Towards a Methodological Approach for the Analysis of Issues of Communication and Control in Networked E-Learning Discourse

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates how relations of power and the exercise of control reveal themselves in the discourse of collaborative networked e-learning. It reports on the use of an adapted methodological approach from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyse the discourse of two different e-learning pedagogic events. It draws conclusions from this for communication and control issues in networked e-learning and the relevance of CDA to networked e-learning research.

Keywords

communication, control, critical discourse analysis

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this paper is on how relations of power and the exercise of control reveal themselves in the discourse of collaborative networked e-learning. In modern society social power, and the ability to exercise such power or control, is unevenly distributed between people. Language is one medium where processes for preserving and changing power relations take place, as it is through language that social reality, our social relations, and identities are constructed (Fairclough, 1989). Language rarely expresses meaning directly. The interpretation of meaning rests on common-sense assumptions which need to be taken for granted for something to make sense. This feature of language use makes it possible for reality to be represented in such a way that expresses something to be true, natural and unchallengeable, rather than assumed, particular and contestable. Thus language use is a site that can be ideologically shaped by relations of power and control. The capacity to exercise social power includes the capacity to shape to some significant degree the nature and content of this common ground (Fairclough 2003).

There is thus a need for some way of analysing language which can disclose such processes, so that people become aware of them and eventually also become more likely to resist or change them. This becomes especially important when it comes to networked e-learning, where different kinds of written discursive practices, such as knowledge sharing dialogue, knowledge construction dialogue, information sharing chats etc., play a crucial role as the main channels for interaction and collaboration in online networked learning environments. This is especially important as such collaborative work is based on assumptions of co-operation, equalisation of power relations and the social construction of knowledge for the purpose of learning.

An analytic approach is required that takes account of power and control and the socio-cultural context which frames interaction. In our opinion, such an approach is best served by the developing field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 2003), where the aim is to make explicit relations of power and the exercise of control in discourse.

CDA entails detailed linguistic analysis of text, generally requiring deep background knowledge in linguistics. Our work has therefore focused on developing an understanding of the CDA framework as developed by Fairclough (2003) and choosing certain aspects that we feel are most important when analysing networked e-learning discourse. In doing this, we have adapted Fairclough's frameworks and developed our own methodological approach for analysing communication and control in networked e-learning. Our aim is to make

this approach meaningful to networked e-learning researchers and more readily available for use by practitioners who do not have an expertise in linguistics.

According to Fairclough, language allows us to do three things: represent reality (Representation); act together (Action); and form identities (Identification). He proposes a detailed framework for the critical analysis of discourse which would reveal how unequal relations of power and control manifest themselves in language within these three areas. He also aims to reveal how we can intervene as agents within this process. In aspiring to make this methodological approach more accessible, we have identified four questions which aim to capture these three aspects of social reality. These are:

1.   What is assumed to be 'common ground' in the discourse?

2.   How is this common ground legitimised within the discourse (i.e. how

      does it become accepted by participants)?

3.   How are different identities constructed in the discourse?

4.   How are topics selected, changed and responded to?

The first two questions are intended to capture the Representation aspect, while the third question focuses on Identification and the fourth on Action.

In order to illustrate how these questions could be applied to actual on-line discourse, we present two vignettes taken from different networked e-learning environments. Both vignettes are examples of how participants respond to a particular pedagogic situation and how they negotiate between themselves their assumptions about how to respond to the situation, their particular approaches and identities within this.

Each vignette shows how a different researcher applies the four questions to a particular instance of discourse. In this way, we hope to throw light on two things: 1) the kinds of issues of communication and control that can arise in networked e-learning environments; and 2) the relevance of this approach to analysing online learning discourse.

MA IN ICT & LEARNING VIGNETTE

The chosen discourse is taken from an online seminar that was part of a course in ICT and learning given at master's level at the IT University of Göteborg. The original Swedish transcript has been translated into English. In the seminar, the participants were instructed to first write down a reflection based upon a book that was part of the course literature and then to read the other member's contributions and respond to them. I have chosen to focus on a discussion between two of the participants. One of the participants (X) is the oldest and most experienced member of the seminar group, and her interlocutor in the discussion is the youngest member of the group, a man (Y). The author of the book that the seminar is based on, Z, will also give a lecture later in the same week.

What is assumed to be 'common ground' in the discourse?

