

1 **On the Discourse of the Hysteric as a way to become a Teacher:**
2 **A Case Study**

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4
5 *Several young teachers discover that they can disappear in class due to a speech that*
6 *stick the students. Isabelle, a new teacher of Physical Education, managed to regain*
7 *attention of a lost class by changing the form of her speech directed at the students, by*
8 *incorporating "that of which she said to them, something of her". Enlightened by*
9 *psychoanalysis, this analysis will allow to verify whether what allowed her to regain*
10 *the class by becoming the Subject of her speech through the Hysteric speech. Ways of*
11 *report on this singular structure of speech in the teachers training will be envisaged.*

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13 Keywords: Teacher's Discourse, psychoanalysis, Subject, speech.

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15
16 **Introduction**

17
18 By choosing a scientific path to describe the meaning of what is
19 dysfunctional in the classroom, schools try to name the reality of the teachers'
20 relationship by reducing it to signification. Yet in the bond of words that both
21 unites and divides teachers and pupils, there is a meaning that is not the
22 signification, but the signifier. By considering that a teacher "id" meant to
23 speak, we can foresee that at given moments during the class, the subject of the
24 enunciation won't coincide with the subject of the statement – and that this gap
25 will make some class time awkward and others, enriching.

26 This reality of the act of teaching is discernible if we try, from a
27 psychoanalytic point of view, to consider both teacher and pupil as Subjects of
28 the unconscious, signifier for another signifier. Indeed, it has often been
29 pointed out that the young teachers who manage to establish a fruitful
30 relationship with their pupils often have a discourse that is outside the
31 recommended or expected guidelines. It seems interesting, in constructing the
32 case of Isabelle (a pseudonym protecting the subject's anonymity), a first-year
33 Physical Education teacher, to detect the structure of her "change of tone " by
34 pinpointing the gap between the said and the saying in her words, and to see if
35 that is what allowed her to recreate a productive atmosphere in her class.

36 The purpose of this study is, therefore, to show how Isabelle's words:

- 37
38 • express part of her unconscious desire
39 • found her as a Subject
40 • can be considered an enunciation
41 • are produced from the Discourse of the hysteric

42
43 What is proposed here is an original dialectical approach connecting the
44 subjectivity of a Subject engaged in inter-diction and the concreteness of the
45 teaching context, while aiming to go beyond the contradictions that this
46 implies.

1 Before defining the clinical methodology that was followed, the theoretical
2 points of psychoanalysis that come into play here will be presented. Then,
3 ideas for teacher training incorporating this way of saying will be considered.
4

5 6 **Psychoanalysis as a Constitutive Field** 7

8 As therapy, psychoanalysis looks at singular psychic determinations of
9 human suffering. It proposes a *modus operandi* for understanding and lessening
10 them based on the etiology of what is problematic by taking the subject's
11 words as an expression of their subjective truth.

12 Like in the cure, psychoanalytic view thinks "non-sense" as the core of an
13 human research. This approach makes it possible to pinpoint the stakes,
14 because its domain is trans-individual discourse, in which an "irrational"
15 element, as Isabelle puts it, cannot be avoided. The analytical postulate does in
16 fact offer "logic for thinking the negative, which is not negative" (Ansermet,
17 1999, p 151). To think the Real (according to Lacan), which eludes meaning
18 and disorganizes or reorganizes inter-relations in the classroom, it is necessary
19 to hear what is said by the teacher in the classroom, above and beyond the
20 significations that are generally attributed to it. This ethical requirement of
21 abandoning presuppositions is what allowed Freud to see the hysterics in
22 Salpêtrière Hospital in a different light.

23 From that point of view, considering the patching together of words that
24 allows some teachers to "win the class back" (Montagne, 2013, p 509), means
25 no longer leaving what teachers say about what they say in class outside of the
26 scope of pedagogical research. The idea is to reverse the function of the spoken
27 word, as Freud did with transference. Instead of ignoring subjective meanings
28 and range, to consider taking them into account and en in charge as an
29 expression of the Subject's truth (and thus as a trace of the cause that drives
30 them).

31 Indeed, psychoanalysis postulates that valid knowledge can come from
32 everyone's singularity. Introducing this perspective into the field of Pedagogy
33 has a political and epistemological aim. Brousse (1997), Lacadee (2007),
34 Gavarini (2009), showed the usefulness of associating "the-person-who-talks-
35 about-what-they're-saying" to the search for a solution to grasp "that-which-
36 causes-it." This can be as useful for the researcher identifying the structure of
37 the Subject as for its potential effects on the life of the Subject speaking about
38 themselves. The idea in undertaking this with young teachers is to help them see
39 where part of their desire is founded and to accept its reflections. The ethics of
40 psychoanalysis, which is to participate in the subjective emergence of the
41 Subject, lies there.
42

43 **The Unconscious Revealed through Speech** 44

45 The unconscious only exists so as to be revealed by what Freud called the
46 derivatives of the unconscious. Thus, the *Revue Scilicet* (1970, p 103) states,
47 "as soon as it speaks, the Subject is determined by their discourse in a way that

1 inevitably escapes their control... only the consequences of this discourse
2 allow (a little bit of) the content to be measured". Although dreams, symptoms
3 and parapraxis, as manifestations of the unconscious, are not directly related to
4 speech (in the sense of producing communicative sounds), slips of the tongue,
5 puns and clever plays on words are manifestations of human beings' division
6 from their state as parlêtres ("speaking beings", neologism invented by Lacan).

