Researching Social Inclusion

Discourses and Debates Across Disciplines

Edited by
Anna Odrowąż-Coates & Taiwo Afolabi
UNESCO Janusz Korczak Chair Book Series

Maria Grzegorzewska University Press

Researching Social Inclusion

Discourses and Debates Across Disciplines

Warszawa 2023

This book is the outcome of the XVI UNESCO Janusz Korczak Chair International Summer School 2023, organized with the Institute of the Political Studies of Polish Academy of Sciences under the patronage of the Polish Commission for UNESCO in cooperation with CREAN (Children's Rights European Academic Network) and the Centre for Socially Engaged Theatre at University of Regina, Canada.

Researching Social Inclusion

Discourses and Debates Across Disciplines

Edited by
Anna Odrowąż-Coates & Taiwo Afolabi
UNESCO Janusz Korczak Chair Book Series

Maria Grzegorzewska University Press

Funding information
This publication is financed by the Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw.
XVI International UNESCO Chair Summer School was co-funded by
the EU under grant no 101049389 CERV-2021-EQUAL Empathy:
Challenging discourse about Islam and Muslims in Poland.

Scientific reviewers:
Prof. Pat Dolan, UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre,
University of Galway, Ireland
Prof. Mark Brennan UNESCO Chair for Community, Leadership,
and Youth Development, Pennsylvania State University, USA

Editors:
Anna Odrowąż-Coates and Taiwo Afolabi

Cover:
a photo by Tomasz Jędrzejewski was used

Composition:
APS Publishing House

Publisher:
Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej – Maria Grzegorzewska University Press.

e-ISBN 978-83-67721-24-0
ISBN 978-83-67721-25-7

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.10244969

40 Szczęśliwicka St.
02-353 Warsaw, Poland
Tel. 22 589 36 45, Fax. 22 658 11 18
email: wydawnictwo@aps.edu.pl

Table of Content

Foreword

Roberta Ruggiero
CREAN, University of Geneva
ORCID: 0000-0002-8756-7354

Anna Odrowąż-Coates
The Maria Grzegorzewska University
ORCID: 0000-0002-2112-8711

This edited volume continues the tradition of the UNESCO Janusz Korczak Chair book series dedicated to the promotion of inclusive international scientific exchanges with open access and no geographical divisions from imagined centres of science to the perceived periphery. The publication is the outcome of the XVI international summer school that took place at Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw in September 2023. The volume is focused on anti-discrimination and is dedicated to addressing hate speech and negative discourses targeted at minorities, including religious groups, and their impact on children and childhoods. At the core of promoting and protecting quality education lies the concept of Global Citizenship Education (GCE), which encompasses three key elements defined by UNESCO: a shared sense of humanity, respect for diversity, and solidarity. In line with the key principles guiding UNESCO's call for action, the 16th International Summer School seeks to promote innovative thinking and active response to the major contemporary global challenges. Inspired by the vision of the 2030 Agenda and the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 4 aimed at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all, we seek to stimulate and promote an interdisciplinary dialogue. Emphasis will be placed on political discourses, social policies, education and human rights, all of them crucial for building more inclusive and sustainable societies. Recognizing intercultural diversity and fostering inclusive language and discourses is also central to the achievement of social inclusion. Education as a global public good is a driver of inclusion and resilience, and it's essential to meet the needs of children, youths and minorities, who are disproportionally affected by conflicts and all kinds of violence, including hate speech. Educators' wellbeing will also be addressed since it's fundamental for building capacities to respond to many current disruptions and ensure that no one is left behind. At the heart of the protection and promotion of quality education is the notion of Global Citizenship Education (GCE), and its three core elements, defined by UNESCO as: a shared sense of humanity, respect for diversity and solidarity. Their importance was earlier recognized by the pioneer of special education in Poland, Maria Grzegorzewska (1887–1967), who is also a founder of

our university and a powerful voice for the rights of children and adults with disabilities, and by Janusz Korczak (1878–1942), a visionary of the development of children's rights and childhood studies. This heritage resonates well with CREAN, the Children's Rights European Academic Network of 30 universities spanning Eastern and Western Europe that, since 2016, has been hosted by the Centre for Children's Rights Studies at the University of Geneva. CREAN is steadfastly dedicated to bolstering European academic institutions in in-depth research, comprehensive studies, and interdisciplinary university teaching, thereby enriching the intersectoral conversation surrounding children's rights both at the national and international levels. With this core goal in mind, it supported the organisation by Maria Grzegorzewska University of The Hate Speech and the Negative Discourses Scientific Seminar held in Warsaw on 20 September 2023.

The selection of chapters reflects the wide array of topics related to the issues of discrimination, and oppressive practice but also hope for inclusion and liberation. The book opens with a chapter by Romanian scientists from the University of Oradea who give us an overview on *Pedagogy of Oppression and the Ideologically Engaged Discourses as an Impact on Children's Oppression and Exclusion*. This chapter is followed by a contribution by Taiwo Afolabi, from the University of Regina, Canada. Dr. Taiwo Afolabi shares his keynote address from the CREAN scientific seminar proceedings, dedicated to theatre for cultural and religious diversity with lived positive engagement examples from the Nigerian context. This hope bringing chapter is followed by a disturbing analysis of hate-rhetoric in right-wing populist political communication, shared by Prof. Erzsébet Barát from the Department of Gender Studies, CEU, Vienna. Prof. Marthinus S. Conradie from the University of the Free State in South Africa reveals creative maladjustments in the interactions between students and assistant teachers. This is followed by presenting a novel concept of parents as "responsible choosers" in the Chilean education policy. Gonzalo Hidalgo-Bazán from the University of Bristol, UK questions the notion of quality, whilst providing a comprehensive critique of the education system in Chile. Luba Kozak explores the ethical dimensions of pet culture in art. She eloquently brings to light the issue of ethics of care in art pedagogy. Julianne D. Gerbrandt from the University of New Brunswick in Canada provides a thought-provoking, poststructural reflection on social inclusion research. Furthermore, Jessica Kristin Nowak from the University of Bialystok discusses the educational process involving juveniles in correctional institutions in Poland. Her chapter is followed by a contribution dedicated to theoretical contribution discussing Rabindranath Tagore and Janusz Korczak's ideas, prepared by Swati Chawla. We learn from this chapter that both philosophers were innovators in their respective fields. Tagore was a poet, a Nobel price winner, who in 1901, founded 'Santiniketan' (Abode of Peace) as an Indian West Bengali school. Whereas Korczak was a medical doctor by profession but also a researcher of childhood involved in development of boarding schools for orphans. He was also a volunteer in the community, a newspaper columnist, a tutor, and a writer. Turkish professor and youth participation activist Seran Demiral engages in a dialogue with a 16-year-old Duru Çiçek, focussing on scattered identities and intergenerational intersections.

Pedagogy of oppression and the ideologically engaged discourses as an impact on children's oppression and exclusion

Florica Orțan
University of Oradea, Romania
ORCID: 0000-0001-5972-6322

Ciprian Simuț
University of Oradea, Romania
ORCID: 0000-0001-9977-0838

Renata Pop
University of Oradea, Romania
ORCID: 0000-0001-5436-2777

Introduction

Oppression and exclusion are issues that are found in contemporary society, in schools and deep into various strata of society. They generate processes that may affect individuals and groups throughout their lives. The effects range from psychological trauma to suicide or murder. The fact that oppression and exclusion can happen in the context of schools is of severe importance, especially considering that some forms are not visibly, or at least not consciously, perpetrated. However, there are means of intervention that offer relief to those who are oppressed, and even the means to counter and fight a system of oppression.

The aim of the research is to show how social movements and their supporters influence the ongoing fight against oppression, through the voices and the works of later thinkers and activists. In this case, the research begins with the description of the Social Gospel Movement and how it identified the oppressed and the excluded of the late 19th century American society, who, in this case, were the middle-class workers, and the poor. It also presents the practical way in which it got involved in the lives of the oppressed and the excluded, and how it restored their voice and their dignity. The research then connects the work of Paulo Freire to the Social Gospel Movement, thus sparking the race for

further critical assessment of society and offering practical ways in which the oppressed would be able to surpass their condition and prevent further abuse. This step is followed by connecting Paulo Freire to Henry Giroux, who expands the work and points towards the need for the educational system to generate values that allow the oppressed and the excluded to regain their humanity and dignity. In this context, the work of Kevin Kumashiro is of great importance, due to the practical aspects it offers to address the issues of oppression and exclusion.

Thus, a century and half of radical social involvement is expanded through the lives of men and women, who sought the betterment of their conditions and the societies they lived in, whether it was at the end of the 19th century, the middle of the 20th or the beginning of the 21st. Oppression and exclusion seem to be propagating and remaining active in the educational environment, which prompts the current generation of teachers and educators to actively assess and consider venues for identifying and eliminating oppression among the student population.

Quick Definitions

Understanding where ideologies come from and how the interact and influence people's perspectives on one another, it is useful to start with a handful of quick definitions. We used the definitions provided by the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary and the Oxford Languages, for *idea, ideology*, and *exclude/exclusion* because these concepts are readily available online, for any student. Also, these terms easily identifiable in everyday school scenarios, whereas *oppression* is rather more technical word, that has implications that may be elusive for regular educational contexts. For this term, as well as *education,* and *pedagogy*, we used technical definitions, found in specialized sources, such as Encyclopedias.

First, there is the concept of *idea*, which is a formulated thought or opinion. It is important to notice the term *formulated*, which implies a process of thinking about the various concepts, that are progressively matured into an idea. It appears that ideas must be clear and concise, in order to fit the definition. Secondly, there is the concept of *ideology*, which is the natural development of ideas. It can be defined as a system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy. In this case, the most important term is *system*, which implies a structured set of ideas. A system requires much more intellectual effort, but because of its nature, an emotional or sentimental element can also be of great importance. The definition provided above limits the concept of *ideology* to merely political and economic domains, but it affects the social and philosophical domains as well.

People of all ages have ideas and develop ideologies, but depending on age and field of expertise, coupled with personal experiences, the ideas and the systems of ideas have various degrees of freedom and depth. The question that we find most important is how many ideas that children have are valued, kept, and developed, as a result of adults' respect and understanding of how children act and think. This question is coupled with another one, that aims at understanding how much ideologies influence children and adults alike. In other words, what influence do ideologies have on all levels of human

development? This question is important since, ideologies determine the manner in which children and adults interact. The tragedy is when due to ideologies, children become the victims of adults, as well as when children become victims of one another, because of the poisonous influence of adults.

