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13. Philosophy of Education (Standard submissions & Long Papers)

Long Paper

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When it doesn't read

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Proposal and theoretical framework

The work here presented aims to investigate the question of links being built up between primary school teacher and their pupils. We particularly study this link when something is going wrong in the class, when didactic contract is broken off (Brousseau 1998).

Our analysis takes place in French primary school and focuses on Sally school history. Sally is a young girl who seems not to be able to read, although she is in CE2 (third year of French primary school) and has no other learning problem. Sally understand well what is happening in class. She is a happy girl, with lot of friends, who perfectly socializes and has no illness known. She just doesn't read, and, by the way, is an enigma to all her teachers. Three years long, she has been the major point of discussion of the pedagogical team. Many methods have been tried since she entered CP (the first year of French primary school).

In this case, usual ways of didactic especially didactic based on knowledge and not on the subject, are showing their limits. That is why we therefore aim to understand Sally's enigma by using a didactic approach with a psychoanalytic orientation. We want to study the links in the class community and especially how Irène links with Sally. So there the psychoanalytically approach in sciences of education offers news perspectives in philosophy of education, by researching differently and also training teachers in a new way.

We thus propose a case construction: Irène, who is Sally's CE2 teacher. Analysing her discourse, we aim to lighten up links existing between this teacher and this pupil. Moreover, we study unconscious process crossing class-time, and focus on dynamics they create. Hearing to Irène, we try to understand in what kind of network of tensions subjects are stuck.

We want to study this enigma under the framework of "didactique clinique" (Terrisse & Carnus, 2009; Carnus & Terrisse, 2013).

This framework aims to import psychoanalysis concepts to didactical approach, in order to better understand didactical situation. Point is to consider class as a psychic space (Blanchard-Laville & Geffard 2001), and to study subjects' symbolic position in such a situation, keeping in mind the thread of knowledge. This theory uses the hypothesis of Freudian unconscious to understand teaching and learning phenomenas. Subject's pupils or teachers are considered singular: they are uniques, split subjects: divided by their unconscious and the lack of being, and liable: by the institutions.

In fact, considering this case, we want to use the discourse of the Master (Lacan, 1970) and the id. (Freud, 1920) to propose a comprehension of what is happening in Irène's professional difficulty. We are especially interested in understanding why Irène is focusing on the quietness of pupils' bodies instead of worrying about Sally's lack of reading competences. The *object petit a* or excess of jouissance (Lacan, 1970) given by the teaching situation may help us to understand the passion for quietness and pupils' immobilism in Irène's way of teaching.

The use of these psychoanalytic concepts in sciences of education offers a new way of thinking, researching and training and this could be a way to reconnect the class community by inviting us to question the process of linking and «unlinking».

Methodology

This article is the result of a collective reflection that was rooted in of one of the members of the group professional issue. It is necessary here to specify the historicity of the approach and the way in which it was formed into a scientific approach.

One member of this group of educational sciences researchers is also a schoolteacher. She welcomed Sally into her class in CE1, after having regularly attended her during their year of CP as part of the educational activities of the school cycle. For two years, Sally's difficulties has been the subject of various team discussions, with production of notes and written monographic-type summary documents.

The observation of the ineffectiveness of the devices put in place during these two years with Sally led her to bring this case within her university research group. We have been looking for other avenues of reflection around these difficulties than those of the didactic order which "takes responsibility for content"¹ (Martinand, 2014), which had already been envisaged, to better return to didactic solutions once informed by the understanding of the subjective stakes. A first corpus consisting of professional notes, student documents and assessment documents was therefore provided to the group. Following the initial investigation, the corpus was supplemented by an interview with the CE2 teacher.

We use the interview of the teacher, Irène. It is a half-directed interview, which means that not only the researcher asks the teacher about her work, but also, she lets the subject talking as she wants, without interfering in her speech. The point is here to allow the subject to elaborate freely its own discourse, building its own associations, so that the researcher would be able to analyse both the discourse and its structure. Questions are short and investigate the report to teaching, to pupils, to institution, to knowledge... Focus is obviously on Sally's situation, and Irène's analyse of her difficulties.

This interview is registered and written extensively. First, we take some informations given by the subject, considering her discourse is her truth. We consequently consider her speech to extract primary explicative elements to the subject position and posture. We therefore take in account every element subject is pointing as a relevant one.

