social contexts and, thus, to generate alternatives and test ideas (e.g., see Karen's posting above). Multi-positioning also apparently facilitates the participants' noticing diverse values and emergence of Type 2 Learning (Argyris & Schön, 1978) (see, for example, Conrad's posting on cursing at his work discussed above);

10. Recursive future-oriented nature of the learning in the discussion, (e.g., "I have learned that collectively I have learned a lot in this class and will be timely next semester" Last week's mini-project, Ann, May 22, 2009. "I have learned so much in our 259 class, not only about diversity in education, but also about myself as a future teacher. I really liked how so much of our discussion in the classroom was based upon everyone's opinions of how they are going to teach, how they want to teach or how they were taught growing up. I have learned a lot about how different children learn, what can affect the way in which a child learns and what effects that this can have on students. I think that at the beginning of the semester i said that i was taking this class because it was a requirement but i think that after taking the class i have changed attitudes. I think that this class has been very helpful for me and i would take it over even if it was not required for me to do so. This class got everyone discussing many different issues faced by teachers today as a result of cultural diversity. I also think that the practicum that we did at the centers was very helpful. I really enjoyed being able to go and work with all of these students and it was very exciting to go there and see how happy the kids were to see us. It really made me excited to begin student teaching, i can't wait to be up in front of a classroom for real. This class has made me want to teach even more than i thought i did when i entered the major. Learning about all of the ways teachers can have positive effects on their students makes me eager to get out there and help out more students." Last week's mini-project, Kory, May 22, 2009)

We treat the entire, overall, 3-theme discourse as an imperfect internally persuasive discourse. Although, in our judgment, the Theme#1 of how the teacher can silence cursing students was an authoritative discourse, it helped to reveal the students' assumptions, values, and concerns to themselves and the other participants. In our view, in the contexts of the two other themes, it helped the students consider what kind of teachers they want to be and become in-control of their worries, rather than to be slaves of them. Although, the Theme#1 was not IPD internally in its own context as self-contained theme, externally – in the context of the overall 3-theme discourse on foul language – it was IPD. It jump-started the IPD for Theme#2. Similarly, we hope that the Theme#3 can become also IPD externally in the context of our entire class and in the context of the students' entire teacher education. We hope it can jump-start a new IPD about what education is in general about (we had this discussion at the end of the class). Because of these missed and unrealized (yet or never) potentials is why we call the overall 3-theme discourse imperfect IPD, as probably any other concrete IPD discourse. However, we have realized that this "missed and unrealized" potential of this discourse is part of any dialogue, in that dialogues are messy, any "concrete IPD discourse" will be filled with utterances that are, as stand-alone utterances, seemingly only authoritative. However, they are also uttered in response to other utterances in a continual and continuous dialogue.

Conrad's becoming authorship in a professional discourse

A reader might ask, "So what reveals the quality of the classroom and web discourse as good? Good for whom and how?" Our own definition of good learning focuses on the kind of accountability our students take in their role as teachers. We want to know not only, "What did the students learn from the course?" but "How has it affected their teaching practice, if at all?" We think that these are very legitimate questions that focus us on our accountability as teachers of our students. In our view, we must justify why what we did was good for our students' learning – in this case, to become good teachers of diverse populations of kids.

Traditionally, learning is viewed as something – usually mastery of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions, – that is taken from the classroom by the students and successfully applied by them in their future activities and practices (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999). In our particular case, this model would examine what important knowledge, skills, attitude, and/or dispositions about issues of foul language in education our students learned or did not learn during the course, and whether the students could take them from the classroom discourse and successfully apply them in their future teaching practices – the process that is often referred to as internalization or appropriation and applied by them in their own teaching practices (Matusov, 1998; Rogoff, 1995). According to this internalization model, when learning is successful then a professional learning discourse on teaching prepares the preservice teachers to teach in their future classrooms. The transfer and internalization models of learning focus on a practice that exists in the future. We propose a different model of learning.

