Lyotard on Wittgenstein: The differend, language games, and education

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Abstract

This essay is concerned with a major theme of work in education influenced by poststructuralism, namely, a hostility toward the ideals of consensus and understanding. Perhaps the foremost critic in education of these aims of communication is Elizabeth Ellsworth (1989, 1997), who argues that these norms express a rational desire to bridge gulfs of culture and experience which, under most educational circumstances, cannot be bridged. The very attempt to do so, Ellsworth argues, disrespects these differences and puts those different from dominant cultures and values at an asymmetrical risk in these situations. She is far from alone in expressing such views; many writers on multiculturalism and feminism have similarly emphasized the insurmountable barriers of difference.
What Wittgenstein Says about Language Games: This section consists of a study of important passages in Wittgenstein which help to explain his concept of a language game. They are all taken from his book, the Philosophical Investigations, the text that Wittgenstein used to introduce the