

EDUCATION AND CULTURE OF LANGUAGE EXPRESSION IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AS A HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PHENOMENON

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Abstract. Education and culture of language expression within the school system represent a complex historical and cultural phenomenon that develops through changing pedagogical, social, and linguistic contexts. In this process, the school system functions as an institutional framework in which patterns of language expression are shaped, transmitted, and standardized, while language simultaneously operates as a means of communication and a carrier of cultural meanings. The findings indicate that the culture of language expression in education has historically evolved through three dominant educational paradigms: the traditional normative approach, the communicative model of language teaching, and the contemporary competency-oriented approach. This development reflects broader socio-cultural changes in the understanding of language, the role of the student, and the function of the school in the learning process. It is evident that the school system not only transmits linguistic norms but also actively participates in their transformation and cultural reproduction, thereby contributing to the preservation and evolution of language culture in different historical contexts. It is concluded that the culture of language expression within the school system is the result of continuous interaction between educational practices, linguistic ideologies, and socio-historical changes, which confirms its status as a historical and cultural phenomenon.

Keywords: education; school system; culture of language expression; historical and cultural phenomenon; language

Introduction

Education and culture of language expression represent interrelated and historically variable phenomena that develop within a broader social and cultural context. The school system, as the central educational institution, participates in shaping linguistic norms and communication patterns, while language

simultaneously functions as a means of learning and as a carrier of cultural meanings. The theoretical framework of education is based on the understanding of learning as an active process of knowledge construction through interaction with the environment (Dewey 1938), while cognitive theories emphasize the role of mental processes in the organization and interpretation of information (Bruner, 1960). Within the sociocultural perspective, language plays a central role in the development of thought and mediates between the social context and individual development (Vygotsky 1978).

Sociolinguistic research indicates that language practice depends on social institutions and cultural norms, with the educational system playing a key role in the standardization and legitimation of linguistic forms (Hymes 1974). Contemporary approaches to language education emphasize the importance of students' cultural and linguistic diversity, while knowledge acquired outside the school environment is recognized as a relevant resource in the learning process (Hall 2008).

Although numerous studies have examined education, language culture, and language socialization separately, fewer attempts have integrated these perspectives into a unified socio-historical framework. This paper contributes to the field by synthesizing insights from sociology of education, sociolinguistics, and educational theory to conceptualize the culture of language expression as a historically constructed educational phenomenon shaped by institutional, cultural, and communicative processes.

1. Social and Historical Context of Education and Language Culture

In contemporary social sciences and humanities, education is not interpreted as a universal and historically unchangeable category, but rather as a socially and culturally conditioned phenomenon whose functions, goals, and institutional forms are transformed in accordance with changes in social structures, political systems, and dominant epistemological paradigms. In this sense, education represents a historically constructed social mechanism through which cultural patterns, value systems, and models of social organization are reproduced, legitimized, and transformed.

In earlier social formations, education predominantly had a reproductive function reflected in the preservation of the existing social order, the transmission of normative values, and the socialization of individuals into predefined social roles (Durkheim, 1956; Bowles & Gintis 1976). Within this framework, the school functioned as an institutional apparatus of social stabilization, while the educational process was directed toward the reproduction of dominant cultural and ideological patterns.

The processes of industrialization, modernization, and later the transition toward a post-industrial society have significantly changed the social function of education. In contemporary knowledge-based societies, education is increasingly positioned as a

strategic resource for economic development, the production of human capital, and social competitiveness. Consequently, the educational system gradually shifts from a predominantly reproductive model toward a transformative model in which the development of competencies, critical thinking, and adaptive abilities becomes the central educational goal. Empirical research further confirms the strong connection between the quality of education and long-term economic and social development. Societies with more developed educational systems achieve higher levels of human capital, productivity, and social stability, with education becoming one of the central factors of social mobility and social cohesion (Hanushek & Woessmann 2015). In this context, contemporary studies indicate that the quality of education exceeds narrowly defined pedagogical frameworks and becomes an issue of overall social development and institutional sustainability (Cvjetković et al. 2024). Furthermore, contemporary international educational frameworks further affirm the competency-based approach to education, emphasizing the need to develop abilities that enable individuals to function actively and effectively in complex, changing, and globalized social conditions (OECD 2019).