7 Thus, when the subject expresses themselves, some of their words emerge
8 unintentionally, giving voice to what has been silenced and is growing inside
9 them, and which they neither know anything nor can speak about of their own
10 initiative. That is why we can say that the word is caused by desire. Thus,
11 "Everything that is the unconscious comes out in effects of language only. It is
12 something that is said without the subject's representing themselves in it, nor
13 saying themselves in it, nor knowing what they are saying in it." Lacan (1966, p
14 36)

15 By promoting the concept of *lalangue*, (a Lacan's neologism written in a
16 single word and in italics), Lacan emphasizes that the subject is conditioned
17 both by what they say and by what they don't say, and that the choices they
18 make within the vocabulary of a language to express what they want to say
19 shows more about them than they intend or realize. So saying is always saying
20 about oneself, because the (unintentional) choice the Subject makes from the
21 register of words to speak declares their singularity to the world. That's why
22 we can understand that in the articulation between language and speech, each
23 of the words spoken and heard acquires effects of signification above and
24 beyond their lexical meaning.

25 This consideration emphasizes that, when a teacher speaks, what students
26 hear of what the teacher is saying to them acquires meaning not only through
27 the grammatical effect of word association, but also through a subjective effect.

28 In some classroom moments, students go from tension to attention via the
29 effect of the teacher's speaking. These instants mean that quietness and
30 listening assert themselves in the classroom without the teacher's having to
31 resort to using their "statutory" authority. The class happens without having to
32 make it happen through an exercise of power. "Sometimes, you talk in a way
33 that you can see them listening, without having to say anything," is how
34 Isabelle puts it. So it seems that depending on the way in which a teacher
35 addresses the class or a student there can sometimes be something in their
36 manner of speaking that catches attention in a special way. Therefore, it is
37 through an effect of inter-subjectivity that one (the teacher), acquires affective
38 value for the other (the student), and that both the one and the other become
39 mutual signifiers. The Subject occurs through this double-significance effect.

40

1 **The Subject, Signifier for another Signifier**

2
3 By choosing to articulate his teaching around the notion of the “Subject”,
4 Lacan distinguished himself from Freud, who spoke of the “person” or
5 “individual.” For Lacan, the Subject of psychoanalysis emerges from his
6 discourse and is constituted by his entrance into the symbolic (language), and
7 speaks as much as he is spoken. In this structuration, in which he is only
8 represented, the Subject loses some fundamental part of his own truth that is
9 tied to the Real of the body and the jouissance that characterizes it. This
10 divided Subject, tucked into the gap between “I and me,” is neither Freud’s
11 ego, nor Descartes’ I, neither psychology’s individual nor sociology’s group
12 member, nor the epistemic school student. It ex-sists (remains outside of) the
13 human being but is consubstantial to it.

14 Prosaically, in class, the subject emerges from the articulation of two
15 signifiers, a student and a teacher, when they meet up in/through language. The
16 particular word that shows more of the Subject than they intended, by being
17 and making a signifier, can therefore be considered an enunciation.

18 These considerations pose the following dialectics as principles in the
19 linguistic act of teaching: “statement, conscious plural unequivocal
20 intentionality – vs. – enunciation, production of the singular equivocal
21 unconscious.” What clearly appears there is the fact that the teaching
22 profession is a profession of the verb, and that, as Isabelle says, “Anything can
23 happen when you open your mouth.”

24 25 **The Four Discourses**

26
27 Lacan established that inter-subjective relations are identifiable according
28 to the laws of the unconscious as long as we take into account the articulation
29 between language (the complete set of signifiers) and words (choice of one’s
30 signifiers). This perception defines a subject’s symbolic position in the world
31 when they are speaking to a listener. It also determines the Subject’s discourse.

32 Therefore, for Lacan, a discourse is an order that rules social bonds
33 through language. In their relationship towards others, all subjects, whatever
34 their status or role, move from one form of discourse to another in a variable
35 and more or less fixed way. Students and teachers, therefore, speak during
36 class from the different places that will be described, with different effects on
37 the teaching relationship. Lacan (1970) argues that this positioning takes place
38 according to what he calls the “theory of the four discourses”. This schema is
39 based on the principle that a discourse is not only a ‘said,’ or even an ‘unsaid’
40 whose saying can be exposed on, but a position.

41 The different discursive positions are characterized by four cardinal-point
42 questions that organize the way in which the Subject expresses themselves. What
43 is the cause of their speaking? From which place are they speaking? Who are
44 they speaking to? For what outcome(s)? Lacan named these queries Truth (the
45 intimate why of the words), Agent (the speaker’s position), Other (the recipient
46 of the words), and Product (the words’ effect).

1 The four discourses allow us to describe the way in which each subject
2 handles both the problem of their own singularity in their relationship with
3 others and their own incapacity to conceive of or entirely express the Real that
4 animates them and that they encounter. This conceptualization is different from
5 the usual ways (Durand, 2001, Shulman, 1987) in which we conceive of how a
6 teacher speaks and therefore positions themselves when facing a group of
7 students.

8 If we take as our starting point the idea that the Subject is a signifier (S1)
9 for another signifier (S2), Lacan symbolized the first speaking relationship as
10 $S1 \square S2$.

