

Misplaced Management Theory in a Massive System of Higher Education: Text,  
Context and Reconstructive Loop

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*Abstract: In 2009, The Chancellor of the California State University (CSU), Charles Reed, hired Sir Michael Barber to work with the presidents of the 23 campuses “aimed at setting a goal for closing the achievement gap and increasing graduation rates from their institutions, and for CSU as a system” “Deliverology,” renamed, the “Graduation Initiative” was immediately implemented. Given the effect of Barber’s presentation as pedagogic discourse in policy and practice, it merits close examination; further, systemic commentaries on and elaborations of Barber’s “deliverology” as policy enacted within the economic, political context of higher education in California also merit attention.*

*Using Bernstein’s concept recontextualization, Branham and Pearce’s notion of contextual reconstruction and Brown’s definition of ideology, this study makes visible the rhetorical means by which the discourse of the CSU in the form of the Graduation Initiative controls and recreates the meaning of higher education for those within and without the system. The value of the study lies in exposing the patterns of discourse intended to reshape its operations, meaning, and value for the citizens of the state of California.*

The California State University (CSU) system, formed in 1960 and once commonly referred to as the People’s University, was for many years tuition free to all qualified citizens of the state (Gerth, 2010, p.100). The mission of the CSU is undergraduate teaching.<sup>1</sup> In the last twenty years, the state’s financial commitment to the universities (both the California State University system and the University of California system) has significantly diminished and has done so dramatically since 2008, shifting income sources directly to student fees.<sup>2</sup> Within the legislature, a focus on “productivity” and

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<sup>1</sup> California’s other system of higher education, the prestigious University of California (UC), is primarily focused on research and graduate education.

<sup>2</sup> By way of illustration, listed below are the fees for two representative campuses that serve the state capitol region: California State University, Sacramento and University of California, Davis:

“accountability” spurred efforts by the CSU administration to “prove” the value of the system.

To do so, in 2009, CSU Chancellor Charles Reed, hired Sir Michael Barber<sup>3</sup> to work with the presidents of the 23 campuses for the purpose of “setting a goal for closing the achievement gap and increasing graduation rates from their institutions, and for CSU as a system” (Reed, 2009). Barber conducted a two-day workshop for the CSU administration and trustees grounded in his management approach called “Deliverology” (Barber, Moffit, & Kihn, 2011). The process was quickly renamed within the system as the “Graduation Initiative” and immediately implemented<sup>4</sup>.

Given the effect of Barber’s presentation as pedagogic discourse regarding policy and practice, it merits close examination<sup>5</sup>; further, systemic commentaries on and elaborations of Barber’s “deliverology” as policy enacted within the economic, political context of higher education in California also merit attention. Barber’s presentation consists of a stack of 87 PowerPoint slides, some of which seem to be repurposed from previous presentations (e.g. slides 14-16; 19-30, 71 and 80); some were borrowed from other sources, primarily the Education Trust (e.g. slides 33-53, 68) and the rest which appeared to be designed specifically for the CSU presentation. Consequently, the slide format is quite varied, and the terminology occasionally culture-bound (e. g. “GCSE”, “LEA”, “League Table” and “contestability”). Much of the content is given to explaining past applications of deliverology by Tony Blair’s administration: the cases of improving railroad punctuality, raising standardized test scores in London secondary schools, and reducing patient wait times in hospital emergency room. Overall, the PowerPoint

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CSUS student fees 2008 \$3854; 2011 \$6572; 170% increase in 3 years (avg. increase of \$900/yr)

UCD student fees 2008 \$28,545; 2011 \$35,958.91; 136% increase in 3 years (avg. increase of \$2471/yr)

<sup>3</sup> [Barber] ... served the UK government as Head of the Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit (from 2001-2005) and as Chief Adviser to the Secretary of State for Education on School Standards (from 1997-2001). Before joining government he was a professor at the Institute of Education at the University of London.

<sup>4</sup>Chancellor's Reports to the Board of Trustees, 18 November 2009. Retrieved from <http://www.calstate.edu/executive/reparchive/091118.shtml>; Academic Senate Minutes 21-22 January 2010. Retrieved from [http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/Records/Minutes/documents/Jan2010\\_PlenaryMinutes.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/Records/Minutes/documents/Jan2010_PlenaryMinutes.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Barber’s presentation can be reviewed at <http://www.csus.edu/indiv/s/stonerm/BarberDeliverologyPPTtoCSU.pdf>