We argue that a professional discourse on teaching itself *is a part of a teaching action*. The teaching action gains its meaning and is shaped, guided, and tested by the professional pedagogical discourse, while the professional pedagogical discourse gains its meaning and is shaped, guided, and tested through the teaching action. The professional discourse is a form of the teaching action and the teaching action is a form of the professional discourse (see a discussion of the relationship of the discourse and the action in Bakhtin, 1986; Freire, 1986; Matusov, 2009). The professional pedagogical discourse defines teaching goals, justifications, pedagogical values, approaches, problems, solutions, and evaluations of the teaching action; while the teaching action implements, tests, problematizes, supports, and provokes the professional pedagogical discourse.

In our view, one of the major problems with a modern teaching practice is that the professional pedagogical discourse remains semi-public and is not institutionalized. Unlike the practice of medical doctors and lawyers, for example, teachers do not have to publish nor read about their teaching practices on a systematic basis in their professional journals – that professional teaching discourses arguably do not exist in the same sense as professional discourses exist in other professions (Hargreaves, 1997). We hypothesize that this is because we, teachers, have not managed to develop a good inscription of our practice that can be publicized to provoke meaningful professional public discourse on teaching. Indeed, when teachers describe a problem they face in their classroom as "an acting out student," or "a lazy student," or "a student hungry for attention," or "a slower learner student", and so on, it is difficult for their colleagues to visualize what really happened and how the teacher's actions, design, instruction, curriculum, relations and students' perception contributed to the tension experienced by the teacher. The teacher's public professional discourse is often about making his or her students objects of the teacher's pedagogical actions, objects that have to be "fixed" (Matusov & Smith, 2007). We wonder if, with the development of Internet technology, teachers would be able to discuss video recorded teaching moments on the web, and in doing so, a public professional discourse can emerge. Essentially public discourse among practitioners, published or not, is consistent with establishing professions as answerable, and self-reflective.

According to our proposed discourse-action model, we wanted our students to learn to participate in a professional pedagogical discourse that *IS* a part of actual teaching practice *and not* a preparation for it. Specifically, we wanted our students to author their views on the issues of foul language in a professional pedagogical discourse which has been run as an internally persuasive discourse. Below we provide an analysis of the authorship of our student Conrad and its transformation in the web discourse on educational issues of foul language. We selected this particular student for analysis of his authorship because his perspective on foul language remained relatively unchanged in the web discourse while, as our analysis shows, his authorship changed from the *assigned opinionship* to his *ontological authorship* in IPD.

Conrad's assigned opionionship

In his miniproject for week 5 of the course (before any class or web discussions), Conrad provided a rather complex opinion about his attitude toward foul language in response to the instructors pre-planned questions. According to Conrad, foul language serves a social lubricant to provide solidarity, including oppositional solidarity, and helps better articulate one's own situational feelings and views (below Conrad replied on the instructor's questions in his weekly miniproject):

1. *What is cursing and foul language, from your point of view? Why does it exist? Do you think it is universal in all cultures?*

   In my point of view cursing is saying words that society deems obscene. It exists so guys have words to use to help them tell stories to other guys. It is also there for people to be able to explain their extreme distaste for situations, things, or other people. It absolutely exists in every culture, because everyone needs to yell sometime.

2. *Please list all possible functions of cursing and foul language and group them to "positive" (i.e., prosocial), "neutral", and "negative" (i.e., anti-social)?*

   See above for uses
   Positive: Cursing let's you bond and show mutual dislike for somthing.
   Neutral: It let's you just express yourself about situations.
   Negative: It gets you in trouble in school.

> … I love foul language, and believe it let's me add that extra something to a good story.

It is unclear how much foul language is gendered and used more by males, according to Conrad (i.e., if his use of the word "guys" refers only to males or also to females). Conrad also provided limited justification for his views,

4. *Why do you think people swear and use foul language? What is the need behind it? Why do so many of us, children included, swear, and what is YOUR response as a teacher to your students' swearing, and why do you respond in that way?*

   Swearing is just the easiest way to express yourself. Kids like to do it becasue they're not allowed to, and adults do it becasue they've been doing it since they were kids. If a kid cusses in my classroom I will respond to it as dictated in the schools handbook.