11 By adding that the signifier is what represents the Subject for another
12 signifier, the Subject resulting from the S1/S2 relationship, Lacan extended his
13 diagram by positioning the Subject under the first signifier:

14
15 S1 S2
16
17 \$

18
19 By considering that a subject's discourse encouraged something in the
20 economy of both their own desire and the listener's, he went on to establish that
21 the consequence of this ternary relationship was a production of desire, and he
22 placed the objet petit a under S2.

23
24 S1 S2
25
26 \$ // a

27
28 He then symbolized the impossibility for the Subject of knowing about the
29 desire by a double slash between \$ and a.

30 In Lacan's formulation the person who speaks, who is in the position of
31 being the agent, is not always S1 (the Master signifier). While the terms are
32 always in the same order relative to each other, no matter what position is held
33 when a Subject speaks, they occupy different places. In this way, each
34 configuration of the Theory "of the Four Discourses" schematizes a specific
35 subjective position. Each of the 4 discourses is named by the term that is in
36 position of being the agent. Thus Lacan proposes:

37	The Discourse of the Master			The Discourse of the University		
38						
39	S1		S2	S2		a
40						
41	\$	//	a	S1	//	\$
42						
43	The Discourse of the Hysteric			The Discourse of the Analyst		
44						
45	\$		S1	a		\$
46						
47	a	//	S2	S2	//	S1
48						

1 The 4 discourses describe the different modalities of the social bond
2 because each subject can move through these different modalities of discourse
3 in a variable and more or less fixed way. Whatever their status, role or
4 function, a subject can express themselves from:

- 5
- 6 • The “Discourse of the Master ” recognizes the fact that the subject is
7 spoken by the Other in a manner that is dependent on the ideals of the
8 moment or the context in which they are expressing themselves. This is
9 the super-ego’s discourse – the superego being the one who gives
10 orders. Within the field of schooling, it tells the teacher, “Obey! Work!
11 Transmit! Teach! Show!” This discourse doesn’t listen, it commands.
- 12 • The “Discourse of the University” focuses on knowledge. The
13 subjective truth of the words produced is hidden by the weight of
14 knowledge belonging to the field from which the subject is speaking.
15 Without wondering about the validity or the conditions of production of
16 the knowledge, this discourse says: “Know! Keep on knowing!” It uses
17 knowledge to reach the objectives of the Discourse of the Master. This
18 discourse doesn’t invent, it reproduces.
- 19 • The “Discourse of the Analyst” is the opposite of the Discourse of the
20 Master. It goes against identifications and undoes what seems obvious
21 to a subject or a social group. This discourse queries the subject it is
22 addressed to about his subjective position. This discourse doesn’t
23 command, it listens.
- 24 • The “Discourse of the Hysteric” is the one in which the unconscious
25 expresses itself. It questions the other through positions that put their
26 power in question. This discourse is the echo of the subject’s desire.

27

28 The great advantage of this schema is to conceive that teachers’
29 pedagogical acts can come from several different discourses and that the
30 different positions have affect students differently. Lacan specifies that the
31 presentation’s worth only comes from putting the ones’ into perspective
32 relative to the others, from noticing the interactions between them.

33

34

35 **Clinical Methodology**

36

37 Clinical research uses a particular scientific approach that is founded on
38 interpretative analysis of individual cases. The particularity of the method it is
39 based on is to focus on particular cases. Stake (1995), Ragin and Becker
40 (1992), Van Der Maren (1996), Widlöcher (1990) and Albarello (2011), as
41 well as Flyvbjerg (2006) have laid the foundations for scientific acceptance of
42 the single-case method in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

43 In addition, in clinical research, also includes, the association between
44 research and intervention. This is because of a certain ethic of action in which
45 searching for the structure and (or) cause of a singular situation allows for
46 treating the incidents that disturb the automatic piloting of teaching life.

1 Clinical work inspired by psychoanalysis is committed to making it
2 possible for one subject to speak to another of/about what they are going
3 through. Through interpretation, the one who listens allows for a different
4 knowledge to appear. This knowledge is invented from the speaking of a
5 subject touching on what is truthful for them as they speak about what they are
6 going through, and is not simply knowledge that refers to a body of pre-
7 existing knowledge where the one who is speaking can be inserted. A clinic
8 inspired by psychoanalysis allows a new truth/knowledge relationship.

9 Because a clinic is defined in part by the truth of the subject, the clinical
10 material we are concerned with here is Isabelle's discursive production.

11 12 **The Subject of the Study**

13
14 Isabelle, whose discourse will be the source of this article, is a first-year
15 Physical Education teacher. She works in a very tough Parisian middle school
16 where, she says, "students don't hear... or only hear what (those who, the two
17 options are homophones in French) they want to hear."

18 We met her in a teaching-methods analysis group established by the
19 teacher-training school of Paris in order to help "get started in the profession"
20 During the first meeting, she took her time describing in great detail the
21 problems she was having with a 9th-grade "reorientation" class. Although her
22 situation is not in and of itself exceptional, Isabelle let it be known that after
23 having "tried everything – from the friendliest attitude to the most authoritarian
24 one – all in vain" and "almost given up, or even quit teaching," she managed to
25 "become their teacher when I managed to touch them, when I started talking to
26 them outside of the discourse of college or teacher-training school You have to
27 talk to them in your own way, with your own feelings, without premeditating
28 things, if you want them to listen to you. That's how I managed to get them on
29 board. Now things are more or less ok."