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presentation content repositions the managerial practices and policies of deliverology from railroad, hospital and educational management in the UK to higher education in California. Such recontextualizing of deliverology, from a Bernsteinian perspective, serves as a form of *pedagogical discourse* (Bernstein 2000). Given Barber's audience of university administrators and the occasion of his presentation, it marks a clearly intentional moment in expanding the *official recontextualizing field (ORF)* that Bernstein posits (2000, p. 33). Further, such discourse, as Barber's presentation and official commentaries reveal, constructs control mechanisms that serve to legitimate very limited forms of discourse surrounding the complex problems of social justice and equality, as well as access to and success in higher education. Further, Bernstein notes that, "No discourse ever moves without ideology at play" (p.32). His modal statement invites investigation. Bernstein describes pedagogic discourse as constructed "by a recontextualizing principle which selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses and relates other discourses to constitute its own order" (p. 33). This is essentially the definition of rhetorical invention (Jasinski). Bernstein (2000) recognizes the role human beings play in the creative process noting, "The recontextualizing principle creates recontextualizing fields, it creates agents with recontextualizing functions. ...Formally, we move from a recontextualizing principle to a recontextualizing field with agents with practicing ideologies" (p. 33). Consequently, I intend to examine the discourse of "deliverology" and its policy offspring, the Graduation Initiative, from a critical, rhetorical perspective in order to answer some relevant questions originally posed by Basil Bernstein about instructional discourse (Bernstein, 2000, pp. 26ff) and the "pedagogic device" (Bernstein, 1986).<sup>6</sup> Bernstein raises the question: "is the language device in itself neutral, is the system of rules that constitute this device neutral with respect to the meaning potential and therefore neutral in respect to what comes out of it?" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 27). Just prior to question, he stated that

...the rules of the language device are not ideologically free, but the rules reflect emphases on the meaning potential created by dominant groups. Thus, from this point of view, the relative stability of the rules may well have their origin in the concerns of dominant groups. .... It

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<sup>6</sup> Bernstein characterized and defined the pedagogic device in this way: "We shall postulate that between power and knowledge and knowledge and forms of consciousness is always the pedagogic device (PD). We shall define the pedagogic device as the distributive re-contextualizing and evaluative rules for specializing forms of consciousness" (Bernstein, 1986, p. 208).

raises the point that the [language or pedagogic] device is not neutral, and that the device itself may have some intrinsic regulatory function. (p.27)

I argue that Barber's recontextualization of deliverology, in the context of the California State University system as the Graduation Initiative, structures an ORF of considerable sophistication, charging administrative/bureaucratic agents with repeating and enacting the ORF, but is *not* ideological and, consequently, will fail to achieve meaningful and positively effective relationships of power within the university. While administrative and bureaucratic agents will maintain the Graduation Initiative project as long as the leadership demands, I suspect, its nature prevents it from articulating satisfactory power relationships among all relevant power shares (public, legislature, administration, students, faculty and staff) and will stutter at the level of mere "accounting force."

Ideology as a concept lacks a singular definition. Given the nature of the pedagogical device as rhetoric, a rhetorically grounded definition will serve as the anchor for the analysis of Barber's presentation to the CSU. Further, rhetorical theory attending specifically to the relationship between text/discourse and context will augment the analysis and help clarify the shortcoming of Bernstein's conclusion that while the language device is not neutral, while it certainly may be informative or persuasive, it is not necessarily ideological. And that which is not ideological will be less effective in shaping meaning and the commitment of people to such organizational projects as the Graduation Initiative.

Brown (1978) argues that ideology is not "false consciousness" as is it often portrayed, but functions as an account for experience. For example, scientific theory, provides an overarching scheme by which people connect ideas and experience to construct a rational explanation for the world, and is therefore ideology. So, Brown defines ideology as a communication process which serves as "symbolic construction of the world in whose superordinate 'name' human beings can comprehensively order their experience and subsume their specific activities" (1978, p. 124). Implicit in the definition are the qualities of ideology as communication, as a product of human symbolic interaction, and as a source of categories that when "comprehensively ordered" provide meaning for people and their experiences and rules for categorizing. The relational effect of ideologizing—articulating relationships between objects and people—makes it central to understanding experience. For Brown, what distinguishes ideology from other forms of rhetoric or communication is the dimension of ultimacy. Discourse that can "comprehensively subsume human experience" (p. 126), and it may be the result of pedagogic discourse, but it may not. I part with Bernstein's totalizing conclusion on this point and present Barber's pedagogic discourse (2009) as a case that fails to construct

or account for significant relationships among people and consequently fails to engender within the ORF a sense of commitment and meaning relative to the policy project of increasing graduation rates among students and faculty. It fails to reach the level of ideology.

Within Barber's scheme, relationships are understood as "reporting lines" for purposes of documenting the progress and completion of tasks set out by management for purposes of control, *not* for purposes of social exchange, sense-making, or negotiation of power. For example, early on in the presentation, Barber (2009) introduces the notion of "delivery chain" (slide 8), then immediately notes that its success depends on "Getting the key relationships right" (slide 9). The delivery chain is defined in terms of its function (See Figure 1):

## What is a Delivery Chain?

A delivery chain is the set of actors (people or organizations), and the relationships between them, through which a given system activity will be implemented.

A delivery chain has one question at its core: starting from the policy intent of a leader in your system and ending with the front-line behaviors and practices that this policy is designed to influence, how – and through whom – does a system activity actually happen?