7. *What educational and other issues with cursing and foul language do you see, if any, and why?*

   The problem with cursing in the classroom is that it disrupts the flow of knowledge because when a kid cusses everyone laughs and then the kid has to get sent out. If cursing was fine in school, or there were no such thing as "curse words" then school would never be disrupted by words.

We characterized Conrad's justifications as limited because in our judgment, he did not try to investigate the basis of his judgments. For example, Conrad did not seem to see any inherent problems for individual's use of foul language – he saw only institutional problems with it, "It gets you in trouble in school." However, he seemed eager to become an unconditional conduit of the institutional policing of the students' language. Thus, we claim that there is no Learning#2 (Argyris & Schön, 1978) about the basis of the one's values and assumptions as described above. Also, Conrad did not find anything problematics in his own opinions. He did not try to test his own or anyone else's ideas.

Although his writing was substantive and informative, Conrad's' authorship in this assignment was limited to responding to the instructor's questions (see in italics above) – we did not find evidence of his exceeding or expanding his reply. It is clear to us that he chose not to read the readings assigned by the instructor as is evident in his following response (Conrad completely skipped the question about another assigned reading – they only assignment question that he apparently ignored),

8. *Please read Article#1. Neill's [(Neill, 1960)] article deals with this issue. He was the headmaster of a boarding school in the UK famous for its children-run, "free" philosophy of education. Please describe the Neill's position about cursing and foul language. What are the author's justifications for this position? Do you agree or disagree with this position? Why? If swearing is another of society's taboos, what is our role as educators in guiding students? Should we condemn swearing at all costs? Neill suggests that this is an "anti-life" policy and against common sense. What do you think of his approach of dealing with swearing?*

   As educators we need to teach students that society has placed a taboo on curse words and that there are places where you can use it and places where you shouldn't. I don't believe we should condemn cursing at all, I think it's a healthy way to express frustration or anger.

The assigned readings could both support Conrad's opinion about foul language and challenge it but it was clear for us that Conrad decided not to read them, probably, he was not interested in the issue at that time of the assignment enough to invest his time and efforts. Or, it might be that he simply be used to readings in school being irrelevant or

unrelated to any ontological interest (although he read the assigned literature for some other weekly miniprojects before and after this one).

We characterized Conrad's authorship as *assigned opinionship* because although his contribution was informative, creative, and authentic – in a sense that reflected his dear ideas and beliefs, – it was limited to the assigned questions. Conrad did not seem to have *his own* interest and investment in the topic beyond answering to the questions asked by the instructor. He did not try to investigate the basis of his opinion, test his ideas, problematize them, examine possible positive and negative consequences for his dear ideas, consider his own responsibility as an emerging teacher, contextualize his ideas, find their limits, and learn what other people think about the issue (i.e., his classmates, the instructor, other educators presented in the assigned readings). One might argue that this assigned opinionship was determined by the genre of the instructor's assignment itself involving the instructor asking students questions in the context of a graded class (although the assignments were not graded, the students were given the final grade based on class participation and their final project). A student might be forced to or choose to please the instructor. However, we have evidence that some other students in this assignment and Conrad in other assignments deviated from the assigned opinionship form of authorship. Thus, although the genre and pedagogical regime (see, Matusov, 2009) of the class might contribute to Conrad's assigned opinionship, it did not seem to determine it.

On the other hand, we argue the assigned opinionship had important educational value because it provoked the student to develop his opinion on the issue of foul language in school and in general and reveals his values for himself and other people. In our view, this is the beginning of any learning. Conrad also valued the assignment and his contribution as he reported (in the last assignment question about its usefulness) that the assignment "may prove useful, as I have begun to think how I will handle certain classroom situations." In comparison with his evaluations of the other weekly miniprojects, Conrad did not automatically regard all weekly miniprojects positively as this one.