2. The Culture of Language Expression as a Sociolinguistic Concept

The culture of language expression extends beyond grammatical accuracy and normative correctness, encompassing socially conditioned communication patterns, discursive practices, and culturally shaped models of interaction. Language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a tool for constructing meaning, identity, and social relations. Contemporary sociolinguistic and critical discourse perspectives emphasize that language is a social practice closely linked to ideology, power relations, and processes of social legitimation, shaping socially accepted forms of communication and expression (Fairclough 2015).

The relationship between language, culture, and education is based on their mutual functional and symbolic interdependence. Language represents the primary medium of cultural transmission and social interaction, while education functions as an institutional framework within which cultural patterns are systematically transmitted, reinterpreted, and reproduced. Contemporary learning theories emphasize that the process of knowledge acquisition does not occur in isolation at the individual level, but rather through social interaction, communication, and participation in discursive practices (Gee 2014). Within this framework, language becomes the central instrument for the construction of meaning and the shaping of educational experience.

Moreover, contemporary educational approaches increasingly affirm the importance of students' linguistic and cultural diversity, based on the assumption that the educational process achieves greater inclusiveness and effectiveness when connected with students' cultural experiences, identities, and communicative practices (UNESCO, 2021). Thus, the relationship between language, culture, and education transcends the function of knowledge transmission and becomes part of a broader process of cultural participation and social integration.

3. The School System as an Institutional Framework for the Development of Language Culture

Education and the culture of language expression are historically and culturally shaped phenomena. Education extends beyond the transmission of knowledge, serving as an institutional process through which linguistic practices, communication patterns, and cultural norms are produced, legitimized, and reproduced. Schools function simultaneously as educational institutions and sociolinguistic environments in which linguistic norms are standardized, communicative practices are regulated, and socially legitimate forms of expression are reproduced through curricula, classroom interaction, and assessment. Comparative-historical studies show that educational systems develop through the interaction of institutional structures, political priorities, and socio-historical conditions rather than through a linear process of evolution (Del Río et al. 2024). Consequently, they function as mechanisms of social regulation that both reflect and shape processes of modernization and social stratification.

Accordingly, historical-pedagogical research points to the longitudinal transformation of the functions of the school system: from the primary reproduction of basic literacy and patterns of socialization in the early modern period to contemporary competency-based models that emphasize cognitive flexibility, metalinguistic awareness, and students' adaptive capacities (Polyakova 2019). This transformation indicates that educational systems cannot be understood as stable structures, but rather as adaptive institutional arrangements that reflect changes in epistemological and social paradigms.

Within current theoretical perspectives, the school is not viewed as a neutral epistemological institution, but as a discursively structured space in which specific regimes of knowledge and communication are produced, distributed, and legitimized. In this context, educational practices function as mechanisms of institutional selection and normalization of linguistic forms, whereby a hierarchy is established between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" language varieties. Such an approach implies that school discourse not only mediates knowledge, but also actively participates in the formation of students' subjectivities through the internalization of dominant linguistic and cultural norms (Gobby & Millei 2017).

As a central institution of social regulation, the school serves as a key setting for secondary language socialization, where language is acquired not merely as a linguistic system but as a socially and culturally mediated practice. Language socialization in education involves both the development of linguistic competence and the internalization of normative and discursive patterns shaped by the institutional context of schooling. From this perspective, language functions as a socially constructed and institutionally regulated phenomenon, learned through interaction and participation in educational practices (Mangual Figueroa & Baquedano-López 2017). Through school discourse, students develop stylistic, pragmatic, and

register-based forms of expression necessary for academic communication while simultaneously adopting norms of “legitimate language” within broader processes of language standardization.