30 31 **Instrumentation**

32
33 Collecting Isabelle's discourse took place through "non-directive interviews"
34 (Mucchielli, 2009, p 122): 3 encounters of 45 minutes each, all entirely
35 recorded and exhaustively transcribed. The words presented were preserved in
36 their entirety. The familiar or imprecise grammatical turns of phrase proved
37 revealing in terms of language's equivocalness.

38 In this type of interview, the interviewer asks the subject to express their
39 perceptions of the situation (awkwardness and inventions) and their causes. In
40 the answers, the interviewer attempts to:

- 41
42
- 43 • spot the logical constructions placed in the words of the subject who
44 speaks, about what they are going through and the feelings that
45 generates in them, and that express what the subject just said.
 - 46 • to shed light on certain inconsistencies and recurrent elements heard in
the subject's discourse.

- 1 • to propose their misunderstandings and understandings in order to
2 highlight the intentions of the subject who is expressing themself.
3 • to suggest and point out connections between different moments in the
4 narrative or between different narratives in order to define some of the
5 structure of the subject who is speaking.
6

7 Above all, the interviewer is committed to not forcing meaning onto
8 comments, to not “over-interpreting,” nor to introducing on their own initiative
9 new signifiers during an interview. Associations that the words heard could
10 lead to will be proposed as a basis for open-ended questions during the
11 following interview. Interpretative hypotheses that emerge while transcribing
12 the interview will also provide material for questions at subsequent encounters.

13 “Flexible listening” (referring to the analyst’s floating attention) allows for
14 meanings other than the standard communicative ones of to be heard for certain
15 elements. This epistemological position considers that the researcher’s
16 subjectivity is recognized as a part of the research’s instrumentation. It is what
17 assigns new meaning to the discourse produced by the subject. In this process,
18 the idea is to consider that the discourse of a subject who speaks about what
19 they are going through only becomes signifying for the listener through the
20 words chosen to express themself by the person who is speaking. The
21 researcher will have a hole poked in their ear by the signifiers in the subject’s
22 language. This hole allows a bond to be woven between the said and the heard,
23 by detecting the gap between the latent content and the manifest content in the
24 discourse of the person who is speaking about themself.

25 This process provides understanding of something beyond the heard
26 subject. It allows the subject themself to elaborate and to grant, often for the
27 first time, thanks to the operative effect of language, a hitherto unrealized
28 signification in what they are going through. Thus Isabelle will hear herself say
29 some of the structure of her enunciation and her new discourse. So the
30 researcher and their partner are involved in the co-production of a knowledge
31 about the Subject.

32 The purpose, in a clinical approach based on interpreting interviews, is
33 indeed to “not repress as beside-the-point non-knowledge... the subject’s
34 saying, the idea they have of their own suffering, the interpretation that they
35 won’t fail to make” (Brousse, 1997, p 12).

36

37 **Ethical Considerations**

38

39 Isabelle, the director of her school, and the Regional Pedagogical Inspector
40 in charge of first-year teachers were all advised about the cause and nature of
41 the conversations that allowed us to collect her words. The purpose was
42 essentially to collect clinical materials for a thesis (Montagne, 2006). The
43 recorded and exhaustively transcribed spoken words remain confidential. The
44 students’ names were changed to preserve their anonymity as well. While the
45 interviews also helped Isabelle improve both her own self-perception and the
46 construction of her newly acquired teaching skills, this subjective self-
47 perception was not integrated into either the object or the results of the present

1 study. The researcher never presented or positioned himself as a teacher trainer
2 or pedagogical advisor, nor did he ever express his personal opinion of what
3 was said, or offer professional advice about the situation described. Isabelle
4 was informed *à posteriori* about the outcome of the interpretation of what she
5 said. Her reactions to this communication, (comments or effects on her way of
6 being a teacher) were not included in the results presented here.

7 Nevertheless, a difference should still be made here between neutrality
8 towards the content of what was heard in the interviews and the inevitable
9 subjective implication involved in encountering speech during the interview.

10 Clinical ethics are founded on taking into account and analyzing the
11 researcher's (listener's) subjective position and implication, but also the
12 trainer's (listener's). I first met Isabelle in a talking analysis group for first-year
13 Phys-Ed teachers) in which my job was to "accompany new teachers getting
14 started in the profession ". It was a fairly unique role, as I was the "listening
15 Phys Ed teacher" in the regional Board of Education's team of "gym-teacher
16 trainers." This specificity lead me to adopt a position of non-knowledge in
17 conversations in order to offer new teachers an empty place in which they
18 could place their lacks, doubts, refusals and questions. Isabelle was very
19 receptive to that self-restraint (on my part), as I was receptive to what she had
20 to say about herself. She stated, in one of our one-on-one interviews: "By
21 asking questions in response to our questions, you were the one who made me
22 realize that what I was going through with my dreadfult wasn't so cut-and-dry.
23 That I was also part of what was happening to me. Because you told us "hear
24 yourselves," I thought, hmmm... maybe it's not as obvious as all that. That's
25 how I started thinking of that gym class as something that really mattered."
26

27 **The Process**

28
29 The three interviews took place at Isabelle's school (in the library). They
30 were spaced out every two weeks from December to February in a single
31 school year. A full transcription was done immediately after each interview in
32 order to enable the researcher to read each one before performing the next one.
33 In addition to allowing the researcher to request clarifications, this
34 (interpretative) re-reading also brought to light certain inconsistencies,
35 redundancies and equivocation in Isabelle's discourse. These effects of
36 discourse, stemming from the encounter between Isabelle's signifiers and the
37 researcher's, provided the basis for the opening questions of the following
38 interviews. Both the specific questions and the general orientation of the
39 interviews were discussed in joint meetings (discussions involving the 4
40 clinical researchers/ teachers, plus a psychoanalyst).