The third important term is *oppression*, which can be defined as the disadvantage and injustice experienced by some social groups. The important words here are *disadvantage* and *injustice*, which reveal an agenda, or a system of actions intended to go against *some social groups*. There are several definitions offered by online dictionaries, that describe concisely, but precisely what such a term means. These searches lack the details necessary for a more nuanced picture. A history of oppression and exclusion is useful in understanding how various social groups fared throughout history against majorities who were different from them.

The third important term is *to exclude*, which can be defined as denying someone access to a place, group, or privileges, and the removal from consideration. In other words, perhaps overly simplistic, exclusion means a person does not matter as much as the group from which one is excluded. The value of a person is diminished or even canceled, due to various reasons, that can range from childish game rules to intense social exclusion, based on race, gender, or any other reason.

The International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences (*Oppression – an Overview ScienceDirect Topics*, n.d.) offers several definitions of *oppression*, and it places the word in a wider context of use. It defines *oppression* as the social act of placing severe restrictions on an individual group, or institution. This definition identifies the government or a political organization powerful enough to place restriction formally or covertly on oppressed groups. The purpose of restrictions is to exploit and make these groups less able to compete with other social groups. In this context, the oppressed are devalued, exploited, and deprived of privileges.

From the subject of this paper, the most important term, that defines how oppression and exclusion come to pass, is *pedagogy*. Beyond any technical definitions, pedagogy is more than a teaching technique. An informative definition by Robin Alexander (Alexander, 2008), describes it as it revolves around the purposive cultural intervention, at an individual human development level. It reaches and influences the values and history of an individual, of a community, and of a society. Pedagogy, therefore, is the act of teaching together with the ideas, values and collective histories, that inform, shape, and explain that specific act. Pedagogy is connected to the concept of *education*, that is defined as the discipline that is concerned with methods of teaching and learning in school environments (*Education | Definition, Development, History, Types, & Facts | Britannica*, n.d.).

Understanding oppression and exclusion is a matter of utmost importance, since pedagogy deals with concepts such as democracy, freedom, community, habits or life, experience, relevance, and citizenship (Leonard & McLaren, 2002). Whether the concepts are taught in schools, or whether they are taught in a certain way, may influence the manner in which children will bond to one another and develop healthy relationships as adults, regardless of the circumstances.

Oppression and Exclusion in Education

Within the educational system, there are several ways in which oppression and exclusion are enacted, and they are not always what one might expect, because they are hidden behind certain values or principles, or even competition. The most obvious ways in which oppression and exclusion happen is when students are treated in harmful ways, either by peers, teachers, or institutions. Bullying is only one of the most visible ways oppression works through (Silva & Costa, 2016). Another way is less obvious, but it has harmful consequences none the less, and it is about assumptions and expectations about certain students (Ross, 2001). These expectations are usually driven by teachers. A highly visible way in which oppression occurs is the pressure on what others should become, which is coupled with what the privileged should not become (Pease, 2010).

Adapting the ways teachers, students, and even institutions react to oppression and exclusion is definitive for the manner in which children will build their relationships in the future. There are several perspectives on how education adapts to fighting oppression. The first type is education for the other, the second is education about the other, the third is education critical of privileging and othering, while the fourth one is about education that changes both students and society.

In an article written two decades ago, Kevin Kumashiro explains in detail what oppression and exclusion are and how can they be avoided and engaged for the benefit of the students. On one side, oppression is done by main-stream society towards the other students, whom he defines as those who are other or different from the norm. The others are treated in harmful ways in the schools, through actions from peers, teachers, and staff. In the same context, harm comes also from inactions or lack of action by educators, or even politicians. Students respond in various ways to the challenges they face, either by overcompensation, that leads increased academic performance or in extracurricular activities, or by achieving sufficiently to keep an satisfactory academic level, but also by suffering psychological harm, that at times lead to self-harm or even suicide (Kumashiro, 2000).

In another context, oppression can be a direct result of how the school curriculum is organized. Teachers turned their attention to what all students should know about the marginalized groups. Knowledge can be harmful for students (Yarbrough, 2020), if it focuses exclusively on how *normal* is defined by society, and what is normative in relation to it. In this context, the others or those who are in groups different from the norm, are known only by inference and in contrast to the norm. The effect is misconceptions about how the majorities are perceived, and which impact the minorities. The second kind of knowledge is, indeed, about the oppressed and the marginalized, but it is based on stereotypes and myths, meaning that it is biased information. The information is acquired within the schools, but also from within the community. The schools lack to act as proper and informed channels for the majority and the marginalized, thus creating the environment for further abuse. The issue with stereotyped knowledge is that it is not discussed through official or formal channels, where it can be debated and present with full knowledge, but through informal means, indirectly and pervasively, thus becoming more sought out and more important than the official information (Kumashiro, 2000).

Understanding the oppressed, the marginalized, and the excluded, and the ways in which they become as such, is not sufficient, in order to act appropriately and efficiently.

It is also important to understand how some groups become the opposite, namely favored, normalized, and privileged (James, 2013). This process is to be understood from the perspective of the social structures and the competing ideologies that support it. School filter and channel what society, social institutions and cultural ideas produce. Schools become facilitating structures of ruling ideologies, that end up maintaining a certain hegemony and reproduce various existing social orders. The result is embodied in schools that favor some and marginalize others. Oppression is hidden behind the concepts such as common sense and normalcy (Kumashiro, 2000).

Another manner in which oppression is rather supported, than resolved, is the citing and repetition of harmful histories (Leland & Stockwell, 2021). These are not necessarily the stories of oppression, but also the stereotypes that seem positive, but that have an ultimately negative effect of the group they describe. Stereotypes are used by individuals, as weapons against certain groups or other individuals, or as a result of certain social structures and ideologies, that support the oppressive structures. Teachers and educational structures can counter harmful stereotypes by either prohibiting their use, or develop strategies to counter and dismantle them and the structure that supports them. This is accomplished through critical pedagogy (Kumashiro, 2000).

Possible Solutions

Teachers and school workers are able to access perspectives that are toxic and detrimental to the psychological well-being of students. The social media can project both negative and positive local (Arias, 2019) and world-views, which impact the way students see themselves and the society. It is recommended that teachers improve the experience the students have, by teaching and guiding them on how to find and use the online resources. In turn, the students will assess with a higher degree of knowledge and confidence the negative information that is found in mainstream media (Baker-Bell et al., 2017).

Teachers could also focus on the information that all students should know about one another, in order to build a more stable and knowledgeable environment. Proper and honest information about various issues, administered and enacted appropriately, could bond students, and lessen the pressure on marginalized students. In this category, it is important to understand why certain students or groups are marginalized, either in society, or in the school environment. It is also useful to understand and acknowledge why other students or groups are favored and normalized. Teachers play a key role in laying the foundation for cooperation between students and groups (Diemer et al., 2016), in such a way that the marginalized would be integrated and the favored would lessen their influence. The accent would fall on understanding each student's abilities and maximizing them, regardless of the aspects that marginalized or favored them in the past (Kumashiro, 2000).

The next issue would be to identify the types of discourses (Brown, 2012) that created oppression and exclusion. These discourses are promoted either by students, or by teachers, at times unintentionally, due to lack of information on a certain subject, other times in a conscious manner. The latter is most detrimental to the oppressed and marginalized,

because is done with ill intent. The first group can easily revert their perspective, once introduced to the proper knowledge that allows them to change their view. Education is the perfect environment for interacting with the past, the histories of oppression and how they came to be. Knowledge of the past can yield the tools for understanding the present and address the new issues of oppression and exclusion (Kumashiro, 2000).

The differences between teachers and students are oftentimes plainly visible. The generational gap impedes various useful interactions between the two groups. In this context, teachers, based on the fact that they have knowledge and more expertise, are to acknowledge the differences and adapt their teaching, not by lowering expectations, but by creating an environment where students can thrive, in accordance with the abilities they possess (Muller & Boutte, 2019). On the same note, understanding who the oppressed are, and making sure that education integrates information about the historical issues of the oppressed, will create the medium through which students can better understand who is oppressed and how to mend, heal, and avoid further oppression. Knowledge provided by the schools, together with the tools to operate against oppression in the real world, prepares students to become active citizens, that go against oppression and exclusion in the real world. Social, political, economic, and even religious oppression would be understood, mended, and healed. These students would later become the generation that would build new knowledge, new understandings, new perspectives on how to better and improve human interactions, in a safe and yet rationally and emotionally challenging environment (Kumashiro, 2000).

Change through Education by Understanding Context

The purpose of this essay is to show how issues of oppression and exclusion can be traced back in history and how various movements and thinkers, from different ages, built upon previous efforts to create a better and just society. Based on this purpose, we pointed out the influence that the Social Gospel Movement had on Paulo Freire, and how his work influenced Andre Giroux. Thus, a steady influence, that covered the last quarter of the 19th century, the entire 20th century up to this day, can be traced with easy, in the efforts built on the work of various thinkers of Social Gospel Movement, and the two prominent thinkers. The written and practical works that stem from the efforts of the three mentioned influences, cover two continents, and later they spread globally. The ministry and the work aimed at identifying the oppressed and the excluded, followed by understanding the context that created their dire social situation, and finding ways of reintegrating and bettering their lives, not only by providing for their material needs, but also to provide for their mental, spiritual, and social needs. In this sense, the aim was to re-build the dignity of the oppressed and the excluded, giving them a voice that was to be heard in society, and that would matter, and to offer means to build a just and equitable society for all.

This section does not do justice to the writings and the research of the Freire, Giroux, and the proponents of the SGM. Due to the lack of space, we shall only refer to a limited number of ideas and principles found in the writings of the mentioned authors. The purpose of skimming the surface of their monumental work is to show how movements

and thinkers were influenced and how important historical research is for any democratic society, that aims at perpetuating critical thinking, moral values, justice, equity, and equality, through education and social engagement.

The Social Gospel Movement

The Social Gospel Movement (SGM) was the reaction to the socio-economic abuses perpetrated by industrialists during the so-called Gilded Age, during the middle of the 19th century in America. Its most important representatives were Washington Gladden, Shailer Matthews, Caroline Bartlett Crane, Lyman Abbott, Walter Rauschenbusch, Mary Eliza McDowell, and Charles Jefferson (Curtis, 2001) SGM was developed beginning with the late 1870s and had its high point during the 1920s. After the First World War, the SGM had less strength, but the influence it had on following decades was undeniable (Deichmann, 2015). The SGM was a social, economic, political, and moral renewal movement, that had a heavy footing in biblical principles. The goal of the movement was to create the Kingdom of God on Earth, by creating a just society, where there is no oppression and no exclusion. The oppressed in the view of the SGM was the middle class, that was ruthlessly exploited by a rapacious capitalist system. The SGM worked in parallel with the Progressive Movement (Law & Libecap, 2004). The situation was dire, because wages were low, healthcare was non-existent, workers' rights were not respected or simply non-existent, as well, working days were long and hard, sanitation lacked, and children were exploited from an early age (Shackel & Palus, 2006).