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Fig. 1 defines "delivery chains" as enactments of policy intentions set by leaders and accomplished by subordinates. (Barber, 2009, slide 69)

Notice how relationships are described: people and organizations are equated as “actors” and the relationships within the delivery chain are designed to enact “the policy intent of a leader...ending with the front-line behaviors and practices that this policy is designed to influence...” “Relationship” in deliverology is not intended as a channel for socially negotiating the meaning of shared experience, as is an ideology. Rather, Barber’s use of the word “relationship” strips it of any potential for sense-making among the people who comprise the “delivery chain” and assigns it a function of information relay. There is nothing inherently motivating, enlightening or engaging about communication activity within the deliverology model. The purpose of the activities of actors in the delivery chain is satisfying the “policy intent of a leader.”

Further, the delivery chain as modeled by Barber does not include students as “actors” relative to student graduation rates. Oddly, the very people for whom the Graduation Initiative is designed ostensibly are not included in the process of achieving their own graduation. Although the words “student” or “students” occur 53 times in Barber’s presentation, each use is descriptive of students as systemic elements, and never as actors in processes of development, decision-making or learning marked by personal change, ultimately leading to graduation. In slide 3, titled, The Delivery Chain— Influencing Graduation Rates, students are not named as a significant part of the chain. (See Fig. 2):

## The Delivery Chain – Influencing Graduation Rates

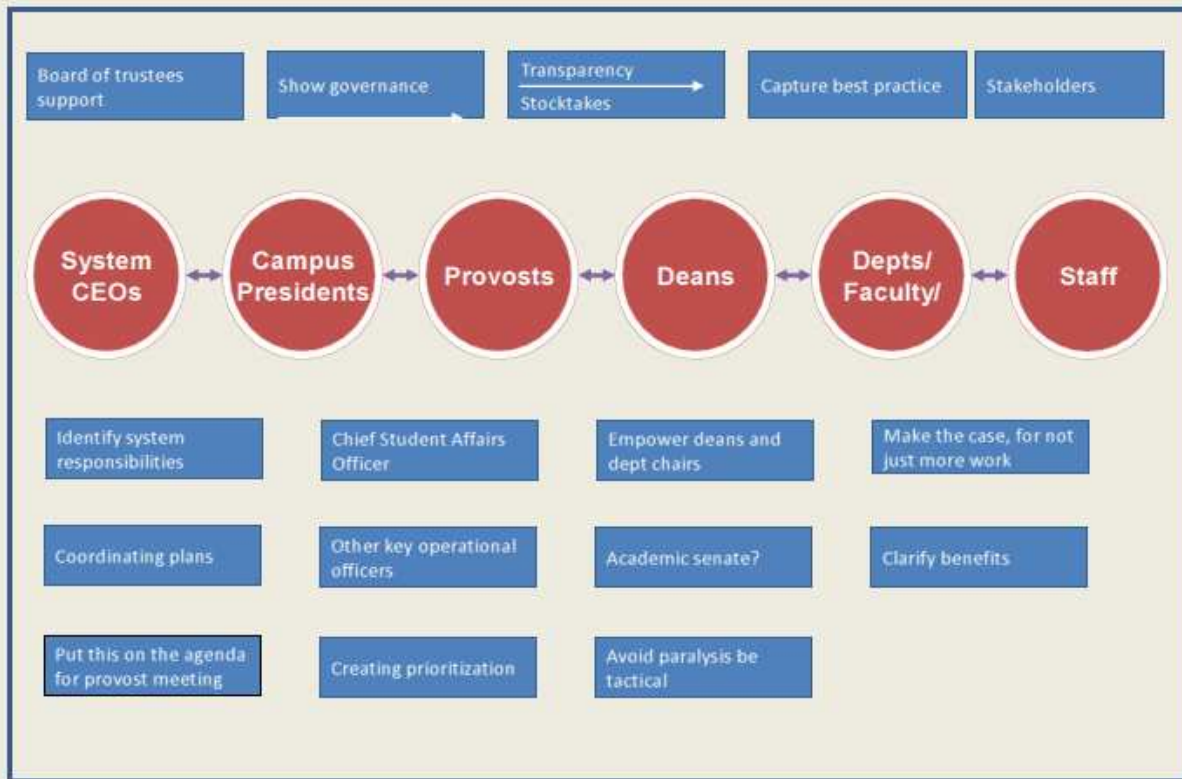


Fig. 2 models the delivery chain apart from students; functions of actors that are categorically named are limited to agenda-setting, prioritizing actions, and persuasion (Barber, 2009, slide 73)

The model describes a set of organizational relationships that exist apart from the key “stakeholders”—students. The communication functions described within the model itself do indicate lines of information flow indicated by priorities set by System CEOs and communicated to subordinates and by reports of subordinates’ activities back to each immediate supervisory entity. While the audiences for the persuasive tasks of, “Mak[ing] the case, for not just more work” and “Clarify benefits” are not clear, what is clear is that students are not considered essential or relevant actors in the “delivery chain.” The slide suggests, too, that there is need for persuasion of some actors within the chain to believe that the tasks assigned are not “just” more work, but are somehow beneficial to someone. A “structure of structures” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 170) obtains for purposes of programmatic control, but there is no evidence within the text of Barber’s presentation that the Graduation Initiative should provide anything more; it is devoid of



any ideological qualities that motivate human beings by “comprehensively order[ing] their experience and subsume[ing] their specific activities” in any meaningful way (Brown 1978, p. 128).