Empirically grounded research indicates that processes of language socialization in the classroom unfold through dynamic interaction between teachers and students, whereby linguistic meaning and communicative competencies are not transmitted in a linear fashion but are co-constructed through discursive practices and shared participation in educational activities (Burdelski & Howard 2019). Therefore, the school is confirmed as a central sociolinguistic space in which processes of language development, institutional normalization of communication, and reproduction of cultural-epistemological patterns simultaneously take place.

Education and the culture of language expression within the school system represent a historically and culturally conditioned phenomenon that develops in accordance with broader social transformations and changes in the organization of knowledge and communication. In this sense, the school system cannot be viewed solely as a neutral educational structure, but rather as an institutional framework in which linguistic practices, cultural patterns of expression, and normative models of communication are simultaneously shaped.

Throughout historical development of education, the school has gradually assumed the role of a central institution in the process of language standardization and the formation of “legitimate” forms of linguistic expression, whereby the culture of language expression is established as part of a broader process of social integration and cultural homogenization. Within this context, language in education functions as both a means of knowledge transmission and a mechanism of cultural reproduction and social differentiation (De Jong 1995).

Contemporary theoretical approaches indicate that educational systems do not merely transmit linguistic norms, but actively participate in their formation through teaching practices, curricula, and assessment standards, whereby linguistic competence is defined as part of a broader system of educational outcomes (Köksal & Ulum 2019; Nguyen Thi Ngoc Thu 2023). In this way, the culture of language expression in school becomes a historically shaped practice that reflects the relationship between education, language, and social values.

4. Culture of Language Expression in Educational Practice Throughout History

The development of linguistic norms in educational practice is a continuous process shaped by the interaction of biological, social, and institutional factors. Early language competence provides the basis for the gradual transition from spontaneous to normatively structured forms of expression (Cvijetić 2020). In traditional educational systems, language instruction followed a predominantly normative and reproductive model, emphasizing grammatical accuracy and memorization of rules. The communicative function of language received less

attention, while teaching was teacher-centered and students primarily acted as passive recipients of knowledge.

Within the educational system, language development acquires an institutional dimension through teaching processes that systematically guide students toward the acquisition of the standard language as a socially legitimate form of communication. The educational vertical, from preschool to higher education levels, functions as a continuous framework of language socialization in which linguistic habits are gradually standardized and aligned with academic and professional requirements (Popović 2020). During the second half of the 20th century, a significant shift occurred in the didactic approach to language, whereby the focus moved from formal linguistic correctness to functional and communicative use of language. Language began to be viewed as a means of interaction in real social situations, and the learner became an active participant in the learning process.

These theoretical assumptions are reflected in classroom practice, where language instruction becomes a vehicle for transmitting cultural values and communicative norms. Modern curricular approaches indicate a transformation of the teaching process from content transmission toward a competency-oriented model of learning. The curriculum is defined as a dynamic framework that integrates knowledge, skills, and pedagogical strategies aimed at developing teachers' professional competencies, particularly in the domains of reflective practice and didactic flexibility (Ahsan & Butt 2024; Kopas-Vukašinović & Lepičnik-Vodopivec 2018).

Contemporary didactics further emphasize a shift from a transmissive toward an interactive and student-centered model of teaching, in which the learner is viewed as an active constructor of knowledge. In such an approach, the role of the teacher also changes, moving from knowledge transmitter to learning facilitator, which contributes to the methodological reorganization of the teaching process (Keiler 2018). These models contribute to improving the quality of education through greater alignment of learning outcomes with contemporary social and professional demands (Jovanović & Cotič 2018). Within sociolinguistic and anthropological-linguistic theoretical frameworks, language is not viewed solely as a means of communication, but as a primary mechanism of cultural transmission. Language and culture form an interdependent system, whereby linguistic practice reflects and reproduces the cultural patterns of a given social community.