To answer the question about common ground, there first needs to be an understanding of what the expression 'common ground' entails. Here, 'common ground' is taken to mean the assumptions that need to be made in order to make sense of the text. This means that common ground is something that isn't explicitly in the text, but can be read between the lines. Fairclough (2003) differentiates between three kinds of assumptions: existential assumptions (assumptions about what exists), propositional assumptions (assumptions about what is or what will be) and value assumptions (assumptions about what is good or desirable).

In his first contribution, Y writes (in bold letters):

Y: I will open this seminar with one sentence that says the most about the book: It is the individual that uses intellectual and physical tools and who communicates and creates new social practices. The individual, the tools and the socio-cultural practice form together an undividable unit in the socio-cultural understanding.

Figure 1

This statement is based on an existential assumption that there actually is one sentence that can describe most of the book, that Y knows this and also knows how to formulate this in a good way. Y's contribution is responded to by several people, but there is only one person, X, who actually builds on what Y wrote. The other people only add their own reflections on the book, without saying anything about Y's initial paragraph.

 In X's first response to Y, she validates that Y's contribution rests on an existential assumption, which I see as confirmation of this assumption. X writes: *In relation to your total summary on 4 – 5 lines, Z's 250 pages might either make me totally exhausted or totally excited (since it spares me reading, I can choose that myself) if I chose to accept your summary as the answer to the problem*. In writing this, she assumes that there is agreement that Y's contribution is seen as an exhaustive summary of the whole book. I see her use of the value verb *spare* as a case of irony. She is most likely being ironic in saying that she is spared from having to read the whole book herself.

Later, X makes a few other value assumptions. By writing *What you said translates to me as "I know the answer" and that is where you lost me in the end of your first sentence.* and in choosing the value verb *lost*, she is making a value assumption that it is undesirable to write in such a way that excludes people or makes them feel outside of the discussion. Indicating that Y made her feel lost right from the start is a value assumption that Y's form of writing is disagreeable and negative. Later in her first contribution, X writes: *If everyone but me understands, can I still be part of the group without feeling left out?* which further supports my claim of her making a value assumption.

In the discussion between Y and X, what needs to be assumed in order to make sense of the messages, is that there are unspoken rules for how to behave in this form of communication and that X thinks Y is breaking these rules. The context framing the seminar is that the group is learning about socio-cultural practice and the intention is therefore that the participants should practice what they are learning about, i.e. adopt the collaborative learning approach and learn together as a group.

The conflict that arises from Y's first contribution, i.e. that he is trying to sum up the whole book in one paragraph and that he is taking a position of authority in relation to the other participants, breaks the unspoken rules of communication. In order to make sense of the responding contribution made by X, the common ground has to be an understanding of how she perceived Y's message and why she is reacting to it as if it was offensive to her in some way. The tone in X's message is quite harsh and this, in addition to the content of her message, indicates that she found Y's message provocative or even insulting. My analysis is therefore that the conflict between the participants reveals that common ground in this case is a contested understanding of what is proper behaviour in a virtual seminar: to work collaboratively as a group, and not as an isolated individual.

How is this common ground legitimised within the discourse?

In the text, there are different things that I think support my analysis that Y assumes that he knows more than the others on the subject. His position is legitimised in several ways. One of the other participants excuses herself for not knowing as much on the subject as Y by writing the following as a response to the long list of questions: *I don't seem to have the same background knowledge as you. I only ALMOST understand the concept of phenomenology*. Y introduces the concept of phenomenology in one of his questions, without giving any explanation to what it means. The concept was not part of the literature that the seminar is based on, but the way that Y formulates his question assumes that everyone already knows its meaning. The other participants, with the exception of X, don't even attempt to dispute Y's initial statement about the whole book. They simply let him stand unquestioned.

X, on the other hand, challenges Y's authority by writing:

> Where do you come up with everything? You are like a living dictionary! How do you have the time to formulate all of these questions and at the same time answer them yourself? Because you already seem to have thought of an answer, or am I wrong?? You seem to me as a nestling, just waiting for someone to feed you.