41 Once the interviews had all been done, an 'after-the-fact' analysis was
42 performed on the verbatim transcription as a first step in analyzing the results
43 and the case construction.

44

1 **The Analytical Method**

2
3 Structuring Isabelle's discourse into a case study was made possible by
4 regrouping her words by theme. Several fields of argument were found: her
5 perception of her profession, herself, her students, her impossible point, her
6 discourse towards her students, her discourse about her own discourse, her
7 displacement and her "new professional know-how." Establishing dialectics of
8 these different elements of discourse allowed for construction of a case
9 discussion.

10 Technically that means seeing the collected discourse through the words
11 read and both the researcher's signifying chain and psychoanalytic concepts. A
12 sort of elaboration in which the interpreter's unconscious can be at work. So
13 Isabelle's spoken words were submitted to a floating reading that facilitated
14 detection of repetitions, paradoxes, Freudian slips and syntactical mistakes, as
15 well as revealing some of the metaphorical meaning of her words. Detecting
16 the equivocal in a discourse is the first step the interpretation, which brings out
17 certain significations by going beyond a simple syntactical reading.

18 So the subjectivity of the reader is the interpretative instrument during the
19 construction of a possible signification of what was said. During this phase, the
20 idea is not to attempt to reveal THE meaning of what a subject is going
21 through, but to try to detect what sticks out, what is sur-prizing in the spoken
22 when it is read.

23 In order to define the enlightening effect of the interpretative process, we
24 can say that the interpretation supplies signification and truth to otherwise
25 meaningless events. The subject's words are taken here as signifying clues to
26 the meaning of what the subject is going through. This use of words is based on
27 detecting and using the gap between the signifier and the signified. These two
28 terms are to be understood here in the acceptance proposed by Lacan.
29 Differentiating from linguistic field, it recognizes the distinction between a
30 word's objective signification, the value of its standard syntax, the concept that
31 a sign (the signified) corresponds to, and that sign's singular value, its
32 subjective weight for the subject who employs it and the psychic representation
33 of the sound as each person perceives it (the signifier). Identifying that gap
34 liberates the discourse's imprisoned meaning. Because, in effect, the property
35 of speech is to allow what it doesn't say to be heard. In this equivocality, what
36 is sought in Isabelle's words is not the absolute truth, but rather her own
37 signifying truth caught in her unconscious intentionality.

38 Thus, analyzing the spoken word allows the construction of a potential
39 meaning of what the subject is going through.

40 This construction is still clearly the effect of the dual-level (both during the
41 interview and while reading the written transcription) verbal encounter
42 between the researcher and the subject. It is not the unveiling by (the
43 supposedly knowledgeable) one of the signification of what the other is going
44 through. It is a proposed causal explanation of what is being gone through. It
45 demonstrates a certain understanding of the subject's psychic structure by the
46 researcher as well as the researcher's beliefs in terms of the causes and
47 purposes of the subject's behavior and words. Once again, the presentation of

1 an outcome to other researchers (in a joint meeting) allows for validating or
2 infirming the theoretical and conceptual coherence that exists between words
3 and interpretation. In the present case, this proposition allowed for
4 identification of the young teacher's enunciative singularity and
5 conceptualization of her unique way of speaking to a class.

8 **Discussion: The Case Isabelle "I was beside myself"**

10 Interpreting Isabelle's words supports the hypothesis of a homology
11 between some of her words as a teacher and an enunciation produced first from
12 the Discourse of the Hysteric, then from that of the Analyst. It also allows the
13 observation that this displacement happened after the Discourses of the Master
14 and the University had been seen to have failed.

15 Isabelle describes her situation in class, "It happened with my 9th-grade
16 'orientation' students. In gym, in small groups, they were just fooling around
17 on the apparatus. Then one of them pushed another one on the top parallel bar.
18 And I thought, 'Somebody's going to get killed on me,' and I shouted STOP at
19 the top of my lungs! My screaming like a lunatic surprised them. I was beside
20 myself! Then I spoke to them very quietly. I poured everything out, that I hated
21 coming to class, That it wasn't worthy of a student, That they made me sad
22 because I cared about them, that that was why I chose this profession, to teach
23 kids to do different sports better, to get along with each other enjoying sports...
24 Afterwards, they told me that I had been enunciating very slowly – when I am
25 always rushing, who talks fast. While I was telling them all that, I was listening
26 to myself talk. I could see them sitting there, listening to me, it was the first
27 time I got them to be quiet without having to ask for it. I could hear my own
28 voice as though someone else were talking. But I can remember everything I
29 said very clearly as I tell you about it now, 2 months later."