It is important to understand communication as *interpersonal* (rather than *intrapersonal*) process, especially when attempting analysis of organizational, managerial or cultural phenomena. Language (i.e. all symbolic interaction) is quickened necessarily by interpersonal symbol-making and symbol use for purposes of ascribing “*reciprocal, complementary, and comprehensive* social relations to members of a community” (Brown, 1978, p. 128). Consequently, individuals are able to make sense of themselves and their experience through social interaction (e. g. Berger & Luckmann, 1996; Dunn, 1989; Mead, 1934; Mullen & Yi, 1995) and so find their “place” in any number of social networks. Further, Brown notes, the attendant interpersonal roles, motives, statuses and locations actors perceive for themselves and others “must be *negotiated* among ideological adherents made consubstantial by acting together *as if* under some superordinate symbol system” (1978, p. 128). Within Brown’s scheme then, any individual actor constructs her “self,” her identity, via interpersonal negotiation of what become observable actions, statuses, and motives within the relevant field of action which in this case is the field of higher education. However, the Graduation Initiative, *nee*, deliverology, at no point invites any negotiation of goals, methods, timetables, or assessments among people in the delivery chain. Brown argues that,

The negotiation, then, of mutual agreement to social identity becomes overtly ideological when individuals act toward each other as though their acceptance or rejection of role performance depends on the presence or absence of behaviors to which “motives” and “beliefs” associated with ideology are attributable. (1978, p. 131)

The top-down design ensures that systemic relationships function solely to accomplish specific tasks set by managers and minimizes advocacy of beliefs or critique of motives, by constraining behavior through prescriptive descriptions of acceptable behaviors. The lack of social identity and motive power is related to the nature of a management theory misplaced in an educational context.

Recall that Bernstein (2000) defines pedagogic discourse as a “principle for delocating a discourse, for relocating it, for refocusing it, according to its own principle” (p. 32). It is in effect a recontextualizing principle and since it deploys the same symbolic media as rhetoric, I will apply relevant rhetorical theory to connect Bernstein’s and Brown’s analyses of the language device as ideology.



Starting from premises consistent with Bernstein, rhetorical theorists, Branham and Pearce observe the reflexive nature of text and context, noting that, “Every communicative act is a text that derives meaning from the context of expectations and constraints in which it is experienced. At the same time, contexts are defined, invoked and altered by texts” (Branham & Pearce, 1985, p. 19). They continue, “In practice ... contexts tend to be relatively stable, because people and societies work to construct and enforce a re-creation of shared experiences” (p. 19). It is this stability (which was asserted similarly by Bernstein (2000, p. 26) regarding the constitutive rules of the pedagogic device) that facilitates meaning-making and ideologizing over time avoiding chaos (and meaninglessness) while permitting necessary adaptations of explanations and maintenance of identity relative to changing conditions in the world of experience.

Branham and Pearce posit four patterns of discursive response to re/contextualizing exigencies. (In Bernstein's theory, exigencies would often correspond to learning events; in the case under analysis here, the CEO's need for means to “prove” the value of the CSU served as rhetorical exigence and Barber's relocation/recontextualization of deliverology was a rhetorical response to the exigence from within the ORF.) The four patterns of contextual responses are: *conformity* to expectations of the context; *non-participation* wherein communicators are unwilling to “relocate their knowledge”; *desecration* which is marked by creation of texts that are unexpected, provocative, purposely disruptive and confusing and *reconstruction* of context via “simultaneous relation to multiple contexts” (Branham & Pearce 1985, p. 29). They describe *reconstruction* this way: “In any period of intellectual change, advocates of new ideas must address audiences whose vision reflects the soon-to-be-outmoded universe of discourse, and the arguments must partake of that universe sufficiently to provoke understanding and change” (p. 29). This characterization of rhetorical action essentially describes the discursive core of good pedagogy at any level, but particularly so at the university level. Teaching is essentially a process of relocating or recontextualizing disciplinary knowledge and professional practices in relation to each other (the imposition of logics that hold together disparate theories and concepts) and in relation to naïve, or developing audiences. Hence, in university classes, students soon learn that their existing universe of discourse is “soon-to-be-outmoded” when they are confronted new disciplinary vocabularies, theories and ways of thinking. Hence the knowledge developed in the context of research is relocated and reorganized in the context of the classroom. The pedagogical process, then, when done properly, traces a reconstructive loop which I will explain in the next section.

Branham and Pearce's patterns of response are useful, but not as provocative as their conceptualization of text-context relations which serve to tie together Bernstein's

concept of the pedagogical device and Brown's conception of ideology. I will use them to make my case that Barber's discourse (and the programmatic residue being the Graduation Initiative) misses the essential element of "interpersonal categorizing" (Brown 1978) and how that loss makes Barber's pedagogical discourse non-ideological and not compelling.