Conrad's IPD authorship

Conrad was authentically interested, proactive, and ontologically engaged (Matusov, 2009) in participation in the class web discussion on the issues of foul language in education. Conrad chose to contribute 5 webpostings to the classroom forum discussion on foul language (i.e., more postings than on average the other students did). In contrast to his earlier mini-project, all five postings communicated some degree of his uncertainty about his ideas and positions either in a form of a direct question asking the class community what they think about his ideas (e.g., "Is this a bad idea?", see his full posting on March 11, 2009 above) or indirectly by using conditional words "would" and low modality words like "probably" (e.g., "As the instructor I would probably handle the situation more like Alexis did," March 13, 2009). Conrad ended four out of five postings with questions to the classroom participants (including the instructor) which reflect his problematicity and addressivity – his genuinely seeking for information from others. All of his postings, even the one new discussion thread that he initiated, explicitly referred to the positions of other participants (see, for example, his postings on March 11 and 13 cited above). We do not know if he read all webpostings on the class forum but his own postings indicated that he read and was interested in at least in some. In contrast to his mini-project on foul language, all but his first webposting on March 11, are contextual and case-based (e.g., "In my classes in high school we had a couple incidents like this where me or one of my friends would 'forget' we were in the classroom and let something slip. We were on good terms with our teachers and they knew when we were trying to disrupt and when we had made an honest mistake, and they punished us accordingly," March 19, 2009).

Did Conrad participate in testing ideas on the web forum with regard to the issues of foul language in education? We think so. It was especially evident in his challenges to the positions of others (and his own), as he noticed a discrepancy (if not hypocrisy) between the near-universal engagement of the class participants in foul language and their rejection it for their future students, "Now time for the good... All I've heard all week are all the bad things about cursing [in the context of schooling and in general], but the majority of the class said it is appropriate or acceptable at some point in time," (March 13, 2009). Although he did not raise an issue in his posting of how this discrepancy should affect education, in the context of overall web discussion such an issue probably implicitly emerged (see below discussion of Conrad's change of his approach to foul language in his own future classroom from unconditional to conditional). He also asked the teaching assistant to elaborate on her example of a personal case she provided, in which she claimed that her son's cursing at her was respectful and supportive. In addition, Conrad was involved in testing his own ideas, – for example, he asked the classroom community if his suggestion of using public humiliation on a cursing student was not a bad idea. Finally, other students were engaged in testing Conrad's ideas, – for example, they did not support his idea of public humiliation as a teacher's strategy (and even tacitly criticized it) while many students supported and expanded his idea of their double role as the Centers as "friends" and "teachers" and complexity associated with it. In general, we argue that Conrad's testing ideas, – justification of ideas, challenging ideas, finding their limitations, revealing and analysis of their foundations and underlining values, and so on – was dialogic by its genre (Matusov, 2009). This means that his testing was between postings (his own and other participants) rather than within his own postings (as in a monologic genre of IPD, see Matusov, 2009, for discussion of differences in monologic and dialogic genres of a discourse). We see a big limitation of Conrad's IPD on foul language (as for the rest of the students) in that he did not consider (at least on the class web) what he would plan to teach his future students about foul language as he was more interested in exploring foul language himself and his policing role (both in punishing and protecting students via school rules) as a future teacher, although we acknowledge that both of these issues are important for teachers. Hopefully, he can do it later in his teacher education.

Has Conrad become a better teacher?

Since we treat a discourse on teaching as a part of teaching practice rather than just preparation for it, the issue of Conrad's transformation of his participation in the discourse is important one. We have noticed three changes in his participation: two changes in his initial positions and one big (meta) change in the way he considered the issue itself. First, in his last webposting (Webtalk, March 19, 2009, see below) he apparently abandoned his proposal to use public humiliation on his future students when they would use foul language as he expressed this proposal in his first webposting on the class forum (Webtalk, March 11, 2009, see above). Second, he moved from unconditionally following the zero foul language tolerance of many school codes of student conduct to a nuanced and conditional proposal:

> Even though the code of conduct says no amount of swearing would be tolerated, if it were MY classroom, I wouldn't let it go any further than a verbal reprimand from me.
>
> Keep in mind I am assuming that his child doesn't go around cursing all day for effect.
>
> I understand that accidents happen and that I am not perfect, and that sometimes you just say something before you realize you are doing this. In my classes in high school we had a couple incidents like this where me or one of my friends would "forget" we were in the classroom and let something slip. We were on good terms with our teachers and they knew when we were trying to disrupt and when we had made an honest mistake, and they punished us accordingly.