Last but not least, and maybe the most important step for the clinical results, we use a free attention (Freud, 1900) to the speech, trying to watch out not only the logic of the speech, but also its fail of logic: the rupture of causality.

To build the case of the subject and understand her way to teach, especially with Sally, we describe the links she makes between topics in her speech in order to describe the mosaic of her unconscious.

Conclusion

Firstly, our analysis is concerning typically Irène's class situation and the lack of linking. When Irène is interviewed about Sally's inability of reading, she begins fastly to talk about the disorder of her class and seems to "forget" what we were talking about. We question such a posture from a professional point of view : why is Irène avoiding the subject ? Why can't she confront to

¹ "assume une responsabilité par rapport à des contenus" initial sentence here translated by us.

Sally's difficulty? However, Sally's objection to learning to read is still a problem for Irène. Even though Sally is calm and quiet, something lacks for Irène: it is what we call the failure of teaching. In fact, both pupils' agitation and Sally's objection are a problem for Irène. As a proof, her way to speak about Sally's problem uses the word « ça », which means in English « that », like something here, unidentified but present, and not a subject. It means also the id. in French. What is happening there to Irène? Which tensions is she taken in? May be Irène is talking about something more personal, an interior agitation that fears her.

At the heart of Irène's case, something universal is said about teaching profession in its inclination to objectify pupils. Educational institution waits for pupils to be seated, calm and speak or move according to teacher's wishes. Through his/her professional position, teacher puts students to work. This social bond inscribes his discourse of the Master that puts pupils to work and obtains more from enjoying in this social and psychic relationship. The organization of knowledge transmission in the school, as we know it today, invites subjects who are teachers to be in this posture linking the quest for *jouissance* and putting the student to work. The pupils'-teacher relationship is triangulated by the concept of excess of *jouissance* obtained by the teacher, and here we are able to probe a little closer to that of Irène. With this teacher, the relationship with the institution is embodied in her relationship with order, faced with the objectionable position of Sally who does not stop reading, Real who imposes herself on Irène. It turns out that the teacher subject to the institution can become a potential obstacle to learning.

Through this long paper, we want to show the place and the contribution of "didactique clinique" to educational sciences, in particular when knowledge-centered didactics finds its limits. Here, Sally's difficulties are undermining the teaching skills of her school's teaching staff. Thus, the case of Irène's relationship with Sally highlights an epistemic interest. With Brousseau and the Gaël case (Brousseau, 1988), the didactic explanation is based on the notion of didactic contract and its break. With Sally, there is not entirely contract break, since Sally reads her little book, in her own way by telling her drawings. How to overcome this observation? How do we explain Irène's failure to teach Sally reading? The work of "Didactique Clinique" tries to repeat Brousseau's questioning where it stops and proposes an extension of a psychoanalytic nature.

This theoretical approach is therefore based on the hypothesis of the Freudian unconscious and in doing so, observes unconscious phenomena in the context of teaching-learning. In the case presented, the concept of id. is a situation analyzer which reveals the place of libido and impulses in the test to teach (Brossais, Jourdan & Saviourin, 2016). The compulsive repetition of the demonstrative pronoun "ça" refers to an agitation which we hypothesize would return to Irène's id. and to her own drive overflow. Coming out of the shadow unconscious phenomena in the teacher, the case treated from the angle of "didactique clinique" points to the death drive at work in Irène. We hypothesize that this death drive is activated in the test of teaching reading with Sally. This would appear, for example, through the way in which the teacher aims to reduce Sally from the status of subject to the status of object in her speech.

Secondly, we aim to discuss a philosophical point relating to "didactique clinique" in sciences of education. We tend to prove that it is a theory which can offer explanation where there is enigma in didactical situation. We there are talking about enigma of the subjects, as a fundamental point to work around class situation. We pretend "didactique clinique" allows to work where usual didactic can't go, where it fails, and demonstrate it.

Thirdly we would like to point how School institution gives a place to pupils. The discourse of the Master could explain the objectification of Sally and perhaps of students generally speaking in educational institution as we know it today. So what about pupils? What kind of place is given to the pupil as a subject? This question arises from a political point of view (Castoriadis, 1975, Foucault, 1975) as well as a didactic one. How does this position of object or subject imply consequences for learning? In other words, how does learning require subject's involvement? (Cadiou 2018, 2019)

Last but not least, we wonder how this kind of results can help teachers when links are broken. That research could feed professional build up, we imagine how to use research results to level up teacher training, for example as a kind of supervision (Cadiou, 2019).

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