Branham and Pearce posit three forms of text-context relations. First, they describe *charmed loops*, in which texts and contexts are mutually entailing. In other words, charmed loops obtain in generic contexts such as funerals, dedications, debates, conventions, etc. (Branham & Pearce, 1985, p. 23). Second, they posit *subversive loops*, in which texts and contexts are mutually invalidating; that is, these activate text-context relations wherein the relationship is "irreparably damaged" (p. 23). The subversive loop is not really a loop due to the disjunction marked commonly by variations on the statement, "I just can't tell you ..." as expressions of ineffability (p. 23). Finally, they describe *strange loops*, in which texts and contexts are mutually transformative" (p. 23). In Branham and Pearce's scheme, the strange loop is elaborated as establishing a "regular, cyclical pattern of acts" (p. 25). Their paradigmatic example is drawn from the "alcoholic's syndrome" wherein the alcoholic believes, she can control her drinking (text A "I can control my drinking.") and consequently allows herself to move into context B where she drinks; the result is a revised self-perception that she is not able to control her drinking (text B "I cannot control my drinking.") and moves to locations (Context A) that promote sobriety.

However, given the case of Barber's relocation of deliverology to the CSU, none of these forms is properly descriptive. Nevertheless, related variations of context-text possibilities are suggested by Branham and Pearce's insights. One possible variation is that contextual reconstruction may be effected by relocating texts and explaining the relevant features of the text to the context. The discourse would essentially be a gloss explaining the speaker's logic for the relocation and interpreting the text within the new context. While Barber's presentation does relocate the discourse of deliverology to a new context—higher education--it does not articulate relevant relationships to its original context and therefore is not ideological. That is to say, in Brown's terms, it provides no account for actors' behavior, but merely structures behavior. I call this a *reflexive loop* because of its self-referential and closed nature. (See Fig. 3.) The effect of Barber's approach is a reflexive loop that is built not for purposes of explanation but for control. It is reflexive in that deliverology as a communication system looks to its own definitions, explanations, and interpretations of experience which it creates for itself. It is a self-defined system that features self-prescribed processes to achieve (often seemingly arbitrary) goals set by leaders.

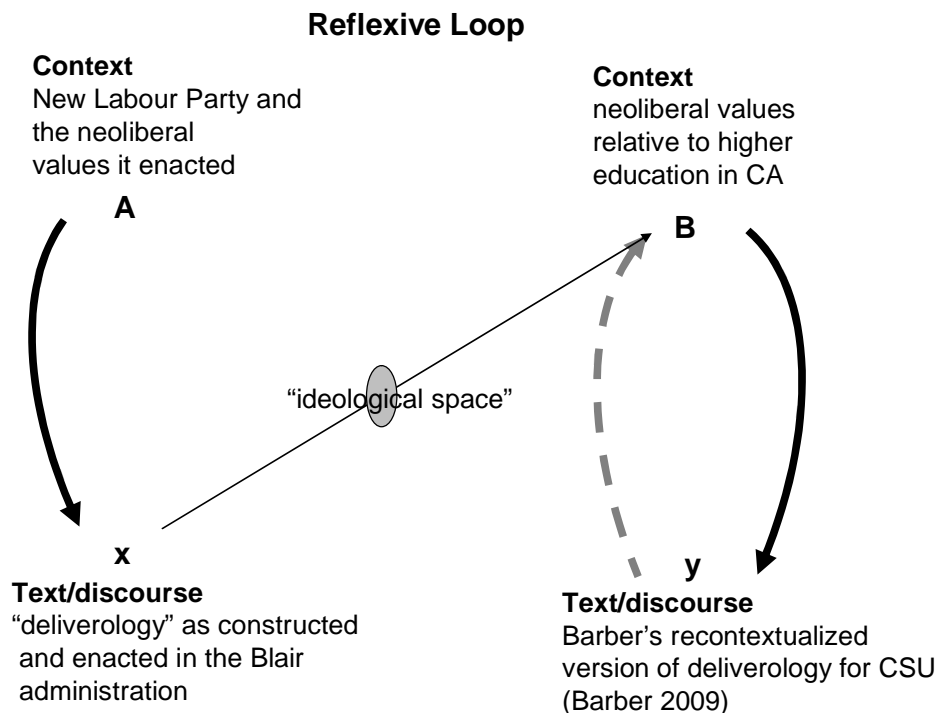


Fig. 3 The reflexive loop corresponds to Brown’s “deviance amplifying system” (1978, pp. 134 ff); in as much as the communication system has *no explanatory function*, there is *no means by which to account for* deviance from goal attainment, leaving actors to merely to “try harder.”