SGM was born in the Evangelical movement, but in its liberal side, but it managed to gather help and influence, through Methodist, Congregationalist, Catholic, and even non-religious or agnostic members and supporters (Morgan, 1969). The movement gave a voice to women, who were heavily involved in the movement, both in the US and in Canada (Edwards & Gifford, 2003). It also sought alleviate and better the lives of immigrants, people of color and children. In order to achieve their goal, SGM used churches to build and fund schools, social houses, establish healthcare systems and organize associations of workers' rights. SGM sought to apply ethics to social problems, through replacing egotism with love in and of society. On this note, it was a similar movement to Methodism in England, which sought freeing the lower classes from alcoholism, domestic violence. SGM identified poverty, violence, domestic abuse, gambling, and joblessness as social sins, not personal sins. Therefore, the objective was to redeem and uplift the oppressed from their lowly condition, create a society in which they have increased quality of life, and as a result they would live in accordance with moral and social codes. The end result would be the enactment of God's Kingdom on Earth (Yeager, 1990).

From the perspective of the legacy and how it influenced various other movements in Europe and South America, SGM turned into an important social movement in the US at that time (Graham et al., 2007). Social Christianity was a significant outcome, coupled with social reform, and social activism, that relied heavily on voluntarism. The welfare system was yet another outcome, that aided the integration of immigrants and supported their training, in order to ease finding jobs (Luker, 1998). Orphanages, work placement agencies, savings banks, and juridical counselling were developed and applied

to the working class, with the specific purpose of minimizing and eliminating, if possible, oppression and exclusion. Having said that, SGM must be judged and evaluated in accordance with the times, thus it was an incipient movement, that did not achieve the same results as modern movements (Gonce, 1996).

In the field of education, the Christian view can be divided roughly between two alternatives. The first view is that educators view religious education as a necessary ordering of society and individuals, arguing for strictness, obedience, and a view of the teacher as a representative of God in ordering the next generation of citizens/believers. In this context, punishment is part of the process. In the second view, educators see Christ as the enabler of peer-to-peer cooperation, equals working and learning together in an ongoing fight against injustice and inequality (Lander, 2004). For the SGM, education was anchored in citizenship training for immigrants, and the middle class, in their fight for rights and value. The SGM representatives came from various backgrounds, more or less in touch with capitalist and socialist principles. As a method of inquiry, the SGM intersected with Marxist analysis, but not its ideology. Some of the promoters of SGM defined themselves as between capitalism and socialism, but much closer to the first, than the last, yet far away from the first (Curtis, 2001). It is at this point that Paulo Freire comes into play, who was influenced by the SGM, as he used metaphors inspired by the |SGM. In this context, Freire argues that God does not violate, oppress, or dominate (Hegar, 2012).

Paulo Freire

For Freire the issue of oppression and liberation was of great interest since he had a personal experience of what poverty and exclusion was. In his view, class analysis is linked to oppression. In the same vein, there must be a separation between sectarianism and radicalization, the latter being more desirable, because it criticizes and liberates. His endeavor towards freedom implies the eradication of oppression, which leads to dehumanization and loss of identity. The psychology of oppression leaves long lasting scares on how the oppressed view the oppression, namely as a model of manhood, thus shaping the perspective on how the relationship between oppressor and oppressed determines the reactions towards other people with or without power.

In the context of liberation, the oppressor dehumanizes its victims, but also oneself, therefore, the long process of oppression generates scares that are at least highly difficult to heal or even manage. The ability of the liberators to end oppression is found in their actions of removing the oppressor from the process. Because of his dehumanization, the oppressor cannot be part of the liberation (Glass, 2001). However, despite the tragedy of oppression, it is a process that can be transformed, and the victims, depending on the depth of the oppressive act, can find freedom. Oppression can be solved by exposing the abuse and supporting the victims.

Freire's perspective in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is rooted in real life experiences, detailing the reactions of both laborers and middle-class workers to various oppressive situations. He was aware of the negative feedback his perspective on human liberation might bring, but as long as his work was read and as long as it spawned reaction, from

both Christians and Marxists (Cooper, 1995) – the top two groups Freire mentions – his work would not have been in vain. He does make a poignant remark as to how sectarianism generates castrating ideologies, since it is fed by fanaticism, while radicalization would always generate creative ideologies, since it is fed by critical spirit. Radicalization has the job of criticizing and therefore the result is liberation, based on the fact that it generates greater commitment to a certain just cause. Radicalization aims at changing objective reality (Freire, 2014).

From a pedagogical perspective, becoming radicalized (Holst, 2008) implies a more conscious engagement with objective reality, resulting in deeper and more valid knowledge, that translates into a more efficient transformation of this reality. The radicalized will confront and listen, and will meet and dialogue with people, which makes such an individual not the liberator of the oppressed, but one who stands with them to the end and fight for them. Freire argues that his concept of pedagogy cannot be fulfilled by sectarians, but by radicals alone (Freire, 2014).

If at the beginning of his book, Freire presents the oppressors as the dehumanizers (Snaza, 2013) of the oppressed, a process that forces the oppressed to react and struggle against the oppressor, at the very end of it, sums up the concept by arguing that the oppressor needs a theory of oppressive action, and the oppressed also need a theory of action, in order to become free. The idea is radical simply because the oppressor acts almost alone, because he goes against the people, while the oppressed are forced to work together with liberators in order to enact the process of their freedom (Freire, 2014).

Several points, in Freire's writings, are well worth noting since they are fundamental for understanding the pedagogy of oppression. The definition of pedagogy of the oppressed, as used by Freire, is that it must be forged with, not for the oppressed. The fundamental struggle, that is at the basis of humanity, is regaining it (Kajee, 2019). Once the process of re-humanization is started, through active engagement, it must be ongoing and remade, otherwise it will only give further opportunity for oppression in new forms and guises. Oppression is a situation that can be surpassed if the oppressed critically recognize its causes. Once understanding is achieved, a transforming action would allow the oppressed to pursuit and enact a fuller humanity. Only the oppressed are able to start such a transforming process, despite the dehumanizing context in which they find themselves. The oppressor will never be able to start it, even though he is also dehumanizing himself while dehumanizing the oppressed. Affirming that the oppressed must be free, but failing to pursue actions that support the affirmation, amounts to mere farce, therefore it is utterly useless. Freire proposes that the change against oppression should come from systematic education, which can be changed solely through the political powers. Educational projects would be tools used together with the oppressed, to get them organized (Yang, 2016). The pedagogy of the oppressed would have two stages. The first consists of the oppressed who inform the world of their oppression and also of their commitment to actively root it out. The second stage take place beyond the context of the oppressed, through the inclusion of all groups and people dedicated to alleviating and eliminating oppression. Oppression is manifested through violence, even if a person is merely hindered in the pursuit of self-affirmation. This is a situation that is most commonly dressed in false generosity.

According to Freire it is still oppression. As a final idea for this paper, we would point out that Freire argues that the oppressed, who fight to be human, effectively strip the oppressor of his power, thus making him unable to dominate. In the process, it is the oppressed who restore the humanity of the oppressor, a humanity he has lost while exercising his power of oppression (Freire, 2014).

Henry Giroux

As for Henry Giroux, he understands education as a feature of politics, thus providing the capacities, knowledge, skills, and social relations to allow and aid individuals to understand themselves as social and political agents. Educational institutions should not be considered as the limit or ultimate representatives of education. Education is more than the institutions in which it operates. The sum of individual and collective experiences is part of education. They offer the necessary critical understanding for everyday oppression. Acknowledging how and why oppression exists in a certain group or institution, may lead to efficient measures to aid its resolve. In this context, a critical understanding for everyday oppression also brings about the dynamics to construct alternative political cultures, where oppression is not only documented, but also easily and hastily identified, addressed, and resolved.

In his *On Critical Pedagogy*, Giroux argues that in the 1970s and 1980s, the education lost its capacity to be critical, in the wider context of authoritarian politics becoming more prevalent. In his view, the fundamental element for democracy is education. The argument is that a democratic society needs a formative culture to survive (Reitz, 2013). The pedagogical practices need to be able to create the necessary conditions for developing critical, self-reflective, and knowledgeable citizens. This kind of democracy will benefit from such citizens, who will make informed and moral judgements, and who will also act in a socially responsible way. Critical pedagogy relies on both critical analysis and moral judgments, but it is not limited to them (H.A. Giroux & Penna, 1979). For Giroux, it goes beyond the ideological comfort, by questioning common sense assumptions, together with matters of self and social agency, and also it engages with the continuous demands and promises of a democratic polity. Thus, critical pedagogy can be considered as a set of concepts, that allow teachers to support and promote the values of reason and freedom (H. Giroux, 2011).

Critical pedagogy is not a set of fixed methods, that can be used readily in any educational or social context. Instead, it is an outcome of specific contexts, and it interrogates how knowledge, power, desire, and experience are shaped in educational contexts. These experiences shape the way students develop meanings, as well as the way they develop their modes of expression. The students thus shape their own versions of self, that will interact with society. Education cannot be limited to dry methods of teaching and obsolete objectives, that have little to no relevance to practical issues of society. Critical pedagogy aims at offering education the status of forming beliefs, practices, and social relations, that are wielded by citizens/individuals who have a voice, and who are knowledgeable in exercising their power and know how to govern, support, and lead a democratic society. The society created by such individuals will place great emphasis on equality, justice,

shared values and freedom. In short, critical pedagogy is a useful element in politics, because it creates critical citizens, who build and support formative cultures, that are the backbone of democratic societies (H. Giroux, 2011).