Language enables the transmission of cultural patterns, values, and norms across generations, thereby ensuring the continuity of cultural identity. Through symbolic and communicative practices, individual experiences become part of collective knowledge, which contributes to the stability and reproduction of culture in both temporal and social dimensions. Charles-Zalakoro (2019) emphasizes that language represents a fundamental mechanism of cultural transmission, as it mediates the transfer of cultural ideas and values within a community. A similar theoretical perspective is presented by Nosirova (2026), who highlights that

language enables the interpretation, reproduction, and continuity of cultural patterns through intergenerational knowledge transfer processes. In both educational and social contexts, language functions as a key mechanism of cultural transmission.

Socio-historical changes represent a key factor in the transformation of the educational system, its functions, and its institutional organization. In earlier social formations, education was predominantly oriented toward the reproduction of existing social relations and the preservation of traditional value systems, whereas contemporary social processes have led to the redefinition of educational goals, teaching practices, and the role of the school as an institution of knowledge. Historical-pedagogical analyses indicate that the development of the school system occurs in parallel with broader social, political, and cultural changes, confirming that educational transformations cannot be viewed outside the socio-historical context (Cenić & Petrović 2006).

These changes are particularly reflected in the transformation of the relationship between teachers and students. The traditional educational model was characterized by a hierarchically structured relationship in which the teacher had a dominant transmissive role, whereas contemporary approaches promote interactive, participatory, and learner-centered forms of teaching. The development of information and communication technologies and the availability of diverse sources of knowledge have contributed to redefining the pedagogical role of the teacher, who is increasingly positioned as a facilitator of the learning process and of the development of students' communicative and critical competencies (Arsić & Radojević 2017).

Accordingly, contemporary social transformations expand the concept of education beyond formal institutional frameworks. In conditions of rapid economic and technological change, the concept of lifelong and non-formal education becomes a central element of modern educational policies. In this way, education is understood as a continuous process of professional and social adaptation of individuals to changing social circumstances (Veselić & Popović 2010).

Within these processes, the role of language in education is also transformed. Language is increasingly less viewed as a static system of grammatical rules and more as a dynamic resource for the construction of knowledge, identity, and social participation. Research indicates that language education is linked to concepts of social justice, inclusion, and equal educational opportunities, particularly in the context of educational policies aimed at reducing inequalities in access to knowledge (Toohey et al. 2020).

Theoretical approaches to higher education emphasize language as a key element of transformative education, as it enables the development of learners' cognitive and social capacities, as well as their active participation in knowledge production. The capabilities approach suggests that language policy in education directly influences individuals' opportunities to achieve their full academic and social potential (Mtawa et al. 2025).

The reviewed literature indicates that the culture of language expression cannot be adequately understood from either linguistic or pedagogical perspectives alone. Instead, it emerges at the intersection of educational institutions, socialization processes, language policy, and communicative practice. This integrated perspective provides a broader conceptual framework for examining language education in contemporary schools.

Conclusions and summary

The aim of this paper was to analyze education and the culture of language expression within the school system as a historical and cultural phenomenon, with a focus on the ways in which language in education is shaped through different socio-historical and pedagogical contexts. The analysis showed that the culture of language expression has evolved from a traditional normative approach, oriented toward the standardization and reproduction of linguistic patterns, toward contemporary approaches that emphasize communicative competence, functional literacy, and the active role of learners in the learning process. In educational practice, language is increasingly viewed as a means of thinking, learning, and social interaction, rather than merely as a system of grammatical rules. The significance of this paper lies in highlighting that the culture of language expression is a key component of the educational process and an important factor in the development of students' communicative and cognitive competencies. The paper contributes to a pedagogical understanding of language as a culturally and socially conditioned category and may serve as a basis for improving teaching practice toward more inclusive and functional language education. In relation to existing literature, the findings are consistent with contemporary theoretical approaches that emphasize the importance of communicative competence and the socio-cultural context in language learning, thereby confirming a shift from transmissive to constructivist models of language teaching.

The limitation of the study relates to its theoretical nature, without empirical research in the school context, which restricts insights into actual classroom practices of language expression. Future research could focus on empirical analysis of the development of the culture of language expression in schools, as well as on examining the impact of contemporary didactic approaches and teaching strategies on the development of students' language competence.

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