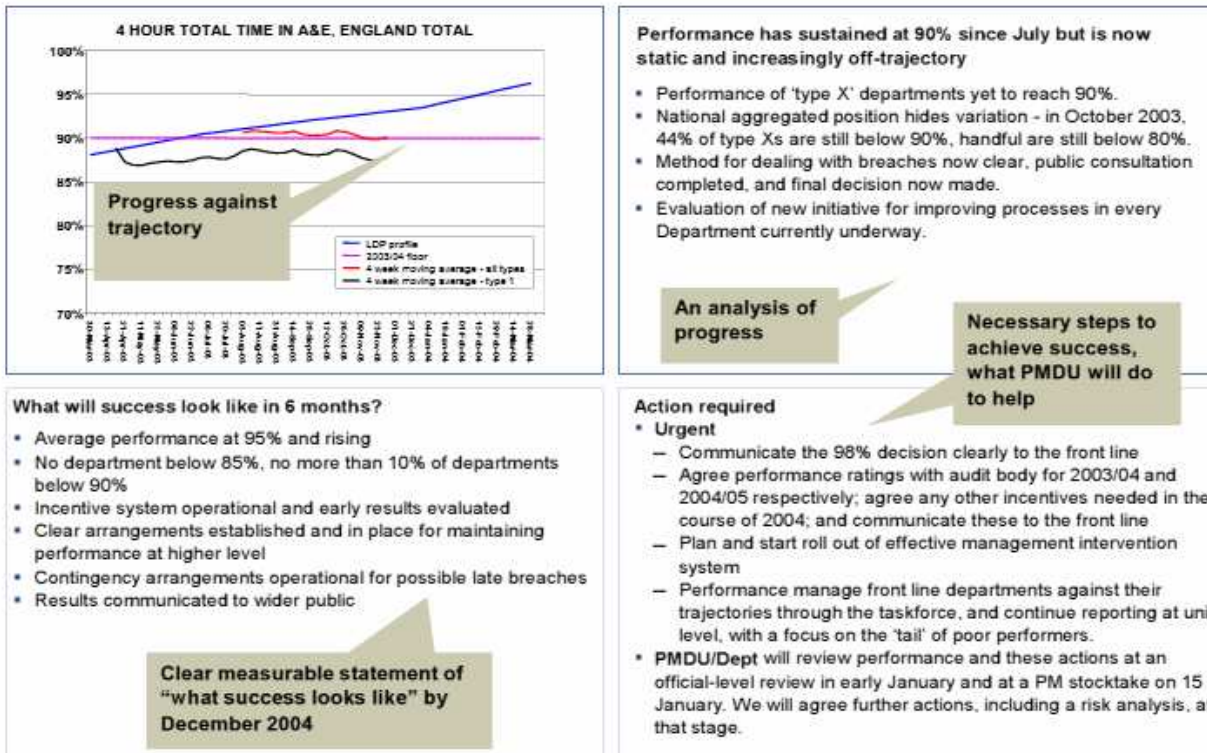
The Graduation Initiative is built to achieve prescribed goals set by system managers and the methods for achievement are also prescribed by the deliverology model. Notice that the “ideological space” is highly attenuated. (In a “democratic” discursive instructional environment, the ideological space is where authentic discussion and refinement of theory and practice occurs. This will be discussed below.)

The “ideological space” within the Graduation Initiative is essentially unoccupied, since it is in this space that system actors would struggle with making sense of the topics being treated. It is in this space that they would engage—explain, refine, contest--the meaningful and transformative concepts, values, even skills that invite testing of existing structures for their viability or for their need to change. The Graduation Initiative, given

its self-referential nature, produces echoes of its structure rather than discussion or debate about knowledge produced by it. As a result, the ideological space is attenuated, leaving what Brown's model would describe as a "deviance amplifying system" (Brown, 1978, p. 134).

In simplest terms, a deviance amplifying communication system deals with "gaps" in its accounts of experience by reusing existing accounts and it is closed to or inattentive to compensating ideas from other contexts or sources. Within a closed system such as deliverology, when targets are not met, reference to existing methodologies leads to application of those methods with more perceived rigor. Notice in Fig. 4, the tendency for leaders to deal with flattening of intervention results by increasing goals.

### Sample Delivery Report outputs, explaining traffic light judgments in the league table and agreed actions for the next 6 months



SOURCE: Instruction to Deliver

Fig. 4 The sample delivery report features the qualities of a deviance-amplifying system (Barber, 2009, slide 80)

Barber presented slide 80 as an example of "Routines in the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit" (Barber, 2009, slide 79) that are designed to maintain progress. The example in

Figure 4 was drawn by Barber from the Blair government's efforts to shorten wait times for patients using hospital emergency room (A & E) services. The universal target set by the government was four patient waiting hours in A & E. Notice in the upper right cell that, "Performance has sustained at 90% [of A & E] ... and is now static and increasingly off-trajectory" (Barber, 2009, slide 80). The finding seems to indicate a different intervention is needed. But the intervention recommended was grounded in the values of deliverology, one of which is constantly increasing scores on "delivery," "progress" (slide 12), "simple" (slide 28) or "leading" indicators (slide 57). Note that in the lower left cell (Fig. 4) that the target performance indicator for six months in the future was set to 95%, then note that the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU) committed to (urgently) "Communicate the 98% decision clearly to the front line". Notice, too, that there is no evidence that "the frontline" was consulted regarding the increased ambition of the target. The problem of static results of earlier procedures resulted in working the same procedures harder (setting higher goals) rather than provoking discussion of the data as pointing to a "gap" in the deliverology methodology that needed to be addressed as explanation for the stagnation of results.

