

THE POWER WITHIN: A BRIEF ON MICHEL FOUCAULT'S IDEAS OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL THEORY

Fery Fahrudin Yunus and Ida Vera Sophya

Tasamuh Institute Kudus, Central Java, Indonesia
verasofadel@gmail.com

Abstract

Social theories generally defined as analytical frameworks or paradigms that applicable to examine social phenomena. The term belonging to ideas about 'how societies change and develop, methods of explaining social behaviour, power and social structure. In contemporary social theory, certain themes such as the nature of social life, the relationship between self and society, the structure of social institutions, social transformation, as well as such as gender, race, class, and others themes consider as most priority to others.

This paper will demonstrates Foucault's ideas in structures and discourses—how discourses produced particular truths which studying institutions (schools) and offering a critique of what was considered to be normal, to consider Foucault's ideas such as panopticism to examine disciplinary and self-policy of schools. The main purpose of this paper is to find practical value in Foucault's ideas.

Keywords: *Social Theory, Education, Foucault's Ideas.*

A. Introduction

In many cases social theories have a background in the discipline of sociology, they are not one and the same thing. Social theories emanate and draw from a range of disciplines including sociology, but also philosophy, anthropology, history, media and communication studies, psychology and psychoanalysis, linguistics, cultural studies and literary criticism. At this point, social theories generally defined as analytical frameworks or paradigms that applicable to examine social phenomena. The term belonging to ideas about 'how societies change and develop, methods of explaining social behaviour, power and social structure, gender and ethnicity, modernity and 'civilisation', revolutions and utopias' (Harrington, A. 2005: 15).

In contemporary social theory, some themes consider as most priority to others, such as the nature of social life, the relationship between self and society, the structure of social institutions, the role and possibility of social transformation, as well as gender, race and class (Elliott, A. 2008). The educational research in forms of professional practice emphasize from practice to theory than from theory to practice. The last mentioned can often confound researchers to apply theoretical models and principles in certain contexts, the first can often compound the problem for the educational researcher; such as the concept of 'power', 'culture', and 'practice' are challenging at the core educational concepts of teaching, curriculum, assessment and learning.

This paper will demonstrate Foucault's thought related to his development analyses of education according to his related work; (Foucault, M. 1977). how the educational researcher can find practical value might be constituted by genealogies of discipline and his archaeologies of knowledge including the practice of discourse towards concept of power and subjection. These will be followed by a consideration historically that have proved interesting to researchers in education (Andrew Hope's: 2013).

B. The Power Within

Every child have the right a quality in education. Education is a right. The child as a member of society must be the determining subject in our educational system, not the needs of ruler and power of corporate. This means that schools have to be able to shape of social, emotional and other needs of students. In other hands, schools are facing the difficult problems and in classrooms with few resources teachers are help students. In the history teachers and parents and the organizations have serious efforts to education and to meet himself to human needs of children, and advocates for children and quality schooling. These are issues of power in relation between education and various mechanisms used to generate and distribute power and subject as agent in society.

The issue in educational research relates to the concept of power in social theory. Power is a difficult concept to understand and 'the researcher can all too easily fall into the trap of looking for power in the wrong places, or worse still, misrecognise their own capacity as power brokers in educational research settings.' Therefore, we must consider it that the possibility it also presence in educational settings, 'in the face of complex and highly differentiated institutionalised arrangements.'

Foucault's initial interest was in structures and discourses, particularly the certain truth produced. He reveals how discourses produced the 'restitution of truth' (Foucault, M. 1967: 197). In this work, he was seeking to determine the '*possibilities and rights, the conditions and limitations, of a justified formalization*' (Foucault, M. 1973: 382). Foucault's archaeological method attempting to examine the structural rules of discourse was governed.

In Foucault's turn from archaeology to genealogy, his focus works moved from discourses to institutions such as prisons, schools (1977), and to sexuality (1978, 1985, 1986). Foucault was collected the information about conditions in prisons, 'the only place where power is manifested in its naked state and where it is justified as a moral force'. Foucault's genealogies reveal the relation of knowledge and power were inter-connected that

and [constructed 'individuals as objects of knowledge' and 'as subjects' who controlled by [themselves. His analyses dismantle understandings of modern phenomena, the [realization of the think of freedom in reality and also in possibility, and the power of constrained in secrecy of our social life.]