Figure 2

By writing this, X is challenging that Y knows more on the subject than the others. At the same time, she is also legitimising the common ground that Y has broken the rules for behaviour in adopting a position of authority and by excluding the group. Fairclough writes about four different types of legitimation in discourse:

authorisation, rationalization, moral evaluation and narrative. In X's message in Figure 2, she is legitimising her own position and her right to challenge and question Y by using a moral and evaluative narrative. She does this by using the metaphor of the nestling, by saying that Y is waiting for someone to feed him. This challenges Y's authority since it puts X in the dominant position, that of the mother being the one to feed the nestling, and it lowers Y's status as it brings him down from his chosen position of authority to a lower level, where he is reduced to being the younger one, depending on others to provide him with the answers ('feed him').

In Y's next response, the common ground is negotiated further. In his response, I find that Y is legitimising himself by using both authorisation and rationalization:

> Y: Of course I have thoughts about what the answers will be but like all of the others in the scientific paradigm I don't want to be hasty and answer my questions myself. How good is it to go into this already knowing the answer to my question? Where is the logic in doing that? Then I never will see any alternatives to my own answers. What I wanted to do was to throw my questions out there and primarily direct them at Z, to whom my questions were intended in the first place. Then he or you can answer them without me colouring your intellect and thoughts.

Figure 3

By referring to prominent persons in the scientific paradigm, Y is positioning himself next to them, on the same level as them. In doing so, I think he is both legitimising himself by authorisation (referring to the scientific paradigm in itself as an authority) and by rationalization (by rationalising his own behaviour, as if saying "if the others in the scientific paradigm do this, it makes sense for me also"). He is also using rationalization by referring to what would be a logical (or illogical) behaviour in this particular context, and choosing to be logical by not answering his own questions.

Also, by acknowledging that he already knows the answers to his own questions, but doesn't want to give them away yet, he is validating himself as an authority figure. He does this by formulating that he has thoughts about what the answers *will be*. This is a propositional assumption that there is a definite and absolute answer to each question and that he might already know it. Also, assuming that he is in a position to colour the other participants' intellects is also legitimising the assumption that he sees himself as above the others on this subject. Another way that Y is legitimising himself as an authority figure is his way of primarily addressing the author of the book, assuming that he is most likely the one who will be able to answer, and not the other participants. Again, by doing this, I see him trying to distinguish himself from the others, putting himself on the same level as the authority figure Z, the author of the book.

How are different identities constructed in the discourse?

I have already indicated that I am suggesting that X perceives Y as taking on an authoritative position towards the rest of the group. I will now elaborate on this, as it clearly connects with the third question about construction of identities in the exchange of messages between these two participants. In my analysis of identity construction, I have chosen to take a closer look at modality choices, since Fairclough points out how these closely relate to construction of identity in discourse. It soon becomes clear that Y uses non-modalized assertions in almost every statement that he makes. In his first contribution (Figure 1), there isn't a single modality marker that I can identify in this piece of text, as he is exclusively using non-modalized assertions and doesn't use any modal verbs or modal adverbs (for example, may, might, could, possibly etc.). In the long list of questions that follows Y's initial contribution, Y doesn't use hypothetical modality in any of the questions, but asks all of them in a very direct way.

Y's contribution in Figure 3 is the response to X's questions in her second statement. Even when questioned, Y doesn't change his assertive style of writing, but he continues to use non-modalized statements and questions. The identity that takes form in Y's style of writing is, in my interpretation, that of a confident, assertive person, who has strong opinions about what he has just read, doesn't doubt the validity of those opinions and is therefore not afraid to share them with the others in a confident tone of voice.

Shifting focus to X's identity and looking at her way of responding to Y, she starts off with a modalized statement by writing: *If I interpret what you are saying by looking at what you have written, in my opinion, it might come out like this.* Here she is using intertextuality in her language by writing that she is interpreting what Y wrote. She is also modalizing the statement by the modal verb *might* and by adding *in my opinion* to the statement. The rest of X's first contribution is mainly made up of other modalized assertions (*the clarity I*

***seemed** to arrive at, 250 pages **might** either make me totally exhausted or totally excited, how interpretations **might** be perceived)*. The next contribution that X makes (Figure 2), is a response to the long list of questions that Y has added to the seminar. Here, X seems a little irritated and is using non-modalized language in her three first sentences. Then she changes her rather harsh style, and shifts to modalized language, by using the modal verb of appearance *seem* twice in two sentences.

