Toni Sacconaghi at Sanford C. Bernstein
Caseism.com
He taught working-class children

Saw differences in performance between working-class and middle-class children in language-based subjects, when performance in maths was comparable

Bernstein wanted to point this out and have it compensated for, but was misunderstood by some.
Two Major Concepts

Restricted Code & Elaborated Code

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Working Class only use restricted code. Middle Class use both.

Restricted Code

- Can include slang and be grammatically incorrect
- Used in informal settings
- Intended for close friends and family and others
- Creates a sense of belonging to a certain group
- Shared understanding

Elaborated Code

- Language used by well-educated people
- Vocabulary is extensive, detailed and articulate
- Used by teachers, in textbooks and on formal occasions
Bernstein's experiment
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Two 5 year old boys
One from a working class background
One from a middle class background
Both shown four pictures and asked to describe what they could see.

Response from the middle class boy
"Two boys are playing football and one boy kicks the ball and it goes through the window. The ball breaks the window and the boys are looking at it, and a man comes out and knocks all them because they've broken the window. So they run away and then that lady looks out of her window, and she tells the boys off."

Response from the working class boy
"Two boys are playing football and one boy kicks the ball and it goes through the window. The ball breaks the window and the boys are looking at it, and someone comes out and knocks all them because they've broken the window. So they run away and then that lady looks out of her window, and she tells the boys off."

Elaborated code
Social Class & Speech Patterns

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Socialisation process

Middle-class: Access both codes

Working-class: Access to one code
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*Educational Attainment*

Elaborated code used widely in educational settings

"*correct*"

*Teachers*  *Textbooks*  *Exams*

*Communication issues*

Middle-class = feel "at home" in schooling

Working-class = feel excluded in schooling
Criticism

Rosen (1974)
- Bernstein’s theories are vague
- he only refers to lower working class instead of working class as a totality
- lack of evidence in the family infrastructure which can acknowledge these arguments
"BERNSTEIN’S THEORIES ARE NOTHING BUT A MYTH"

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