In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault suggests that the physical punishment is represent the education and the 'disciplinary regimes' into 'docile bodies' of people (Foucault, M. 1977: 138). Foucault developed the idea about power and knowledge as a useful 'box of tools' for understanding the mechanism of control and restriction by 'surveillance', a disciplinary techniques such as exclusion, regulated, normalized, and made to submissive or comport a certain attitude. Therefore, Foucault proposes three ways of surveillance.

First of all, hierarchical observation was makes 'for a single gaze to see everything perfectly' possible. Hierarchical observation is involved a form of supervision of supervisors, with everyone accountable to authority from above. The effectiveness of the supervision was guaranteed by the fact that it was 'absolutely discreet, for it functions permanently and largely in silence' and since it was impossible to know when one was being watched, it was necessary to behave as if this was the case.

Second, normalising judgements are used to legitimated correction and coercion in education, such as in learning and teaching and promote standardization and homogeneity. Individuals can be measured in terms of their distance from their norm and once the extent of their deviance from the norm is established, disciplinary techniques can be used to homogenise and normalise, and, of course, exclusion can be justified as a means to these ends. According to Foucault that normalization as one of the great instruments of power at the end of the classical age, but alerts us to its continued use: "It is easy to understand how the power of the norm functions within a system of formal equality, since within a homogeneity that is the rule, the norm introduces, as a useful imperative and as a result of measurement, all the shading

of individual differences.”

Third, the examination is combination of hierarchical observation and normalising judgements in, such as, a form of the ‘economy of visibility into the exercise of power’. The examination also introduces individuality in order to fix and capture and makes each individual a ‘case’, capable of being ‘described, judged, measured, compared with others, in his very individuality’. These mechanisms of surveillance construct subjects, and the kind of power exercised here produces ‘reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth’ in the shape of subject individuals. ‘This individuality would be shaped in a new form, and submitted to a set of very specific patterns (Foucault, M. 1982: 214).

Fourth, the analyses of subjectification have proved the genealogies of educational contexts in order to demonstrated how individuals were resistance or not. Tremain’s collection of papers on *Foucault and the Government of Disability* (2005) contain the analyses of epistemologies, ontologies, histories, governmentalities, ethics and politics which reveal ‘some of the fascism which still runs round in our heads and still plays itself out in our everyday behavior’(McWhorter, L. 2005:1). The individuals was situated of structure, in Foucault’s term, knowledge and power used as a means of ‘complicating power relations’ or in order to seek the possibilities of alternative educational (Butin, D. 2002: 13-16).

Foucault’s critique of the way subjects, thereby, are disciplined with the self and its ability for resistance and transformation. “You must have learned principles so firmly that when your desires, your appetites or your fears awaken like barking dogs, the logos will speak with the voice of a master who silences the dogs by a single command,” Foucault said in one interview (Foucault, M. 1987: 6). The point is in problems about techniques of the self, and then the individual operates in relation to certain rules (disciplined) and to find other ways of these rules—some kinds of transgression—to resistance. An example of the mode of subjection, is the student who fashions his lifestyle according to

certain high classrules and principles.Foucault states, “the forms of relations with the self, on the methods and techniques by which he works them out, on the exercises by which he makes of himself an object to be known, and on the practices that enable him to transform his own mode of being (Foucault, M. 1985:30). Hence, the teachers can convey socially constructed assumptions that underlie the classroom social relationships (and then concerns of curriculum and classroom evaluation) as the issues such as: What counts as social studies knowledge? How is this knowledge produced and legitimized? Whose interests does this knowledge serve? Who has access to this knowledge? How is this knowledge distributed and reproduced in the classroom? What kinds of classroom social relationships serve to parallel and reproduce the social relations of production in the wider society? How do the prevailing methods of evaluation serve to legitimize existing forms of knowledge? What are the contradictions that exist between the ideology embodied in existing forms of social studies knowledge and the objective social reality?

These questions are focus on the production, distribution, and evaluation of classroom knowledge and social relationshipthat related to the principles and practices of institutional plan in society. These questions should be analyzed before social studies teachers structure their classroom experiences. In other words, these are important subsequent questions that should provide the base for educational theory and practice. These questions can helping teachers identify, understand, and importantfor social processes needed to support students in searching for knowledge and meaning of designed to pointed at critical thinking and social action, and also the relationship between the process of classroom pedagogy and the wider structural determined culture, as well as, is a relationship between ideology and social control in the process of education.