Conclusions

The research aimed at presenting the issue of ideologies and how they come to influence the educational system, not only in today's society, but also at the turn of the 20th century. Oppression and exclusion are realities that begin at early ages and marginalized groups adapt to the pressure, at times, throughout their lives. If oppression and exclusion are to be efficiently fought, and eventually eliminated from the educational system, pedagogy would still not have a quiet time, since every generation spawns new challenges. The research focused first on several definitions, starting with the concept of idea and finishing with that of pedagogy, passing on to showing how social engagement, in the midst of the marginalized, the oppressed, and the excluded, had been an ever-present endeavor for humanity, especially from the second half of the 19th century, within western society. Even if a significant part of oppression happens outside of school institutions, the lack of education or the inability of the educational system to correct oppressions against their own students, would inevitably lead to severe limitations on personal and social freedom.

The Social Gospel Movement aimed at delivering society from its social sins, such as alcoholism, domestic violence, promiscuity, joblessness, and oppression suffered by the working class, at the hands of industrialists, by giving a voice to the oppressed and the excluded, and restoring their humanity and their value, so that they might perpetuate and better the process of social reform. The movement influenced Paulo Freire, who experienced first hand what poverty and exploitation were. Through a series of life events, he became one of the brightest and most important voices against oppression and exclusion. He considered pedagogy a means to fight with, not for, the oppressed, and together to restore their humanity to themselves and to their oppressors, thus creating an environment for building a just and equal society. Henry Giroux was influenced by the works of Freire, and argued for a critical pedagogy, that would aim to evaluate the system of oppression, through critical thinking and a pedagogy that builds and strengthens beliefs. As for the proper assessment of oppression and exclusion in schools, the work Kevin Kumashiro is of special interest.

The work done through the SGM, and the writings of Freire and Giroux, are part of the ongoing process of educational reform. They are testimonies that deep thinkers can influence generations of students and future citizens, who are faced with choices regarding their own lives, as well as the overall good of society. The solutions proposed have their limits, but their application is almost universal, since any kind of oppression can be countered by access to the right information, proper methods of teaching the fundamental values of democracy, and an active engagement together with the oppressed to reach and support their freedom.

References

Alexander, R. (2008). Culture, Dialogue and Learning: Notes on an Emerging Pedagogy. In N. Mercer, S. Hodgkinson, *Exploring Talk in School: Inspired by the Work of Douglas Barnes* (pp. 91–114). SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781446279526.n6

Arias, M. (2019). *The Role and Impact of Social Media in Protesting Oppression in Venezuela–University of Miami* [University of Miami]. https://scholarship.miami.edu/esploro/outputs/graduate/The-Role-and-Impact-of-Social/991031447249202976?institution=01UOML_INST

Baker-Bell, A., Stanbrough, R. J., Everett, S. (2017). The Stories They Tell: Mainstream Media, Pedagogies of Healing, and Critical Media Literacy. *English Education*, *49*(2), 130–152. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26492794

Brown, C.G. (2012). Anti-Oppression Through a Postmodern Lens: Dismantling the Master's Conceptual Tools in Discursive Social Work Practice. *Critical Social Work*, *13*(1), Article 1. doi: 10.22329/csw.v13i1.5848

Cooper, G. (1995). Freire and Theology. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, *27*(1), 66–78. doi: 10.1080/02660830.1995.11730616

Curtis, S. (2001). *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture*. University of Missouri Press.

Deichmann, W.J. (2015). The Social Gospel as a Grassroots Movement. *Church History*, *84*(1), 203–206. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24537298

Diemer, M.A., Rapa, L.J., Voight, A.M., McWhirter, E.H. (2016). Critical Consciousness: A Developmental Approach to Addressing Marginalization and Oppression. *Child Development Perspectives*, *10*(4), 216–221. doi: 10.1111/cdep.12193

Education Definition, Development, History, Types, & *Facts Britannica*. (n.d.). Retrieved 3 July 2022, from https://www.britannica.com/topic/education

Edwards, W.J.D., Gifford, C.D.S. (2003). *Gender and the Social Gospel*. University of Illinois Press.

Freire, P. (2014). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Bloomsbury.

Giroux, H. (2011). *On Critical Pedagogy*. Continuum.

Giroux, H.A., Penna, A.N. (1979). Social Education in the Classroom: The Dynamics of the Hidden Curriculum. *Theory* & *Research in Social Education*, *7*(1), 21–42. doi: 10.1080/00933104.1979.10506048

Glass, R.D. (2001). On Paulo Freire's Philosophy of Praxis and the Foundations of Liberation Education. *Educational Researcher*, *30*(2), 15–25. doi: 10.3102/0013189X030002015

Gonce, R.A. (1996). The Social Gospel, Ely, and Commons's Initial Stage of Thought. *Journal of Economic Issues*, *30*(3), 641–665. doi: 10.1080/00213624.1996.11505829

Graham, J.R., Coates, J., Swartzentruber, B., Ouellette, B. (2007). *Spirituality and Social Work: Select Canadian Readings*. Canadian Scholars' Press.

Hegar, R.L. (2012). Paulo Freire: Neglected Mentor for Social Work. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, *23*(2), 159–177. doi: 10.1080/10428232.2012.666726

Holst, J. (2008). Paulo Freire in Chile, 1964–1969: Pedagogy of the Oppressed in Its Sociopolitical Economic Context. *Harvard Educational Review*, *76*(2), 243–270. doi: 10.17763/haer.76.2.bm6532lgln2744t3

James, R. (2013). Oppression, Privilege, & Aesthetics: The Use of the Aesthetic in Theories of Race, Gender, and Sexuality, and the Role of Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Philosophical

Aesthetics: Oppression, Privilege, & Aesthetics. *Philosophy Compass*, *8*(2), 101–116. doi: 10.1111/phc3.12002

Kajee, L. (2019). *A (de) Humanising Pedagogy: Let the Teachers Speak*. 248–251. doi: 10.36315/2019v2end052

Kumashiro, K.K. (2000). Toward a Theory of Anti-Oppressive Education. *Review of Educational Research*, *70*(1), 25–53. doi: 10.2307/1170593

Lander, D. (2004). The Legacy of the Social Gospel in Adult Education. *Journal of Adult Theological Education*, *1*(1), 79–90. doi: 10.1558/jate.1.1.79.36055

Law, M., Libecap, G. (2004). *The Determinants of Progressive Era Reform: The Pure Food and Drugs Act of 1906* (No. w10984; p. w10984). National Bureau of Economic Research. doi: 10.3386/w10984

Leland, W., Stockwell, A. (2021). Anti-Oppressive Restorative Justice: Behavior Analysis in Alternatives to Policing. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*. doi: 10.1007/s40617-021-00633-0

Leonard, P., McLaren, P. (2002). *Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter*. Routledge.

Luker, R.E. (1998). *The Social Gospel in Black and White: American Racial Reform, 1885–1912*. University of North Carolina Press.

Morgan, J. G. (1969). The Development of Sociology and the Social Gospel in America. *Sociological Analysis*, *30*(1), 42. doi: 10.2307/3709933

Muller, M., Boutte, G.S. (2019). A framework for helping teachers interrupt oppression in their classrooms. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, *13*(1), 94–105. doi: 10.1108/JME-09-2017-0052

Oppression – An overview ScienceDirect Topics. (n.d.). Retrieved 3 July 2022, from https://www-sciencedirect-com.am.e-nformation.ro/topics/social-sciences/oppression

Pease, P.B. (2010). *Undoing Privilege: Unearned Advantage in a Divided World*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Reitz, C. (2013). *Crisis and Commonwealth: Marcuse, Marx, McLaren*. Lexington Books.

Ross, E.W. (2001). *The Social Studies Curriculum: Purposes, Problems, and Possibilites, Revised Edition*. SUNY Press.

Shackel, P.A., Palus, M.M. (2006). The Gilded Age and Working-Class Industrial Communities. *American Anthropologist*, *108*(4), 828–841. doi: 10.1525/aa.2006.108.4.828

Silva, C.S. e, Costa, B.L.D. (2016). Opressão nas escolas: O bullying entre estudantes do ensino básico. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, *46*(161), 638–663. doi: 10.1590/198053143888

Snaza, N. (2013). Bewildering Education. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, *10*(1), 38–54. doi: 10.1080/15505170.2013.783889

Yang, C.-L. (2016). Encounters between the 'oppressed' and the 'oppressor': Rethinking Paulo Freire in anti-racist feminist education in Sweden. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *19*(4), 835–855. doi: 10.1080/13613324.2014.885421

Yarbrough, D. (2020). "Nothing About Us Without Us": Reading Protests against Oppressive Knowledge Production as Guidelines for Solidarity Research. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *49*(1), 58–85. doi: 10.1177/0891241619857134

Yeager, D.M. (1990). Focus on the Social Gospel: An Introduction. *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, *18*(1), 3–6. JSTOR. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40017825

Theatre as a tool in creating space for cultural and religious diversity dialogue[1]

Taiwo Afolabi
Centre for Socially Engaged Theatre, University of Regina, Canada
Theatre Emissary International, Nigeria
University of Johannesburg, South Africa
ORCID: 0000-0002-5905-1051

I want to begin with two vignettes:

I

In 2017, an ethnic clash ensued in my hometown, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. The clash was between Hausas and Yorubas, who reside in Ife-Ife. The cause of the clash was controversial; however, residents took sides on the basis of religion and culture. Rumour had it that the government took sides because, at the time, the president of the country was a northern Hausa Muslim man and the governor of the state was a Muslim. Hence, both the federal and state government favoured the Hausas for obvious reasons. The clash resulted in a crisis, loss of life and displacement.

II

In May 2023, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIFR) designated 17 countries to the State Department for designation as Countries of Particular Concern (CPCs) because their governments engage in or tolerate "systemic, ongoing, and egregious violations" of the right to freedom of religion or belief. Although the countries on the list have been notable for religious violations, different levels of severity of religious intolerance exist in other countries apart from these seventeen. With the rate of clashes and crises due to religious and cultural differences, there is a need to find innovative ways to talk about religious tolerance, acceptance and social inclusion without the fear of being silenced or shamed.

[1] A keynote presented at the 16th UNESCO/Janusz Korczak Chair International Doctoral Summer School organized by the Maria Grzegorzewska University and Institute of Political Studies of Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland, September 2023.

Introduction/Rationale for the study

Many incidents, such as those described above, 9/11, attacks on religious buildings/structures, and mass shootings of worshippers, are not isolated (Sugar, 2022; Nair, 2014). Scholars believe that some of these incidents were religiously motivated (Abulafia, 2011; Kidner et al., 2007). According to Parvati Nair, the Director of the United Nations University Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility, "Clashes, provocation and dissent between religiously and culturally different groups have characterized many mainstream European concerns" (2014, 328). For instance, in Poland, according to the 2019 Report on International Religious Freedom by the U.S. Department of State's Office of International Religious Freedom, there were reports of physical attacks against Roman Catholic clergy and vandalism at Jewish and Roman Catholic sites. According to the opinion polls, most Poles believed religious discrimination in Poland was about race, although for a significant portion of the population, anti-Semitism was a problem. Incidents in recent times also show that some of the attacks were based on the atrocities many church figures have committed against humanity.