> I think a STRONG verbal reprimand (Fuck does have a higher value on the words you really shouldn't say in class list) would be sufficient, but any further use of FL would result in parental and administrative involvement.
>
> What grade were the kids? (Webtalk, March 19, 2009 [Conrad replied to a specific case brought by a teaching assistant])

It is interesting that Conrad seemed to self-quote about "the code of conduct" that he had initially referred in his weekly mini-project about foul language, "If a kid cusses in my classroom I will respond to it as dictated in the schools handbook" (Mini-project#5, March, 9, 2009, see above) but now he was implicitly critical of it. Now he proposed 1) no harsh punishment and 2) reprimand conditional of the intentions and severity of students' usage foul language in the classroom. Arguably, the two main changes in Conrad's position was a result of his participation in the web IPD on foul language. We judge these changes in Conrad's position on teacher's policing students' conduct as beneficial because they seemed to be informed by concerns about students' overall well-being and his consideration of societal practices and attitudes toward foul language.

However, an even more interesting (meta) transformation occurred in how Conrad changed his consideration of this educational issue. We argue that he was socialized in a professional teaching IPD as the main medium of searching for a teaching solution, rather than remaining exclusively in his own opinionship rooted in societal traditions and institutional policies. Rather than just ask him or herself what to do, or what the society expects, or what the institutional rules say in a face of educational tension, issue, dilemma, or conflict, the teacher can and, probably, must bring the issue at hand to colleague educators – both current ones through web or face-to-face discussions , and past ones through reading professional literature (e.g., Neill, 1960) – for finding diverse alternatives and testing ideas. Of course, Conrad seemed to be only at the beginning of this road in this web discussion on foul language, – for example, he did not seek what professional literature said, but hq admitted discussing this issue with people outside of the class. In our view, metaphorically speaking, in education the journey is more important than destination: the fact that Conrad got engaged in the professional public IPD on teaching is educationally more important than particular (temporary) perspectives that he might have gained (or have transferred to him) by the end of the class.

Conclusion: New vision of education

In this paper, we propose a shift of the focus for educators from instilling the correct knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions into, conceived of as internal to the students; to organizing and supporting internally persuasive discourse on the subject matter, promoting the emergence and development of the students' voices in this discourse and their informed authorship of answerable replies to others. We argue that education fails when there is no internally persuasive discourse in the classroom, and/or when the students do not have their own voice in the discourse (or it is not supported), and when their authorship is not informed by voices of others in the internally persuasive discourse where the student has to reply and address to voices of relevant others (both present in the classroom or not). Although we have defined here internally persuasive discourse as testing ideas, students' ontological and interested engagement, justification, responsibility, and so on, we think that defining IPD is also a part of IPD and is a communal concept that may also vary depending on the practice of application and the purpose of its defining. We view "internal" in the internally persuasive discourse as internal to a broad societal dialogue rather than to the individual or the practice alone. We view teacher classroom discourse not as a preparation for their future practice in education (e.g., math, social studies, teaching for preservice teachers) but as a part of the practice itself.

We are aware that the presented case of the classroom IPD on the issues of foul language in education is far from being a model/ideal. For example, we know that two students did not participate in the discussion at all, and some students participated lightly. Of course, during the semester the students experienced and discussed many issues and hopefully all of them had opportunities to be actively involved in IPD where some of them and developed their voices and informed authorship similar to Conrad, but it has to be tested in future research. Similarly, we found that our success in promoting IPD on the issues of foul language for education was limited because, in our judgment, we did not succeed in engaging our students in IPD on what and how to teach their future students about foul language. We think and have presented evidence here that we managed to engage students in IPD on foul language but not as much on what and how to teach it in their future classes. Similarly, we succeeded in helping Conrad move from his assigned opinionship to IPD authorship informed by his classmates, instructors, and friends but we failed to promote interest in him to become hungry for reading educational literature on the professional topic of his interest. All this raises an issue of how a pedagogical practice focused on IPD can inform itself about and reflect upon its successes and failures, outside of the context of educational research.

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