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Abstract: <u>Learning regimes of evidence in Education schools: The necessity of disciplinary training</u>

Sociocultural researchers working within topically focused disciplines enjoy a freedom of combining theory and method unavailable through more "traditional" disciplines. For the latter, however, this introduces a likely trade-off of coherence and validity, which I propose may be too great a price. As a result, it should be required that all aspiring educational scholars have explicit disciplinary training, guided by community consensus on ways theory, method, data, and evidence can coherently work together.

To illustrate the logic of this proposal, I provide a cautionary tale from my own research concerning evidence for phenomena deemed to be "language ideological". This research asks educationally successful, upwardly mobile youth in a rural South African township to reflect on what influences their choices of linguistic code, particularly English, across different interactional situations. As a theoretical label devised by linguistic anthropologists, "language ideology" was designed to apply to data that were collected ethnographically. One reason this is important for "ideology", as it would be for any form of meaning-making, is that ethnographic data can 1) increase validity and 2) capture "ideology" as immanent in and thus traceable through all manner of social practices. Using just data on language-use dynamics, or the semantic content from transcripts of controlled interactions such as interviews, can strongly suggest language ideologies, but this evidence is strengthened by ethnographic data beyond the interaction itself. Only a disciplinary training can adequately inform the aspiring researcher of the necessity of coherence and validity of a research approach for producing credible evidence.

The paper opens up the "black box" of data collection, analysis and reporting, and explores how conventions for combining theory, method, and data are more or less modular in topical approaches, and fixed in disciplinary approaches. This has implications for social-epistemic approval, legitimacy, and consensus building, and as such, should determine general prescriptions for graduate training. I take care to ground this discussion in the long history of disciplinary tensions, to clarify what new and productive directions may lie ahead.