Further, scholars have investigated how being tolerated differs from being discriminated against and being accepted in its associations with affective well-being and ethnic and national identification of ethnic minorities (Cvetkovska, Verkuyten, and Adelman, 2020). The ultimate goal is not to be tolerated; rather, it is to be accepted because toleration implies enduring and permitting what one finds objectionable (Forst, 2013; Gibson, 2006; Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2017). This means that in a society with minorities, the dominant group or the group in the majority would need to acknowledge imminent change, tolerate and move to acceptance.

The incessant clashes based on religious and cultural difference globally has provoked responses from the international community. Particularly, many international organizations and states signed on to promote cultural and religious pluralism, particularly by safeguarding the cultural and natural heritage of religious interest. There are codified and uncodified legal instruments, such as the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression (2007) and the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950). There are regional soft and hard laws for the purpose of creating welcoming systems, structures and processes for religious and cultural tolerance. These tools are in response to religious and cultural crises. Particularly, in 2019, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) developed the Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, entitled "In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship," in close consultation with United Nations entities, government, civil society, faith-based organizations, religious leaders, diverse age and gender groups, local communities, private sector, and other relevant stakeholders. According to UNAOC, "the Plan supports governments in their efforts to protect religious sites and places a strong focus on prevention, exploring actions to address drivers that can result in violent attacks against holy sites and worshippers." (UNAOC website 2019). The call towards religious pluralism is complex and nuanced and has to be navigated carefully. UNAOC's Plan of Action is anchored in seven principles: Respect, Responsibility, Diversity, Dialogue, Solidarity, Standing together, and Staying together. In many ways, these principles align with the

theatre's framework and the benefit through the creative process in theatre making. I will return to these ideals later in this chapter.

Evidently, the topic of religion and culture is not far-fetched. The impetus for this research is personal. Apart from the fact that I have experienced cultural and religious crises, there are many examples that abound in the world today, and there is a need to create critical pathways for acceptance. Secondly, religious difference accounts for one of the top reasons for killings (UN Alliance for Civilization). According to the Encyclopedia of Wars, out of all 1,763 known/recorded historical conflicts (as of 2014), 121 (6.87%) had religion as their primary cause (Charles Phillips and Alan Axelrod, 2004). To buttress this, Charles Kimball in his book, When Religion Becomes Evil claims that "it is somewhat trite, but nevertheless sadly true, to say that more wars have been waged, more people killed, and these days more evil perpetrated in the name of religion than by any other institutional force in human history." (2002, 1). Thus, this chapter is guided by the question: How can theatre be engaged as a tool for creating a safe space for dialogue on social inclusion? The impetus for diving into the line of inquiry on cultural and religious diversity started from a personal experience heightened by similar experiences globally. Structurally, this chapter starts with an introduction, moves to theoretical framing and underscores the nexus between theatre and religion. The chapter case studies an applied drama project in Nigeria and ends with some thoughts and remarks.

Theoretical framing

With the high rate of migration in the 21st century, cultural diversity is critical to the success of organizations, businesses, and countries (International Organization for Migration, 2022). Sociologist Caleb Rosado defines multiculturalism as "a system of beliefs and behaviours that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organization or society" (2006, p. 2). Rosado identified five core ideals critical to fostering a multicultural environment, such as "beliefs and behaviours", "recognises and respects", "acknowledges and values", "encourages and enables", and "empowers". Multiculturalism as a system of ideals can offer possibilities for co-existence within and among religions and cultures and foster outcomes for recognizing, acknowledging, tolerance and acceptance.

Debates in multiculturalism show there are many faces to multiculturalism (Parekh 2006; Taylor 1992) . There are challenges, benefits, and conceptual differences over the meaning of multiculturalism which often lead to confusion and misunderstanding (Joppke, 2004; Kesler & Bloemraad, 2010). Demographic multiculturalism centres on population diversity, culture and equality (Barry 2002). Multiculturalism is considered a political philosophy and public policy, and is critical to social cohesion, immigrant integration, and ultimately, multicultural citizenship (Banting et al., 2006; Bloemraad, 2006; 2011; Kymlicka, 1995; 2010).

Within the context of religion and culture, the purview of this chapter, multiculturalism, is critical to achieving a diverse society and scholars have argued for the need

to rethink it (Plaut et al., 2011). This is because religion is culture and informs culture; as religion is a 'cultural system' (Woodhead 2011, 124). Religion plays a central role in social inclusion because religion is a social activity as much as spiritual. It is a major influence in our world because, for many people, religion is the first source of cultural identity. In fact, it is the first agent of socialization— and people can take religion personally. The strongly held worldviews and intolerance of other religions have resulted in violent clashes between respected religious groups. Since religion is central to culture and vice versa, any take on culture will inversely affect religion. For instance, the Yoruba-Hausa crisis in 2017 described in Vignette I, was fueled by cultural and later religious differences.

Religious traditions differ in seven ways: doctrinal and philosophical, mythic and narrative, ritual and practical, ethical and legal, experiential and emotional, social and organizational, and material and artistic (Smart, 1996). Scholars have argued that the doctrinal and philosophical aspect is central to every religion, and other aspects emanate from the aforementioned views. An embrace of the doctrinal and philosophical views of any religion—not necessarily to believe in them but to allow them to thrive without silencing them or privileging them over others—, is crucial. The pluralistic stance has led to the questioning and defense of various "exclusivist" traditional Christian or Islamic claims. Theories of religious diversity have largely been driven by attacks on and defenses of such claims, and discussions continue within the realm of Christian theology (Kärkkäinen, 2003; Netland, 2001). Within the theory of religious pluralism, core pluralism acknowledges differences in all the aspects of religions, but separates peripheral from core differences.

In multiculturalism, there is no dominant culture; in fact, the goal is for multiple ethnic, cultural or religious groups with hand traditions to co-exist within a society. Religious diversity or pluralism means "an informed, tolerant, and appreciative or sympathetic view of the various religions" (Tuggy, Dale. Theories of religious diversity, *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, n.p/d*). Multiculturalism can take place through a natural or artificial process, and it can take place on a small or national scale. Integration of different cultures into a single society can be considered a melting pot, salad bowl or mosaic. As Tariq Modood states in his book Multiculturalism (2013), 'at stake in the practices of multiculturalism are questions of inclusion and exclusion, turning integration into a key issue in contemporary Europe.'

So how does theatre come into this?

Theatre and Religion Nexus

Religion and theatre have commonalities in terms of origin and practice. Both are rooted in people's culture; they are culture-specific, culture-oriented and people-driven. There is an element of performance in religion— ritual practice requires some theatrical elements such as music, spectacle and most times, costume and props, while theatre itself has its origin in religious practices. Both are extensions of each other. Marvin Carlson writes, "Generally, non-Western performance has been tied to religious practice from the very beginning." (2014). Even in the West, for instance, the Greek theatre is

associated with the Dionysian cult, and the Roman theatre is connected to the church. In Africa, theatre and performance have some roots in religious rituals etc. In fact, "[…] religion and theatre often share a common understanding that truth cannot be contained solely within literal facts: we need creative images in order to catch a fleeting glimpse of reality". Both involve ceremonies, an actor addressing the audience, movements, songs/music and the creative imagination.

Strauß, et al., argue that there is a link between religion and the arts because both attempt to interpret and give meaning to human existence. Religion and art belong to the roots of culture (Strauß et al., 2013). In the case of theatre, scholars have argued that theatre has a close bond with the ritual dimension of religion because of its mimetic feature, which offers performative connections between the two. Theatre embodies some of the features of any religion (Smart 1996). Specifically, the mythic and narrative, ritual and practical, experiential and emotional, social and organizational, and material and artistic are evident in theatre. Historically, theatre originated from ritual practice from cults and religious practices from Africa to Asia, Greek to Roman theatre.

The creative process in theatre can foster an enabling environment needed to achieve these principles. In Tim Prenkti and Nicola Abraham's Applied Theatre Reader, some of these words were part of the lexicon identified as key terms used in applied theatre practice (2020). For instance, the process of devising and building an ensemble in an applied theatre project would require embracing certain values which align with the principles outlined in the UN's Plan: *Respect, Responsibility, Diversity, Dialogue, Solidarity, Standing together, and Staying together.* Specifically, the process of creating a theatre performance (applied theatre) requires a respectful environment, a sense of responsibility, diversity of ideas, dialogue, a sense of community (that is, standing together and staying together) and solidarity. In the next section, I discuss an applied drama project I worked on titled The Queen Moremi Project in Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria, to create a safe space to discuss issues of social inclusion.

Methods and Materials

This research is guided by Applied Theatre as Research (ATAR) in a community-based participatory methodological framework. ATAR is "an act of political and cultural resistance that creates, through the fictional frame, a set of propositions that are co-constructed, analyzed and then re-presented to communities as a method of creating new knowledge and forging social change' (O'Connor & Anderson, 2015, p. 49). ATAR works as a democratic and pro-social adjunct to community-based research and explains its complex relationship to arts-informed inquiry, Indigenous research methods and other research epistemologies (O'Connor & Anderson, 2015). ATAR involves using drama, theatre, and performance in non-traditional theatre contexts. Apart from the themes of migration and displacement, which The Queen Moremi Project dealt with (Afolabi, 2023), the project addressed other issues, such as social inclusion, including cultural and religious issues. This is because the impetus for the crisis was caused by ethnic clashes. Designed on the background of the ethnic crisis described in Vignette I, the theatre project in discussion recognized the socio-cultural conditions at the time. Held

in Oranmiyan Middle School, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria, the project involved Grade 9 students. Thirty-five pupils aged 11–16 from four different ethnic groups in Nigeria – Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and Ebira; and mostly from Christian and Moslem religions – participated in the project. The choice of the school was based on its location in Sabo, the place where the Yoruba-Hausa crisis happened in March 2017. The pupils were interested in exploring issues around social inclusion since they witnessed a major crisis in the city 19 months prior to this time. Part of the questions explored include, "Why do two closely knit ethnic groups fight each other?" "How can we avoid communal clashes?" We explore the idea of peace, friendship and power.

Based on these questions and the pupils' civic education curriculum, I designed drama workshops. Through storytelling, songs, still images and traditional games, we unpacked some of these questions.