In X's style of language, she commits herself to challenging Y's position of authority. In her language, she is confident and strong in addressing Y and she doesn't let him get away with his overconfident way of expressing himself and his bid to control the seminar. At the same time, she is tentative in the way she addresses the group, as she is modalizing most of her own opinions in a very careful way. In my opinion, this indicates that she wants to take on an identity that is more cautious in assertion of authority. At the same time, she is not being too careful, since she dares to question Y. This becomes especially clear in X's choice of using the nestling metaphor to challenge Y's identity, by positioning her own identity above Y in that sentence.

How are topics selected, changed and responded to?
So far, I have focused on the exchange of messages between two of the participants, but to answer this question, I need to look at the bigger picture, and include the other participants as well. In the group, there are seven participants all together. This seminar, however, is dominated by the exchange of messages between X and Y, since their discussion thread is the most active one. Y's initial contribution and his list of questions are responded to by most of the other participants, but only X questions what Y has written. Two others choose to introduce their own ideas as a response to Y, two only make very brief comments on Y's enthusiasm and perceived depth of knowledge.

The most striking thing is the difference between how Y's contribution is responded to and how the separate threads set up by other participants are dealt with. The contributions made by the other participants in separate threads are dealt with in a direct way, whereas Y's contribution isn't responded to in a direct way at all, with the exception of X's response. Y's initial statement and list of questions both receive answers, but those answers are not actually dealing with the content of Y's contributions. Instead, they are generally introducing new concepts as a response, or aren't long enough to deal with anything that Y wrote. This may be a result of Y's assertive writing style and expressing himself in a way that seems to excludes other members from joining in the discussion. It is clear, however, that this is X's opinion, and that she isn't going to let Y get away with that without an open discussion about it. It is also interesting to note that Y doesn't respond to any of the other contributions made outside of his own thread. He only engages in the discussion with X and leaves everything else without comment.

Summary
In the analysis of this discourse, I first looked at the underlying assumptions present in the contributions made by the two most active participants. I found that the common ground is revealed in the conflict that arises between the participants. This conflict relies on two main assumptions, the first being Y's assumption that it is appropriate to make an authoritative statement expressing an individualised approach, and the second being X's assumption that the basis for the seminar should be an approach of collaboration. The conflict reveals the contested nature of the common ground around what is considered to be good behaviour when engaging in this kind of virtual seminar, i.e. to practice collaborative learning in the socio-cultural spirit, or to act as an isolated individual.

Further on in the analysis, I tried to reveal how the common ground is legitimised in the discourse. I found that this is done by the different ways that the two participants negotiate their respective positions and attempt to control the seminar. For example, Y uses rationalization and authorisation to maintain his own position, whereas X challenges his authority by using a moral and evaluative narrative to gain control of the seminar herself.

I also looked at identity construction in the discussion between the participants and found that Y's style of writing reveals an authoritarian identity, as he mainly uses non-modalized statements and non-hypothetical questions associated with a non-dialogical style (see Fairclough, 2003, p. 162, pp 41-44).

I also looked at how topics were dealt with in this discourse and found some interesting differences between how Y's contributions were responded to, compared to the other topics. The other contributions were picked up and discussed by the other members, while Y's contributions were left unanswered in any real way, with the exception of X's replies. It is interesting to see how Y's own behaviour actually excludes HIM from the group, as he is ignored by almost everyone apart from X, who challenges him and questions his position and tries to

get him to change his behaviour in order for him to be able to be part of the group. Instead of controlling the seminar, Y ends up being the one left out of the collaborative group learning activities.

Active Worlds vignette

Three women and two men ages 30-50 years old are sitting together in the same room using the virtual space Active Worlds Education (AWEDU), a widely used 3D system with avatars which communicate in chat, to see and discuss how knowledge sharing could take place in a setting designed only for that purpose. The discussion among the participants was on how possibilities in virtual space could be used in network learning. The dialogue is a synchronous textual chat in a visual environment, where the participants can take on different roles/identity when choosing their avatar. The methodological approach is applied to a 1-hour chat session.

What is assumed to be 'common ground' in the discourse?

The assumption that seems to be shared by 4 of the 5 participants is that the discussion is a professional one, which means that serious engagement is required, sidetrack discussions are not relevant, and jokes, comments and word games are not considered appropriate. When questions are asked, serious responses are expected. This common ground assumption is founded in the setting not being of the participants own choosing, but a setting planned by the designers of the explorative session and so legitimized by their authority (Fairclough, 2003, p. 98-100).