31 *Recognizing the inefficiency of the Discourses of the Master and of the*
32 *University: "What I thought would be good for being in charge and teaching*
33 *them stuff didn't work"*

35 Phys Ed's being a school subject depends less on its simple presence on
36 school grounds than on there being a teacher (master) who has to reconstruct
37 the idea of school at each lesson. When the master leaves the gym, school
38 leaves too. If a class exists during recreation, it is by the effect of the master,
39 the location alone does not create the bond. In this construction, Isabelle,
40 through her instructions, her advice to help with learning and her calls to order
41 demonstrated a teacherly fantasy entirely constructed around the "Discourse of
42 the Master" as we have presented it. This position seems to have been proven
43 inefficient or even penalizing with those students. Isabelle explains, "I could
44 say what I pleased, they didn't take it in, got upset over the least little thing,
45 didn't do anything, or worse, were out of control (cursing, sneaking out of
46 class). I wasn't part of the group, it was impossible for me to join their group
47 (the students were in a 9th-grade reorientation class...). There was this huge

1 gap between what I would say and what they heard, or were willing to hear. As
2 though I were speaking a foreign language. But how could you expect them to
3 hear me when they don't even hear each other. Actually, what I thought would
4 be good for being in charge and teaching them stuff didn't work." While the
5 words she spoke followed the rules, "conformed to, like, to what you expect
6 from a teacher. Someone who's there to transmit and to give students orders,"
7 is reinforced by the Master Signifiers of sports, which organize Isabelle "as an
8 athletic woman." The S1 Master Signifiers, "effort, cooperation, self-respect,
9 respect for each other, competition, records," crop up frequently when she
10 speaks. They motivate her way of being. By deduction, when her word as a
11 teacher/master echoes them, she believes they strengthen her authority. In her
12 eyes, those commandments are loftier when they refer to sporting values. This
13 construction of rule-abiding, authoritarian authority draws Isabelle far from
14 who she is as a singular, desiring subject "who loves the students above all,"
15 and indeed, "It falls on its face a lot."

16 At times, her training at STAPS (Science and Technology of Physical and
17 Sporting Activities) Sports-Teaching College removes her from leadership
18 upheld by sporting values and the power inherent in her role; instead it favors
19 seeking authority depending on knowledge of the students' bodies... In that
20 context, she no longer has to command, the knowledge she dispenses is
21 supposed to do that for her. By rights, what she knows should establish her
22 authority. "When I explain why, they blow it big time, I give them the real
23 reasons, bio-mechanical stuff, physio. I tell them that they have to listen to me
24 because it's important to understand how their bodies work." In this discourse,
25 S2 knowledge takes the place of the agent and institutes the discourse of the
26 University. Like many teachers who come through the competitive French
27 teacher-training system, Isabelle thinks that being aware that a piece of
28 knowledge exists is enough to become a user of it, and that her stating it is
29 enough to give it value to those who listen to her. For her, what is said in class
30 – simply because it is stated by the teacher – is necessarily true, and, ipso facto
31 establishes the authority of the person who says it. Yet, by talking that way,
32 Isabelle is no more than a record player repeating knowledge that has no
33 meaning for her students. Because it is in fact (and perhaps above all) the
34 listener who establishes the receptability of what is said by someone who is
35 reciting. In this case, it is S2, the second signifier, which establishes the
36 validity of the first signifier, S1. When she parrots a speech that pre-exists her,
37 one that she herself submits to, Isabelle believes it to be true (stemming from
38 her truth). Indeed, below the bar, S1 tries to get her to speak ever more "true
39 knowledge," i.e. one that stems from the University. She thinks that in this
40 way, her students will be 'converted' "I thought that by giving them technical
41 information that I would get through to them, convince them that I was there
42 for their sake, that I knew how to make them learn." But knowledge – rather
43 than something from inside herself, something on the order of desire – is what
44 makes Isabelle say what she says. Yet in the "Discourse of the University" (as
45 we have seen it), the subject is produced (product). It is the object of science. It
46 is no longer subject; it has been neutralized by knowledge. Thus this attempt to
47 achieve technical, knowledgeable authority also ignores the subject in the act

1 of teaching. It does not in fact establish the teacher/master's symbolic position
2 in class.

3 Along both these lines, we recognize the "negative freedom of speech that
4 has given up on being recognized" (Lacan, 1966, p 279). Isabelle is not
5 speaking in her own name, she doesn't dare to express her true self, to speak
6 from what she is. Her diction is simply the repetition of dictated edicts. Her
7 teacherly discourse follows the Phys Ed curriculum, including the fundamental
8 issues and scientific knowledge required, to a T. In this way, Isabelle becomes,
9 both in style and in substance, the object of her own discourse. She doesn't ask
10 herself (doesn't say) what she wants out of the encounter with the students, but
11 simply how to hew to curriculum. She doesn't manage to be the subject of
12 what would be her own words.

13 This stilted and stultifying position means that Isabelle, objectified and
14 drawn to a future that must be reached univocally, shrinks from the possibility
15 of an inter-subjective encounter that can only take place in the present. That
16 can only occur "outside the box," outside the curriculum, outside of STAPS
17 knowledge, only when she is lead off trail by the students.

18 Students' display of refusal and pulling back ripped her fantasy to shreds.
19 Isabelle says that, for want of positive feedback from students, you "lose faith
20 in what you're going to say, no longer know what's right, what's in the
21 curriculum, in books, or what they told you." This conforms to what every
22 teacher has gone through at some point, i.e. the unpleasant impression of not
23 knowing, when they think they are expected to be (or expect themselves to be),
24 the "Subject who is Supposed to Know" (such as defined by Lacan, 2001) or
25 even thinks they should play the role of the "Supposed Subject OF
26 Knowledge." This wavering goes so far as to make Isabelle wonder about the
27 legitimacy she grants herself, "I wondered – if they don't listen to me, and my
28 words are worthless, then am I really a teacher?"