Discussion

In response to the aftermath of the recent conflict/crisis, the kids decided to retell the Queen Moremi story to explore issues of cultural differences, protection and safety. Because the kids were part of the decision-making process in deciding which historical material to use, they were invested in the drama workshop and, ultimately, the story. The Queen Moremi is about a queen who decided to spy on the enemies of her people in order to know the secret of the enemies and divulge it to her people so that the next time the invaders come to her people, her people can protect themselves. The pupils were interested in ways ethnic clashes can be avoided. During the reflection, one of the pupils asked if the fight between the Ifes and Ibos could have been avoided if one ethnic group had not chosen to invade the other. In response to the crisis in the town of Ile-Ife, the pupils expressed their displeasure at the incident because the impact was felt mostly by them. For instance, the school closed, and some had to lose their friends, among other things.

Through the theatrical explorations, the pupils spoke about the connection between religion and culture. They identified the significant roles of religion and culture play significant roles in Africa, including Nigeria. This understanding aligns with scholars' submissions that religion is central to the cause of crises in the region (Pew Research Centre, 2010). Like many parts of the world, Ife-Ife, an ancient town considered the origin of the Yorubas, has experienced a series of insurgencies in the last decade, which has had adverse effects on the city. In the Pew Research Centre report, *Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*, the impacts of religions are evident in people's day-to-day lives, and the levels of tolerance and tension are based on various worldviews each religion holds. The pupils observed that there were different opinions because there were different religions represented; what was important was the need to create space for dialogue. As pupils, the decision to play or not play together was not because of religion, even though they all knew their religions. "If we children can work together, why can't adults do?" They also raised the fact that many of the prejudices they have against the other person's religion were learnt from the adults in their lives – most from stories they heard and by observing the adults in their lives. Both the hate speeches and positive narratives were spoken by mostly adults.

Further, the project sought to work with school children to create a safe space to have a conversation about social inclusion. The choice of the school children was based on the school curriculum, and focusing on children to hear their perspective about the crisis was important to understand their experience and the healing process. Also, many of them were internally displaced from their homes due to the crisis; they had first-hand experience of the repercussions of religious and cultural crises. The time of the theatre intervention was critical. The project was carried out 19 months after the crisis, and approval was sought from the school for alignment with their curriculum. This is important because in theatre intervention, especially in post-conflict zones and highly religious societies, the place of religion, accurate timing, consultation, varied interpretation of meanings, signs and symbols, cultural forms, and religious values, among others, need to be respected so that the people can open up to the purpose of such theatre initiatives which is to create awareness to let aside differences and embrace peace to mention a few.

On the UNAOC's Plan of Action's seven principles— respect, responsibility, diversity, dialogue, solidarity, standing together, and staying together— the project offered an opportunity to respectfully engage with one another despite the differing opinions. The safe space to speak freely about the fact that each person is responsible for the peace of society was important because respectful dialogue is important in resolving conflict and in achieving any form of peace and solidarity. Owing to the fact that the subject of religion and culture can be really emotional and uneasy and requires care when addressing, theatre can serve as a tool for creating a safe and brave space for courageous conversation if ethically done. This is because religion involves people's belief systems and worldviews. Navigating conversations around religion and culture requires a certain level of openness and understanding, and theatre can facilitate this ideal.

Finally, the commitment to pluralism is a touchstone of democracy as envisaged, especially in the wake of the Second World War and the threats of fascism. However, democracy – and with it, pluralism – becomes undone every day due to the existence of multiple borders that are more economic, legal and political, than they are to do with race, ethnicity or religion per se. As a result, at the heart of plurality lie major questions regarding tolerance, equality and justice.

Conclusion

To end where I started, the two vignettes continue to manifest in society at various levels, and there is a need to find a way to address religious tolerance and acceptance. Let's be clear, theatre alone cannot resolve religious and cultural differences, but it can create a safe space for courageous dialogue. It can provide an opportunity where parties involved can feel heard and listened to, and through the element of playfulness, difficult conversation and a tense environment can be diffused with fun and laughter for a respectful sharing of ideas and opinions.

Therefore, this project first brings to light the relevance and influence of religion to theatre intervention on issues of social inclusion. The right understanding of the reality and intricacies of people's religion, especially when carrying out theatre interventions among religious societies, can either make or mar such an initiative. Thus, with

the alarming increase in the rate of crisis across the world, especially crises caused by religious beliefs, the findings of this project will help theatre scholars and practitioners in devising mechanisms to overcome the challenge of obstruction/rejection that many practitioners face in such post-conflict zones. The project amplifies strategies to achieve shared understanding, community collaboration and accurate interpretation of experiences, symbols, and dialogue that are necessary for the success of such theatre initiatives.

References

Abulafia, D. (2011). *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Axelrod, A., Phillips, C. (Eds.). (2004). *Encyclopedia of Wars* (Vol. 3). Facts on File, pp. 1484–1485 "Religious wars".

Banting, K., Johnston, R., Kymlicka, W., & Soroka, S. (2006). Do Multiculturalism Policies Erode the Welfare State? In *Multiculturalism and the Welfare State: Recognition and Redistribution in Contemporary Democracies*, K. Banting, W. Kymlicka (Eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barry, B. (2002). *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bloemraad, I. (2006). *Becoming a Citizen: Incorporating Immigrants and Refugees in the United States and Canada*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bloemraad, I. (2011). "We the People" in an Age of Migration: Multiculturalism and Immigrants' Political Integration in Comparative Perspective. In *Citizenship, Borders and Human Needs*, Rogers Smith (Ed.). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bloemraad, I. (2011). The Debate Over Multiculturalism: Philosophy, Politics, and Policy.

Joppke, C. (2004). The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State: Theory and Policy. *British Journal of Sociology*, *55*(2), 237–257.

Kesler, C., Bloemraad, I. (2010). Does Immigration Erode Social Capital? The Conditional Effects of Immigration-Generated Diversity on Trust, Membership, and Participation across 19 Countries, 1981-2000. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *43*(2), 319–347.

Kidner, F., Bucur, M. Matthisen, R., McKee, S., & Weeks, T. (2007). *Making Europe: People, Politics, Culture* (Vol. 1). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Kimball, C. (2002). *When Religion Becomes Evil.* Harper: San Francisco.

Kymlicka, W. (1995). *Multicultural Citizenship*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (2010). Testing the Liberal Multiculturalist Hypothesis: Normative Theories and Social Science Evidence,*Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *43*(2), 257–271.

Modood, T. (2013) *Multiculturalism* (2nd edition). Oxford: Polity Press.

Nair, P. (2014). Cultural and religious diversity in Europe: the challenges of pluralism. *Strategic Sectors | Culture and Society*, 328–330

Parekh, B.C. (2006). *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*. New York: Palgrave.

Plaut, V.C., Garnett, F.G., Buffardi, L.E., & Sanchez-Burks, J. (2011). "What About Me?" Perceptions of Exclusion and Whites' Reactions to Multiculturalism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *101*(2), 337–353.

Strauß, B., Tabori, G., Fritsch, W., Bärfuss, L. (2013). Religion in Contemporary German Drama. Bydell & Brewer.

Sugar, S. (December 20, 2022). Religious conflict in Poland. *Hungarian Review*, Vol. XIII, NO. 4.

Taylor, C. (1992). *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rosado, C. (2006). What Do We Mean By "Managing Diversity? Originally Published in Sumati Reddy, editor. Workforce Diversity, Vol. 3: Concepts and Cases. Hyderabad, India: ICAFAI University. EdChange and the Multicultural Pavilion – http://www.EdChange.org/multicultural

United Nations (UN News). 'Reaffirm the sanctity' of religious sites, says Guterres, launching new plan to 'counter hate and violence'. UN News: Global perspective Human stories. https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/09/1046182

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). The United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, entitled "In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship. September 2019

https://www.unaoc.org/2019/09/launch-of-plan-of-action-to-safeguard-religious-sites/#:~:text=UNAOC%20developed%20the%20Plan%20of,local%20communities%2C%20traditional%20and%20social

Countering the prevalence of hate-rhetoric in right wing populist political communication

Erzsébet Barát
CEU, Vienna, Austria
ORCID: 0000-0002-7774-6471

Introduction

I am arguing that over the past dace or so, a ubiquitous discourse of hate propaganda has been established as routine, banal mode of communication in contemporary political discourse in Hungary. This hate rhetoric has had 'gender', the critical category of analysis of feminist scholarship in its centre as the ultimate enemy of the state (values). I identify the powerful emergence of this dominant rhetoric in 2010, when the Fidesz-Christian Democrats Party coalition under the leadership of Prime Minister Victor Orbán came into power and maintained a super majority in parliament four times to date. Over the years, the rhetoric of fear mobilizing the affect of hate has come to be naturalized through an intensive state propaganda to the point of an ordinary mode of interaction. I have also argued (Barát, 2022) that this rhetoric is a major instrument in the regime's so-called 'cultural war' that aims to replace the Hungarian cultural and academic elite while restructuring their institutions or replacing them with ones loyal to the regime.

I shall argue that this dominance is particularly problematic for those self-identifying as critical of the system. In so far as a discourse becomes the dominant mode of communication, it cannot function as a distinction between political statements articulated by those in power and by the opposition. The latter can be easily caught within the logic of the dominant mode of interaction as the example of the analysis of the radical feminist stance will demonstrate it. Since the rhetoric of stigmatization draws on fear to legitimize the affect of hate towards any group that is either indirectly associated with threat or is explicitly announced to be one a crucial stance needs to go beyond that logic and try to intimate the affect of trust instead. My ultimate aim is to attempt to contribute to the development of a critical analysis of hate speech that may shift the focus from pitting reasons and demarcating differences across the various feminist positions towards a solidarity that focuses on what we have in common in our struggles for a more democratic co-existence.