In similar fashion, the CSU Trustees' Committee on Educational Policy Report recently noted that the Graduation Initiative as started in 2009 with Barber's work with the senior managers and that since that time, all graduation rates had improved by eight percent, but the achievement gap (the gap between "underrepresented" or "at-risk" students and those not in these categories) remained unchanged. Consequently,

In his inaugural "State of the CSU" address two months ago, Chancellor Timothy P. White committed the system to continuing its focus on student success and to raising graduation rates by an additional 10 percent across three different measures:

1. Four-year graduation rates for first-time full-time freshmen
2. Six-year graduation rates for first-time full-time freshmen
3. Three-year graduation rates for transfer students" (Agenda, Committee on Educational Policy, 20 May 2014, p. 22)

So, the Chancellor's response to no change in the achievement gap after four years of the Graduation Initiative was to increase the initial (and unachieved) goal of eight percent to ten percent decrease in the achievement gap, and to add three new

categories of surveillance as a result of a concern expressed by Governor Jerry Brown at the previous Trustees' meeting.<sup>7</sup> Such is the nature of a reflexive loop.

To clarify the concepts, it is helpful to compare and contrast the deviance amplifying reflexive loop of deliverology with the deviance compensating structure of what I call a *reconstructive* loop.

Returning to Bernstein's notion that "pedagogic discourse is a recontextualizing principle", and that, as the "recontextualizing principle creates recontextualizing fields, it creates agents with recontextualizing functions [and] . . . with practicing ideologies" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 33). Connecting that with Brown's contention that ideologies survive to the degree that they "compensate for gaps" (p. 134) in their explaining and ordering functions, it seems clear that the development of knowledge should entail a reconstructive loop that relocates, or recontextualizes theories and facts (abstractions at various levels) for instructional purposes. The ideology constructed serves in any field to explain experience and when explanations fail, new ideas to compensate for the "gaps" in explanation must be appropriated. (See Fig. 5).

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<sup>7</sup> At that time, "Governor Jerry Brown questioned why the system was talking about six-year rates and why was four years (now at 16 percent) not the baseline" (Agenda, Committee on Educational Policy, 14 March 2014, p. 145).

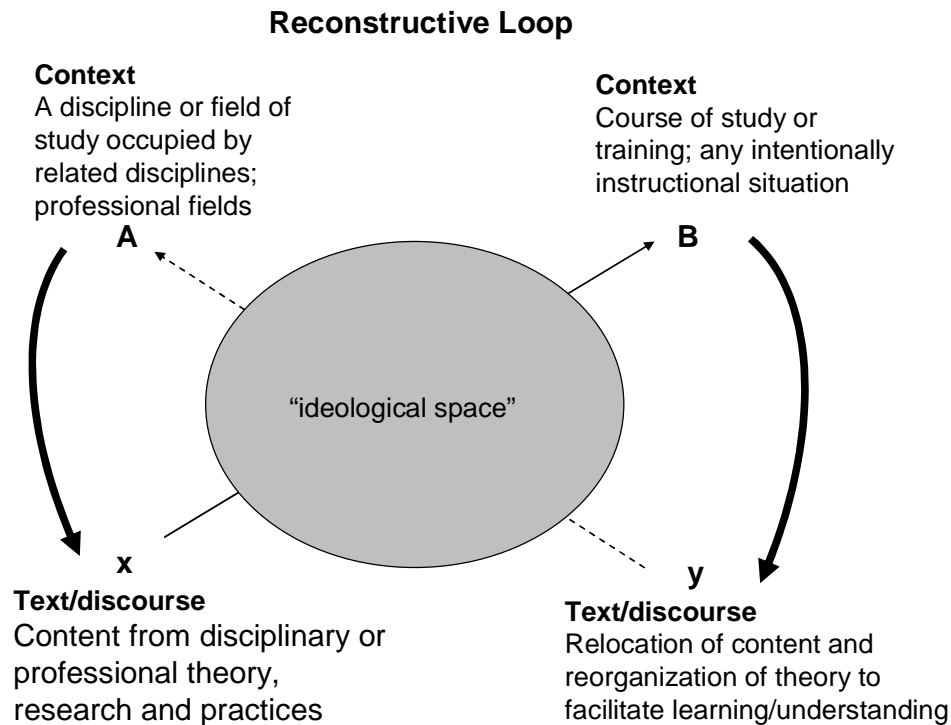


Fig. 5 The reconstructive loop portrays the relationship between text and context and the potential location of Bernstein's ideological space resulting from repositioning of discourse to a new pedagogical site. (Bernstein, 2000, p. 32)

