

Discourse as a Social Practice

- Social practices are socially regulated ways of doing things—but the word “regulate” may give the wrong impression here, since “regulation,” in the sense in which we normally understand it, is only one of

Social Practices

A social practice is made up of a number of elements:

▣ Participants:

A social practice first of all needs a set of participants in certain roles (principally those of instigator, agent, affected, or beneficiary).

▣ Action

The core of any social practice is a set of actions performed in a sequence, which maybe fixed to a greater or lesser degree and which may or may not allow for choice, that is, for

Social Practices

▮ Performance Modes

In our example text, parents are advised “not to rush children.” When “preparing children for the first day,” it is apparently not enough to perform the actions that make up the practice, they must also be performed at a certain pace, and the need to be unhurried does not relate to all of the actions but only to those that are performed.

Social Practices

▣ Eligibility Conditions (Participants)

Eligibility conditions are the “qualifications” participants must have in order to be eligible to play a particular role in a particular social practice.

▣ Presentation Styles

Social practices also involve dress and body grooming requirements, or *presentation styles*, for the participants.

Social Practices

▮ Times

Social practices and specific parts of them take place at more or less definite times.

▮ Locations

Social practices are also related to specific locations.

▮ Eligibility Conditions (Locations)

Like the eligibility conditions for participants, the eligibility conditions for locations refer back to “preparatory practices”—of building, of interior

Bibliography

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