The epistemological framework of critical studies of discourse

As a scholar who does critical analysis of discourse, let me clarify some of the key tenets of the framework – with a focus on all three terms in its naming: discourse, critical, and analysis. First of all, I would like to underscore that the category of discourse was not originally developed in linguistics. It is not a category of language that should conveniently and without further reflections be reduced to language or text. The concept is transdisciplinary and cannot be automatically adopted for the purposes of linguistic analysis. It was introduced by Michel Foucault in his monograph, *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), which is his criticism of linguistics and history for their empiricist understanding of the relationship between reality and language (language use). He took issue with their assumption that the first element of the binary were a natural source or cause of knowledge and meaning, respectively. He takes issue with the allegedly referential relationship between the two elements, according to which our statements should be literally consequential upon what there 'is' in the world and the 'corresponding' knowledge/concepts of reality should be represented in our categories/words that are 'true to facts'. Instead of this structuralist position, he argues for an intertwined, mutually constitutive relationship between the two, thereby interrupting the fractal logic that informs the empiricist episteme. The fractal logic will automatically generate further nestings of the same binary of immediate constituency on either side of the divide. The fractal logic of mathematics is argued to be informing the chains of binary distinction by Susan Gal and Gail Kligman (2000, p. 81) when they discuss the routine formation of public/private distinctions in the 1990s of post-socialist countries. In their formulation;

> Whatever the local, historically specific content of the dichotomy, the distinction between public and private can be reproduced repeatedly by projecting it onto narrower contexts or broader ones. Or, it can be projected onto different social "objects"–activities, identities, institutions, spaces and interactions – that can be further categorized into private and public parts. Then, through recursivity (and recalibration), each of these parts can be recategorized again, by the same public/private distinction. It is crucial that such calibrations are always relative positions and not properties laminated onto the persons, objects, or spaces concerned. They are like Bakhtinian voicings or perspectives rather than fixed categories. The term fractal is used in geometry to describe how a single pattern recurs inside itself – is self-similar – often with multiple nestings.

That is, the public and private are co-constitutive cultural categories, and they are "indexical signs that are always relative: dependent for part of their referential meaning on the interactional context in which they are used" (ibid.) In other words, the meaning of any category is necessarily intertextual, echoing and resonating with their multiple uses, actual and potential. Once they are established, they can be used to characterize, categorize, organize, and contrast spaces, institutions, bodies, groups, activities, interactions, relations, etc.

James Paul Gee (1999), the discourse analyst would capture this co-constitutive, intertwined relationship of the text/context nexus as language-in-action; where language

use is constitutive of what we understand to be the case of the world in a historically specific situation and that situation, in turn, is to shape how we may articulate, encode what we have to say, depending on the power dynamic organizing the activities we perform. This also implies that we, as speakers are always already caught within socially regulated collective practices at the intersection of multiple ways of enacting the world, including practices of signification. This post-structuralist paradigm entails two major tenets relevant for my analysis. One is that whatever we recognize as meaningful in an event of communication is situated, that is, caught or embedded within a particular matrix of differential relations of power. Consequently, the meaning of a concept is organized out of multiple elements into a more or less coherent pattern, where the elements necessarily pull in different directions. The other is that meaning is emergent, is the result of ongoing negotiations relative to, or indexical of the institutional organization of social life. In this sense, no particular meaning exists as the absolute, unquestionable representation of the event, like some 'content' capsuled or contained in the word to be judged in terms of a faithful or false (by mistake or on purpose) reflection thereof. What we routinely understand to be the 'referential content' always relies on routine contextual usage where the distinctions between the categories are relative to the matrix of power relations making up those contexts. As Deborah Cameron (2009, p. 15) has argued, language is not a neutral means of transfer of ideas from one mind to another with no distortion, which she calls "telementation," but it is contextualized and therefore functions as a site for power struggle over whose meaning is to become 'obvious' and as such dominant. It is in this sense that we can talk about the politics of the meaning of, for instance, sexuality, migration, gender, peace, or any other concept in the foreground of a given historical moment. Within this framework, when we are researching language use, our ultimate aim is to explore if the meaning of a given category reiterates unequal relations of the participants as if given and beyond change, that is, if the given meaning is ideologically invested in maintaining the status quo. Consequently, it is a meaningful objective to change language use when trying to shape and negotiate a less exclusionary, more egalitarian world. According to the referential paradigm of meaning, though, such an objective does not make sense. What needs to be changed is not language use but the world 'out there', including the outside of academia and the arguably 'neutral' (purely descriptive) language of our publications. I argue that it is such a structuralist perspective of language and knowledge that contemporary right wing populist discourse endorses, while necessarily discrediting and dismissing any scientific, pedagogical, or activist project that sees speech as performative or constitutive of reality. That logic articulates such a stance as an act of 'wokeism or PC', or as biased, subjective ideology, or mere belief. Any conservative academic discourse, in turn, that would defend science as a matter of objective value-free descriptions of our academic observations of the world as it is comes to be caught within the logic of such right wing political discourse – regardless of their representatives' claim.[1]

CDA studies will pursue the impact of institutional organization of life on the meaning of a category. Such an analysis is to explore how, for what possible reasons, what

[1] The dangerous overlap between political and academic discourse when looking at hate speech in relation to the social media context. (See Luke Munn (2023).

kind of discourse positions are articulated, for whom to assume; and what activities with what consequences are enabled from within those positions. In this sense, CDA analysis is an act of ideology critique, interested in the exploration of how and why given meanings are more likely to become 'commonsense' in the various institutions of social life, academia included. The validity criteria of such analysis are both internal and external. Internal validity entails the coherence, the explanatory power of the arguments developed. External validity entails the explanatory power of the researcher's decisions about what (textually mediated) events, histories, cultural practices, global changes should be brought in when they build the interpretative context around what is singled out as the focus of their analytical attention, in short, the context of the chosen terms' indexicality.[2] To analyze discourses entails exploring the situatedness of meaning, where the analysis itself is a particular discursive practice, an interpretative act oriented towards the deconstruction of what counts as commonsense, obvious understandings of the world for a given speech community.

What is it about discourse that makes critique possible? How is it possible for one to, in part, reflect on their routine act of signification? It is the multiplicity or heterogeneity of elements that make up a category more or less coherent and therefore intelligible. In short, multiplicity is not the mere multiplication of several self-contained units in an infinite line but integral to the meaning of any category. It is this multiplicity each category is organized out of that may allow us to expose the unsaid but assumed elements and their potential consequences for the material life of particular members of a speech community. Meaning is multiple in the sense that each coherent pattern of meaning, traditionally called 'category' is articulated out of several constituent elements at the intersection of several relations of power, such as relations of class, gender, ability, religion, geographical location, coloniality, etc. Secondly, meaning is multiple also in the sense that each constituent element of a sufficiently coherent pattern (category) is intertwined into several other coherent patterns (category) at the same time, decentering the semiotic field. Therefore, there is always a limit to what can be exposed and what remains invisible, but we do have the possibility of shifting our critical gaze along the vector of a given constituent element while moving in the direction of some other configuration from one is able to reflect on the previous configuration. This act of shifting the position is what I understand by critique.

The ultimate research question in term of multiplicity that is seen integral to the formation of any intelligible category is to pursue if a given meaning, addressed from a particular perspective, reiterates the dominant relations of power as 'given' and as such unchangeable, and to trace down the reasons for which it is argued to be the case. It is the logic of reason that shapes the network of relatings with several others as either 'desirable' and 'valuable' or 'undesirable', 'dangerous', 'threating', etc. What previous or potential future contexts do the constituent elements come to be associated with, in how complex of a web of differences or similarities? In short, discourse analysis is a performative act of reflexive critique and not a descriptive account of what there is: shifting our perspective along the vector of any of the constituent elements allows for the assumption

[2] Fran Tonkiss (1998) has published a great chapter on doing analysis of discourse (in the Foucauldian sense) and on the two criteria of its validity.

of a different position from where we may reflect on our previous location and their entanglements in power dynamics. On the other hand, within this framework of positionedness, trying to give an 'exact account' of what we have observed then means to reiterate, to stay within the perspective of the discourse pattern under investigation. The difference between the two positions can be grasped by James Paul Gee's (1999) claim that to be recognized as member of a speech community, as one of 'us', with whom we share the horizon of intelligibility, entails to be 'sufficiently' in sync with the given, routine practices of communication. From this, what follows for me is to say that critique is an act of subverting the limits of this 'sufficiency'. We come to disidentify with the conditions of being recognized as 'one of us' – including, of course, doing linguistics according to the canonized logic or not. At the same time, let me underscore that this limited view also entails that we must be always open to the possibility of 'making a mistake', precisely because within this model there is no promise of complete foreseeability of 'God's perspective' – to use Donna Haraway's (1988) (self-)ironic metaphor.

Building the interpretative context for the analysis of the four acts in the so-called emergency governance

The key moment for building a hate-rhetoric around the category of 'gender' in my reading is during the second term of the current regime (2014–2018). It included the billboard campaign against the refuges in 2015, the so-called lex-CEU and the appropriation of the Academic Research Institutes in 2017, and the revoking of the MA in Gender Studies in 2018. They functioned as discursive sites for reinforcing one another and solidifying the order of hate speech. The regime's propaganda effectively stigmatized several categories of identity as empty signifiers – in Ernesto Laclau's (1996) sense of the term. The four tropes of hate in the making are the 'intellectuals', 'genderists or gender lobbyists', 'Soros (as a synonym for 'Brussels' that should stand for the European Union)' and 'migrants (and never refugees)'. The signifiers are 'empty' in the sense that their meaning is intensely reworked to emerge as the exact opposite of their conventional intelligibility through a discourse strategy of decontextualization that detaches the categories from their established context to the point where each one of them can routinely implicate the others without actual mention, through a chain of equivalences that govern their new, oppositional associations. The discourse strategy that I call 'free interchangeability' draws on a systematic naturalization of the contradictory relationships across the four tropes so that they all may 'naturally' share and evoke the meaning of 'threat' for 'us', underscoring an absolute demarcation line of alleged 'protection' between the hostile enemy, 'them' and 'us', the homogenized collective of some imaginary unity sharing the 'desire' to live in 'security' – expected to be coming from the 'sate'.