Therefore, the educators have to develop a better understanding of its political nature of schooling relations in shaping it and the relationship between the pedagogical and the

political as basis to any social movement that attempts to lead to emancipatory struggles and social transformations. First of all, Education must be understood as producing not only knowledge but also political subject. It means students have the skills to locate themselves in history. The educators need to develop the knowledge, habits, and skills of critical tauhgt. This means providing students to develop the critical capacity to challenge and transform existing political forms and social relations. This suggested that 'educators should attempt to understand more fully how different discourses offer students diverse ethical referents for structuring their relationship to the wider society'. Educators must also come to view ethics and politics as a relationship between the self and the other. Ethics, in this case, is not a matter of individual choice or relativism but a social discourse based on struggles refusing the human suffering and exploitation. Thus ethics is lead to the struggle against inequality as a discourse for expanding basic: human rights—in pedagogical terms, 'an ethical discourse needs to regard the relations of power, subject positions, and social practices it activates' that produce particular stories, struggles, and histories in challenging and politically transformative way.

C. Conclusion

In his '*Preface to Transgression*' Foucault written as an introduction to the work of Bataille, he argues that 'It is likely that transgression has its entire space in the line it crosses'. This implies 'a boundary that can only be there by crossing it'. The limit and transgression depend on each other. The relationship is like a spiral, with moments of crossing of the limit. Foucault himself argued 'to show people that they are freer than they feel'. He perhaps help us to abandon the truth in considering of consequence of our thinking and believing, invites us to 'question what is given to us as necessary to think and do'. It means that self-policy of schools and curriculum knowledge should not a fixed text but developed as part of an ongoing engagement with a variety of power narratives that can be re-read, re-examined, and reformulated. Finally, as according to

Giroux, suggests that is 'a pedagogy that provides the knowledge, skills, and habits for student and others to read history in ways that enable them to reclaim their identities in the interests of constructing forms of life that are more democratic and more just.'

REFERENCES

- Allan, Julie. 2013. 'Foucault and his Acolytes: Discourse, Power and Ethics' In *Social Theory and Education Research: Understanding Foucault, Habermas, Bourdieu and Derrida*. Ed. Mark Murphy. New York: Routledge. p. 21-29
- Burchell, G. 1996. Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self. In *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, ed. A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, 19–36. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 32.
- Butin, D. 2002. This Ain't Talk Therapy: Problematizing and Extending Anti-Oppressive Education. *Educational Researcher* 31, 3: 14–16.
- Elliott, A. 2008. *Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. 1967. *Madness and Civilisation*. London: Tavistock. p. 197.
- Foucault, M. 1973. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage/Random House. p. 382.
- Foucault, M. 1977. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin. p. 138.
- Foucault, M. 1978. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. 1982. The Subject and Power. In *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, ed. H. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow. Brighton: Harvester Press. p. 214.
- Foucault, M. 1985. *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality, 2*. (Trans. R. Hurley). Harmondsworth: Penguin. p. 30.

- Foucault, M. 1986. *The Care of the Self: The History of Sexuality*, 3. Trans. R. Hurley. New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. 1987. 'The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom'. Interview. In *The Final Foucault*, ed. J. Bernaur and D. Rasmussen. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. p. 1–20.
- Foucault, M. 1997. Writing the self. In *Foucault and his Interlocutors*, ed. A. Davidson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 234–247.
- Giroux, Henry A. 1997. *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope: Theory, Culture, and Schooling: A Critical Reader*. Oxford & Colorado: Westview Press. p. 221.
- Harrington, A. 2005. 'Introduction: What is Social Theory?' In *Modern Social Theory: An Introduction*, ed. A. Harrington. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 1–15.
- Hope, Andrew. 2013. 'Foucault, Panopticism and School Surveillance Research'. 2013. In *Social Theory and Education Research: Understanding Foucault, Habermas, Bourdieu and Derrida*. Ed. Mark Murphy. New York: Routledge. p. 35-48.
- Martin, L., L. Gutman and P. Hutton. 1988. *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*. Amhurst: University of Massachusetts Press. p. 10-11.
- McWhorter, L. 2005. Foreword. In *Foucault and the Government of Disability*, ed. S. Tremain. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. p. xiii–xvii.