How is the common ground legitimated within the discourse?

The 4 participants are engaged throughout the discussion in trying to communicate in the virtual space. How the common ground is legitimated becomes clear when the 5th participant (avatar name "Prague") goes against the common ground assumption and in this way shows its legitimacy. Most of the participants engage with good manners in the discussion, questions are asked and answered, but Prague makes jokes, plays with words, and makes comments with no relevance to the ongoing discussion (figure 1). These actions are surprising to the other participants and in the beginning, they react with questions about what is going on, what the acronym used by Prague means, etc. As the discussion comes to an end, the participants comment more directly on what they see as Prague's provoking and non-appropriate behaviour.

192. Beijing:	*(to Geneva) shall we gang up on Prague?*
193. Geneva:	Went to see if there was a relevant object somewhere else. All I could find was a pillow cos I am quite tired!
194. Beijing:	*(to Paris) Feel like ganging up on Prague?*
195. Sydney:	Should we take a coffee break Helper?
196. Prague:	Wily,
197. Geneva:	Yes, Prague is definitely stirring things!

Figure 1: Reactions from participants

One participant (avatar name "Beijing") tries to create an alliance by using the whisper feature in the system to get the other participants to team up on Prague (figure 1, line 192 and 194). Two other participants react verbally and confront Prague about the unexpected behaviour. Line 197 in figure 1 is an example of one of the participants' (avatar name "Geneva") reactions. The 4th participant (avatar name "Sydney") requests a different behaviour from Prague, but seems to feel rejected by Prague and withdraws from the discussion as a whole.

How are different identities constructed in the discourse?

The choice of vocabulary, input length and choice of avatar name give each participant an identity in the chat, which the rest of the participants respond to. Prague takes on an identity of being the one to comment, joke and provoke. Prague types and reads fast, uses acronyms, makes fun with words, gives nick names to the other participants, uses chat-language and most importantly divides sentences up in several short inputs. In figure 2, line 65, 67, 69 and 71 is an example of one sentence being divided up on 4 lines. These lines and line 72 are also an example of sidetrack comments, which have nothing to do with the main discussion, which is going on in line 64 and 66 supported by the Helper in line 70.

64. Paris:	maybe we should move to the technological objects –to discover what is hindering our progress here?
65. Prague:	OK, that´s it.
66. Geneva:	Yes, so why do not you take us there Paris?
67. Prague:	Paris, your authenticity..
68. Paris:	I need first to find the stage
69. Prague:	in this situation is beginning..
70. Helper:	EVERYBODY FOLLOW PARIS TO THE TECHNOLOGICAL OBJECTS
71. Prague:	to feel somewhat suspect
72. Prague:	now we have the Helper on our backs as well

Figure 2: Style - Dividing one sentence up on several lines

By dividing a sentence into many lines Prague's name is more or less on the screen all the time. By using this chat style and being the only one doing it, Prague seems to dominate the chat as the other participants uses a more traditional e-mail style and thus do not appear as much on the chat-screen. Notice in line 70 that the Helper is using capital letters to get attention and to visualize shouting. An example is in figure 3 line 29. This line is a contribution to the main discussion followed by other participants in line 30 and 31 whereas line 28 is part of a sidetrack discussion, where Prague is making word games with the avatar name of Paris.

28. Prague:	no Paris from Paris
29. Geneva:	Well I have chosen it because it represents something we do naturally and I am wondering if what we are doing now is really necessary to something we do already
30. Prague:	genev, you´re not making yourself clear
31. Sydney:	What is it that we do already?

Figure 3: Style – writing long sentences and presenting it in 1 line.

Style in writing is one way to identify how the different identities are constructed in the discourse (Fairclough, 2003, page 159-163). And it seems that in chat the identity of a participant is determined by the style the participant uses as well as the way the participant behaves.

How are topics selected, changed and responded to?

The discussion was roughly divided into 4 main topics. These topics were chosen by the participants themselves as they took turns to introduce their thoughts. In figure 2, line 64 and 68 is an example of a participant (avatar name "Paris") changing topic with help from the Helper in line 70. The 4 participants all introduce a topic and engage in a discussion. Geneva especially is active in all 4 topics and contributes with questions and thoughts. Geneva at the same time ignores most of the sidetrack discussion and comments and so seems to keep the discussions from falling apart completely. Prague on the other hand participates throughout the session with sidetracks, which seems to interrupt the main discussions several times. And as the other participants frequently participate in the sidetrack discussions it seems that Prague succeeds in interrupting the main discussion.