29

30 *Going towards the Discourse of the Hysteric: "I couldn't do anything but say*
31 *myself,"*

32

33 Isabelle explains, "In fact, it's actually thanks to the students that things
34 changed. They got me to share my real feelings. That was the first time they
35 really listened to me. I hadn't planned to say that like that. Like, without really
36 knowing. I didn't say all that just as a teacher, but as a person. Maybe that's
37 why it got through to them? I was speaking from my gut, talking about myself.
38 It just flowed out, I didn't have to force it. Still, it's exhausting, afterwards I
39 was wrung out. They even came up to me and asked, "Are you, ok, Miss?
40 What should we do now?" I said, we go back to working in groups. We had 15
41 minutes left, I didn't say anything, they put the mats away without a hitch.
42 Everything just flowed."

43 Isabelle goes on, "That class is deaf to scolding and threats... It's hard to
44 impose what doesn't come from within. You need real conviction to convince
45 them... now I know that to touch them, you have to put yourself on the line...
46 Everything I said the day I told it like it was, I said on my own. I didn't know
47 that I would know how to say all that. That's how you get their attention. If you

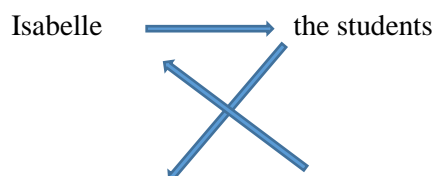
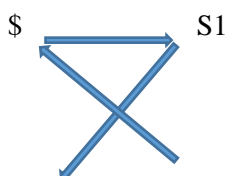
1 don't believe in what you're saying they won't believe you. That's how I
 2 recreated the class, the class group." Through this expression of her own
 3 desire, she let some of her own "teacher being" through. This syntagm should
 4 be seen as the imaginary, symbolic and real position held by the Subject
 5 (Isabelle) as a signifier for another signifier (Isabelle's class). The "teacher
 6 being" is the way in which teachers express the urges and incarnate the desire
 7 that animate them in performing their role. It is both the completion of the
 8 object-cause of their chosen profession, and the source of the object-goal in
 9 their teaching. The classes they teach fluctuate between the "why" and the
 10 "what for" (homophones in French) of their life choices. In other terms, it is
 11 what projects from them and symbolizes their being in the world in front of
 12 students. The "teacher being" appears more particularly when the teacher
 13 disappears beneath the signifier they become when speaking. By expressing
 14 themselves through an enunciation that surrenders part of them without their
 15 knowledge, they offer students their condition as a living, desiring being.
 16 Isabelle says it in her own way, "I had to talk to them like that, I couldn't do
 17 anything but say myself. It was that or die. They finally knew who I really
 18 was." She clearly demonstrates the subject as effect of the response to the Real.

19 Freud exposed the truth of the hysteric and made it a respectable subject of
 20 study, but Lacan, as it says above, established the Discourse of the Hysteric as
 21 a particular type of social bond. In his quartet of "discourses" the hysterical
 22 discourse is caused by desire (a) and gets the subject (\$) to act. It is the one that
 23 opposes the discourse of the University and of the Master. Through an
 24 enunciation, it is the one that allows the Subject to take back into their own
 25 hands the path of their life (or of a relationship to the other) that has gotten
 26 away from them, that they don't understand, or in which they have been
 27 objectified.

28 Knowing that the subject's desire is his enunciation,, we can hear that
 29 Isabelle "said (of) herself". A part of her desire. This truth, even half-spoken, is
 30 what rebuilt the "class group." It seems that both the content and the way it was
 31 said to the students acted as the "savoir y faire" (Montagne, 2013) in her
 32 professional re-positioning. One feature of the discourse of the hysteric is to
 33 substitute itself as a 'production' of S2 knowledge while enjoying (a) the
 34 discourse of the Master.

35 The enunciation produced by Isabelle from the context of the discourse of
 36 the hysteric is what allowed her to establish her bond with others (her presence
 37 as a first-year, female teacher in front of this class) without having to perform a
 38 representation of a role or status. The content of her discourse towards the
 39 students took the place of a master signifier. In the Lacanian diagram, it took
 40 the place of truth, the color of desire.

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a // S2 Isabelle's Desire // knowing how

Isabelle pinpoints her “change of tone (to) that day at the gym.” Still, she also mentions that “the week before, M had told me that “Master Bates” wanted to see me (in the original French, she quoted the student as saying “Allez vous faire mettre” (“Go screw yourself”) which could also be heard as “Allez vous faire Maître” (“Go become a teacher/master”). That’s when I said to myself: things can’t go on like this.” She goes on to say that, “Actually, it’s thanks to them that I’ve become a teacher. Without all their crap, nothing would have changed in my rapport with them.” In this observation, Isabelle’s southern French accent led me to hear, “through them became a teacher,” (instead of “to them... become a teacher”) as if to signify that she became Subject in her class, she “through them became a teacher/master”), i.e. thanks to the students. As if to prove that the teacher is the product of the student, as much if not more than the other way around in the case of a beginning teacher. One can also argue that the student, by provoking the enunciation, places the teacher in a certain position and allows them to establish themselves as Subject. “That rotten class” is the one that allowed Isabelle to allow herself to enter the Discourse of the Hysteric. That class forced her to displace herself within the discourse, made her speak from another place, to “go become a teacher/master,” which the students signified to her that she was not. This relationship evokes Hegel’s master-slave dialectic; the one who has the upper hand is not the one you’d expect.