When teaching, instructors' primary tasks are to identify theories, facts, models, etc. from relevant bodies of disciplinary knowledge and relocate, or recontextualize that knowledge in the instructional context (be it academic instruction or professional training) via the pedagogic device. The purpose of all instruction, at its core, is to facilitate understanding of the world and to develop accounts for phenomena, sensibly relating power, knowledge and forms of consciousness. (Bernstein, 1986, p. 208). The reconstructive loop (Fig. 5) pictures that process. From the body of disciplinary knowledge (A), instructors (and textbook authors) construct a discursive account for experience in the relevant field/s (x). That content is relocated to the instructional context (B) and the discourse therein functions as the pedagogic device (y). Where there are significant "gaps" in the accounts, disciplinary knowledge must be modified (return to A) in order to refine, correct, or expand theory. The constant development of



and change in ideology to create a better fit with experience and knowledges from other contexts is deviance-compensating which maintains the ideological system. A good example of this process of ideologizing over a long period of time is the waxing of evolutionary biological theory since publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. The evolutionary explanation for the origin of species has been constantly modified to accommodate new knowledge generated by research; at the same time, the research has been driven by questions of about the completeness or coherence of the discourse/text articulating the explanation.

It is the constant interaction between (x) and (B) and (y) and (A) that occupies the ideological space. The “democratic” value of education (when fully enacted) gives voice to all actors who wish to engage the problems of knowledge development. Students’ questions (most often at the graduate level) developed in response to (y) often drive the redevelopment of first (A), then (x). While a hierarchy of actors remains, and while certainly imperfect, the result of an official recontextualizing field (ORF) built as a reconstructive loop provides is a functioning ideology serving as a way for people to “comprehensively order their experience and subsume their specific activities” (Brown, 1978, p. 124). Further, a reconstructive loop articulates the “distributive re-contextualizing and evaluative rules for specializing forms of consciousness” (Bernstein, 1986, p. 208.) Actors in any organization that we hope is a “learning organization” (in Argyris, Putnam and Smith’s broadest sense) then have a stake in the learning (ideologizing) process. For Brown, what makes the process meaningful is the dimension of ultimacy (1978, p. 126) wherein the projects of individuals and communities engenders commitment to what each sees as meaningful enterprise. Such is the nature of a reconstructive loop.

In sum, I’ve argued that deliverology as the “graduation initiative” fails to connect contexts and thus fails to occupy the ideological space Bernstein argued was the product of pedagogic discourse. Barber’s PowerPoint presentation, as pedagogical discourse, constructs a structure of surveillance and summary, but in so doing fails to articulate meaningful categories of experience and relationship. There is nothing in the discourse to explain past or present conditions; no vision of new possibilities of relationship are offered. We should not confuse statements that set targets and statements that articulate a vision of desired states. Setting targets and charging subordinates to achieve them apart from their perceived identities and roles in social, and power systems in which they work disconnects the project from them. The interdependence of major power shares—particularly students and faculty—are not recognized; the social, negotiational dimensions of the language device are missing; the “agents of record” are only top administrators in the CSU. Rather than work with all relevant entities, the administrators are charged with surveillance of the delivery units

and with collection of regular progress reports. Power is not negotiated and shared among all parties who have a role in the education process and who finally interpret the meaning of “graduation” (e.g. some never intend to graduate). Power is not a communication medium to facilitate circulation and relocation of relevant discourses, but a blunt instrument deployed to keep staff in line. Being “accountable” in this competitive, neoliberal, instrumental model is a euphemism for “vulnerable and therefore controllable.”

Finally, two important implications emerge—one regarding theory and one regarding management practice. The first is that management theories are context-bound. While Barber’s theory (model?) of deliverology may be suited to some contexts, its self-defined and referential structure is not suited to an organization such as a university or university system that is built around human and humane symbolizing processes that are necessarily ideological in nature. Pedagogical discourse as a principle for “recontextualizing fields, it creates agents with recontextualizing functions. ...Formally, we move from a recontextualizing principle to a recontextualizing field with agents with practicing ideologies” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 33) and those ideologies ideally “comprehensively order [learners’] experience and subsume their specific activities” (Brown, 1978, p.124). The context of higher education enacts discourses, roles, and power relations for purposes quite unlike those deployed by instrumental, pragmatic contexts. Learning contexts move beyond “transfer of information for immediate use” to the development of knowledge and ways of thinking that are “interpretive and normative as well as empirical” (Argryis et al., 1985. p. 78). Deliverology (Barber) and the Graduation Initiative (CSU), as the evidence from Barber’s presentation and from administrative talk and action suggest, focus only on outcomes and therefore lack the power of ideology to engage actors in creative, meaningful ways that lead to outcomes that invite effort, value and commitment.

The second implication for management practice is to examine carefully the contexts to which theory is applied and modify theory (or replace it) to be consistent with the contextual rules of the new location for its use. All organizations are not alike, and some, particularly educational organizations, are decidedly different from those designed for purposes of production. While this conclusion, on its face, is simple, the task of contextual analysis is complex, as the preceding case shows, requiring that consultants and decision-makers frame efforts at organizational change to articulate the discourse of management with the new context of application by establishing a functional and meaningful reconstructive loop.

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