Summary

The common ground assumption about how to engage in a professional discussion is challenged by one participant and who succeeds in provoking the other participants to a point where they choose to react and protest. This does seem to give Prague power of the situation but not control of the setting because the other participants do not side with the actions of Prague. They stick with the original common ground assumption and do not start making jokes, word games, sidetracks, etc. If they had done so, then maybe Prague could have gained more control than the others. When instead the other participants choose to protest and even try to make an explicit alliance against Prague, it's as if they oppose Prague's bid for control and subversion of the designers of the setting's intentions.

The main discussion was interrupted, but the majority of participants stayed with the common assumption. Prague's power seems to be closely related to familiarity with the medium. This familiarity allows him to have an overview of what goes on and what is said by whom which thus gives him the potential for more control.

Knowing and using chat language in a set-up where most of the participants are not familiar with the language, might frustrate other users, as they are made aware of their own lack of control in the system. The flow of communicating in chat is improved when sentences are broken up in several lines, but when only one participant uses this chat "rule", the participant might be experienced by the rest of the group as intrusive and distracting. There is thus an interaction between communication, the medium and control which Prague seems to take advantage of. Nevertheless being able to ignore sidetracks and stay focused also seems to be a way to gain control of the situation, which seemed to be the case for at least one of the other participants. However, the rest of the participants do not ignore Prague and the result is a confusing and disrupted discussion.

CONCLUSION

Communication and control issues

Despite seemingly clear instructions about the purpose and process of these two pedagogic events, both vignettes show how participants negotiate power and control between themselves and between themselves and their respective 'teachers/facilitators', through the different ways in which they assert their own interpretation of the common ground for the group's work. They do this through the following: assertion of different existential, propositional and value assumptions; making bids to legitimate their positions through authorization, rationalization, and moral and evaluative narratives; modality or its absence; topic initiation, avoidance, or change; word play, irony and 'sidetracks'; bids to form alliances; choice of avatar names; ignoring moves to change or negotiate the common ground; and using their own particular competence in the medium.

What might normally be assumed to be a straightforward process of facilitating and engaging learning through collaborative online discussion, reveals itself through this kind of analysis to be a highly complex social process involving the negotiation of power and control not only between teachers and learners, but also within the learning group itself. It is as if each individual is engaged in finding a space within the learning group within which to pursue their own particular learning agenda and learning style. This reveals itself either as attempts to assert such a space for the whole group, or to create spaces within the larger space in which to 'get on with the work at hand'. Thus participants seem to be variously exercising control over their different communication capacities and the communication medium itself in order to fulfil their own particular learning intentions and needs. What is not clear from the analysis, is the extent to which this may be influenced by the online environment as opposed to face to face environment, by the particular pedagogic event and/or the participants themselves. What is clear however is the fact that the exercise of power and control is evident in both examples, and that this exercise of power and control shifts and fluctuates within the discourse between participants.

Relevance of this approach to analysing online learning discourse

Whilst strongly asserting the relevance of this approach to analysing online learning discourse, we would also recommend two further strategies for enhancing the interpretative framework. The four questions we posed allow the researcher/practitioner to more systematically analyse what might intuitively be interpreted to be 'problematic' online classroom events and thus understand how they might have arisen. The analysis reveals the complex nature of the collaborative peer learning process and the dynamic conjunction within it between individual participants and the norms and requirements of the particular social practice they find themselves in.

The analysis of online discourse using the four questions proposed nevertheless still requires reference to and understanding of certain key linguistic and CDA concepts, such as modality, legitimation and so on. The four questions posed need to be broadened to address the context of the discoursal event analysed (e.g. particular pedagogic purpose and design; type of teaching and learning event; institutional context; wider social context, and so on). This would provide a richer framework within which to interpret the findings from the analysis and would locate the analysis not only within the micro process of the discourse of the event itself but also within the wider macro social processes which frame it.

Finally, this interpretive framework could be significantly enriched by including the individual participants' own accounts of their experience of the event and their accounts of their actions within it. These two additions to the approach would thus allow one to examine the issue of communication and control through the triangulation afforded by critical discourse analysis, macro social context and individual participants' experience.

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