By forcing Isabelle to change her ‘said’, the students allowed her saying to pierce her statement. Through her enunciation, she showed herself to be desiring in the eyes of the students. Psychoanalysis explains that, the hysteric has a desire for desire. By loudly and clearly expressing her sadness and anger at not being loved by this class, Isabelle illustrates that perfectly. Once her own desiring was heard, she became desired. Students’ desire to learn attached itself to the teacher’s desire to transmit. Once again, Isabelle hit the nail on the head by saying, “With these students, you can’t just talk to them, you have to talk for them.”

In fact, Isabelle’s students’ refusal to submit to her discourse of the master and the university could, in a different study, also be highlighted as the act of emergence of a subject. Emergence that is based on a signifying discourse, “that is not satisfied with the blah-blah that satisfies the ego” (Scilicet, 1976).

It’s worth remembering that, like any parlêtre, the students in class are also navigating amongst the four discourses.

1 **Perspectives for Initial Training?**

2
3 It seems both possible and enlightening, by learning from Isabelle's case,
4 to conceive two responsible paths of preparation for the teaching profession.
5

6 **Speaking in Company, in a Group of Speech and Analysis of Practice**

7
8 GPAP is a particular space-time in a teacher training program. A hole
9 actually creates an excellent image of what this parenthetical moment can
10 afford those who venture into it truthfully. A GPAP that is enlightened by the
11 epistemological field of psychoanalysis allows an analysis of the professional
12 situation via the experience of the effects of the full word. This practice results
13 in self-listening and co-listening that can create play (in the sense of looseness
14 or space) between what the Subject thinks they are, what they think they are
15 saying and what they actually are and say (as observed by the effect of their
16 words on listeners). GPAP leaders' responsibility is to create a break in the
17 circuit by pointing out a discourse's master signifiers, and by placing the words
18 spoken into one or the other of the four discourses. This can allow the Subject
19 to hear themselves saying themselves and to see themselves saying, can provide a
20 chance to acknowledge themselves as a signifier for another signifier. They check
21 that they exist by a signifying chain- reaction effect and not just by the
22 imaginary liaison between a sign/sound and a signification. So there are
23 moments in a GAP that create a real encounter with speaking in terms of
24 saying and enunciation. The kind that caused Aliénor to shift her position.
25

26 **Engaging with Enunciation as a Trainer Too**

27
28 However, whether facing or alongside beginning teachers, a trainer who
29 also offers truthful speech, enunciation, is needed. For it is from the standpoint
30 of the Discourse of the Hysteric that statement of theory can take on accents of
31 truth. That requires teacher-trainers to speak from their own "private
32 philosophy of education" rather than simply parroting a discourse. Isn't that the
33 way to show beginning teachers that to succeed in the teaching profession, you
34 need to be subjectively engaged in what you are saying? Exposing yourself as
35 desiring is a difficult exercise. It requires answering from yourself, while you
36 are speaking from a role. Oddly enough, that requires more of a shift, or de-
37 centering, of your own perspective than an introspective delving into yourself.
38 Before you can offer something intimate, you need to see yourself from the
39 outside. Isn't that a small experiment called "ex-sistence"? Isn't that an
40 ineluctable passage to becoming a trainer of trainers?
41
42

43 **Conclusion**

44
45 This analysis was committed to taking into account and in charge the fact
46 that in some classes, the protagonists in the educational act are not "in tune"
47 because they can't be what they are. One of them, (the teacher) speaks from a

1 position where the other (the student) isn't expecting him, and therefore
 2 doesn't hear him. Yet when a Subject speaks to another, inevitably, the said
 3 can't go without saying and sometimes, the said surpasses the saying, and
 4 mends the educational cloth.

5 In order to take their place as Teacher/Master when students don't
 6 automatically place them there, it seems that the teacher need to be able to shift
 7 from one discourse to another. That switch, performed so that something can
 8 circulate between teacher and students, is what makes the lesson possible.
 9 Isabelle, the teacher heard in this research, formed a favorable relationship with
 10 her students by changing her way of speaking. She did it by expressing herself
 11 not only from the Discourse of the Master, who rules and maintains law and
 12 order, or from the Discourse of the University, which educates and convinces
 13 through knowledge, but also from the Discourse of the Hysteric, who cries out
 14 their truth. She said her "teacher being" in order to become a teacher.

15 This circulation allows the lesson to acquire meaning, both for the
 16 students and for the teacher. Putting one position into perspective relative to
 17 another is the only thing that allows a teaching relationship to become
 18 signifying. Psychoanalysis states that meaning is only ever produced from the
 19 translation of one discourse into another. The "elasticity" that Ferenczi (1913)
 20 spoke of could be a useful metaphor for designating this teacherly shift. It was
 21 named in a previous job "savoir y faire" (Montagne, 2013).

22 Isabelle, who embarked on those journeys, allowed herself an unusual
 23 connection with her students. Her experience shows that it is in fact the never-
 24 changing distance between students and teacher caused by the teacher's always
 25 speaking from the same place that can be stultifying and can lead to missed
 26 opportunities in the lesson.

27 In order to shoulder their heavy burden in the 21st century, schools cannot
 28 spare themselves the effort of examining the "off topic" that emerges from
 29 teachers' desire to "get to know" (getting to know students and getting them to
 30 learn).

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