To expose the actual working of this hate rhetoric, out of the four events during the second period of the Orbán regime, I shall focus on the case of the ban of the MA degree in Gender Studies in August 2018.[3] The decision was not discussed but simply introduced

[3] For a detailed discussion see Barát 2019.

in the Hungarian Gazette as Decree No. 188/2018 (X. 12.).[4] The choice of gender studies over other disciplinary fields for a spectacular public execution (not only that of the degree but, mediated by the ban, that of academic autonomy as well) is not an arbitrary but a carefully calculated decision in my reading. The official justification of the ban indirectly legitimizes the coercive move by contending that the government has not revoked a discipline but an ideology. Redefining the meaning of 'gender', the key analytical category of feminist scholarship as mere 'ideology' was expected to come across as convincing (not only for the citizenry but within Academia) more easily than any key category of analysis in other social science disciplines. First of all, the category of gender entered the public discourse relatively late, in the wake of the system change in 1989. Furthermore, from the very beginning, it was predominantly brought up in public discussions only to be discredited as an 'ideology' (Barát, 2005). Most importantly, though, the very label of ideology was already there on the horizon of intelligibility. Its commonsense meaning entails serving party political interests. That meaning is especially difficult to challenge in a country like Hungary, whose academic institutions only two decades before suffered constant interference from the one-party state before the system change. After 1989, in an effort to counter their lived experience in the state socialist past, researchers wish to secure their autonomy by appealing to the 'objectivity' of science within the structuralist framework. However, the claim to 'neutrality' is counter effective in that it prevents us, academics from seeing that to be recognized as scientific means to be positioned as sufficiently powerful and such recognition entails contestations of the dominant terms of evaluations. We are caught in an ongoing power struggle over what counts 'science', 'scientific'. Finally, Gender Studies, unlike many other disciplines, has always been explicit about its politics of knowledge, about its objective to undermine the regime's authoritarian power that is grounded in an extremely conservative misogynistic gender order.[5]

When the discipline of gender studies is denied academic merit and relegated into the domain of (party political) ideology, the first frame of the argument mobilizes the regime's populist discourse against anything 'intellectual', which is defined as the other of the value of 'productive'. The dichotomy will further associate gender studies (and by extension, any critical social research) as a matter of 'sophistry of words.' But once labelled to be an ideology, the 'sophistry' is indirectly associated with the meaning of 'deceptive words' that are not only useless (hence non-productive) but also an act of dangerous mind-washing in comparison with 'real science' that also comes to be implicated to be 'real' because 'productive', i.e. 'material' in its application (as exhibited in the promotion of 'applied' sciences over 'theoretical' approaches). Whenever the Government wants to reinforce its 'credibility' in regard of their education and research policies, they mobilise this complex network of explicit and implied binary distinctions of their right-wing

[4] The single sentence of the Decree reads like this; "The 139/2015. (09/06) Government Decree shall expire as indicated in Line 115, Appendix 3" In: "http://www.kozlonyok.hu/nkonline/index.php?menuindex=200&pageindex=kozltart&ev=2018&szam=158"the Hungarian original: "Hatályát veszti a 139/2015. (VI. 9.) Korm. rendelet 3. mellékletében foglalt táblázat 115. Sora." <http://www.kozlonyok.hu/nkonline/mkpdf/hiteles/mk15079.pdf>

[5] According to the EU Gender Equality Index (EIGE 2020), based on data from 2018 and 2019, Hungary came last but one out of 27 countries in the European Union.

populist discourse against anything labelled 'intellectual' for its allegedly non-productive, i.e. 'parasite' even 'frivolous' nature while elevating and fetishizing 'productivity' in the name of some unspecified utility and realpolitik.

The second narrative that has framed the fate of the MA degree implicates the institutional origin of Gender Studies at the private university of Central European University – still in Budapest then. The institution is routinely labelled as the 'Soros university' in the government officials' statements. This hostile stigmatization is based on the fact that George Soros, the philanthrope of Hungarian Jewish decent, was the founder of CEU in 1991. In my reading, the discipline's affiliation with CEU meant that the new Hungarian-language program at the state university of Eötvös Lóránd University (ELTE) could stand no chance. In August 2018, one year after the start of the program (sic), when the MA degree was banned, CEU was already under siege by the Government. The newly fabricated law on so-called foreign branch campuses was passed in April 2017. Charted in New York State, CEU was now demanded, retroactively, to have an actual teaching campus in the US to be allowed to run study programmes in Hungary. The Act was effectively targeting CEU, the only institution without such a campus out of the seven private institutions in the country at the moment of the passing of the Act. The legislator eventually forced CEU out of the country (into Vienna) in September 2020, making the Hungarian higher education system 'safe' from its so-called 'liberal propaganda'. Furthermore, the alleged threat of the 'Soros university' reiterated in countless government statements inevitably implicates the gender degree as the instrument of the 'liberal propaganda' of 'Soros'. Gender Studies may be showcased retrospectively as 'evidence' for the Government to legitimize their two-year vendetta against CEU. The attack on the degree therefore – through a further move of association – could also be seen as testing the Hungarian academic community's resistance to such abuse of academic autonomy. After all if the decision to close Gender Studies at ELTE had really been based on financial considerations and concerns about the government's alleged concerns about 'wasting the national budget,' they could have simply suspended the financial support and keep the MA as an exclusively fee-paying program – similarly to legal studies that was made into an exclusively fee-based degree in 2012 for that single academic year. The missed opportunity exposes the fact that the Government's ban was ideologically motivated. That motivation was further underlined by the announcement of a new MA degree in 'Family Policies and Social Policies' (sic) in the Economics Program of Corvinus University, Budapest in the very same Hungarian Gazette that removed the MA in Gender Studies from the list of officially recognized MA degrees in the country.

The Soros-trope has emerged though the interplay of multiple connotations. To make its infamous 'illiberal democracy project' work, the Orbán-regime and its think-tanks have singled out George Soros, on two intertwined accounts. Firstly, he was attacked as representative of Western liberalism that is further associated with 'Brussels', i.e. as its capital of administrative institutions, with the European Union. The original mission of the university to promote 'liberal democracy' in the wake of the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe is redefined in the 2010s to mean the 'enemy' of the current regime. It is to index everything Orbán's authoritarian illiberal regime has set out to destroy, partly for the sake of the so-called reorientation of the country's foreign policy towards the 'East'. From this perspective, CEU's mere existence and objective to promote

an 'open society' may expose the Hungarian government's broader agenda. From this perspective, CEU is indeed a threat, exposing the official agenda – as such, that meaning must be reversed. Secondly, in this strategic semantic inversion, the government harnessed a long tradition of anti-Semitism in the country when denouncing George Soros as the ultimate 'hideous financial power behind' any 'liberal mission'. Soros's decent of a Hungarian Jewish family made him the 'ideal' target and construct the Soros trope as the enemy from 'within', where the mention of the Soros figure automatically renders the meaning of CEU into 'the site of hideous ideological conspiracy' that has Gender Studies as its 'secret weapon'. Consequently, runs the logic of the official propaganda, it is only right for the Government to 'purge' 'our academia' and protect its 'scientific autonomy" from such 'hostile ideological interventions'.

The 'Soros' trope works not only to mean the enemy 'within', though. It means, at the same time, the enemy 'outside'. That external location of the trope emerged in the Hungarian government's official propaganda in the context of the refugee crisis Europe encountered in 2015. The despicable propaganda that redefines the meaning of refugee as "opportunistic migrants" takes me to the third narrative frame which defines the concept of gender (and its study) as an 'alien ideology'. The image of 'the frightful, ghastly, monstrous Jew' became ubiquitous since the summer of 2015 when the Government began to set up huge billboards all over the country as part of their anti-refugee campaigns (Barát, 2017). His figure is 'neatly' paired with the figure of the refugee in the xenophobic and anti-Islam discourse in the "Did you know?" series of billboards. The Soros trope as an "enemy from outside" is accused of 'plotting the Islamisation of a Christian Europe', inviting the citizenry to unite and feel justified in their fear and hate against the forced migration of people through the Balkan Route. The billboards at the same time also mobilize the message of 'no migrant to be imposed on us by the European Union', implicating 'Brussels' to be the other ideological tool associated with "Soros" against 'us, the Hungarian people' – on an international level. By August 2018, when the Gender Studies program and CEU were under heavy government attack, the name of the university's founder was effectively constructed to mean "the merciless ultimate enemy of the Christian nation". What is more, the third narrative of antimigration articulates 'us' in the first place as a collective of men. Their gendered mandate granted by the authority of the state is to imagine themselves as the figure of a "patriotic fighter" 'protecting' 'our women' and the 'Christian family values' of the 'real Europe' against the 'other' Man, the hostile 'Muslim male intruder'. Indirectly, the frame, to the extent it calls for defending Europe and its 'traditional' values, is also meant to mobilize against the so-called 'gender and human rights craze' of civil organizations and the academic institutions, both argued to be financially and ideologically supported by "Soros". This appeal to defending 'Christian values' as the 'real European values' indexes the rise of a Christian right in Hungary that can indirectly and conveniently implicate, yet again, anti-Semitism intertwined with Islamophobia, conflating the two as if sharing the same platform of threat. This narrative, most immediately, may hold out the promise of regaining a sense of valuable masculinity, the ultimate object of feminist critique of patriarchal organization of social life.

The association of Gender Studies with 'liberalism' and the private institution of CEU, a link, which is mediated by the figure of 'Soros', made the targeting of the programme symbolic of the much broader agenda of the Hungarian regime against the European

Union and the country's allies of neo-liberal democracies in the 'West', which has been termed by the prime minster as 'illiberal democracy' (Polyák, 2019). Gender Studies as a discipline came indirectly to mean and embody all imaginable values that were perceived to undermine the myth of Hungary as the self-styled 'protecting shield of the old Christian Europe' who protects its citizens against the danger of 'Brussels' and the 'non-Christian Muslim migrant' in alliance with the 'hostile EU bureaucrats with no national mandate and as such with no performance of 'real productivity'.

The mere mention of the trope of 'Soros', 'gender', 'migrant', or 'intellectual' can function as the centre of multiple, often contradictory discourses of fear. These names have become an empty signifier in Ernesto Laclau's (1996) sense of the term. Whichever figure is mentioned, its meaning is automatically articulated out of the other three, each with their complex chains of association of equivalences. In my understanding, right-wing populist discourses of fear produce multiple social relations of exclusion across empty signifiers that are set up as if in a non-reconcilable antagonistic conflict through the routine use of diverse forms of hate speech. The exclusionary logic produces a nexus between four equally unspecified positions in a dire opposition to 'us', an equally vague kind of populous. In the homogenized 'us', the diverse social groups are offered the opportunity to recognize themselves as if the 'same', downplaying the fact that they live their lives to deferent degrees in fear of precarity, of losing their autonomy, of lacking the possibility of transparent political institutions. They can conveniently be called upon to come together and re/imagine themselves as 'we' who are 'strong defenders' of any values the 'nation' should stand for in the face of any event, institution, or collective declared to be 'a hostile malicious threat' 'against us.' Just as importantly, it is also an exceptionally useful ideological rhetorical move for the Government in that the mentioning of the trope will safely prevent the actual citizens addressed as 'us', from acknowledging that 'our' sense of fairness and legitimacy disadvantages various others, such as refugees, civil organizations helping them, or educational and cultural institutions of trying to build alliances of solidarity. Most importantly, the chain of equivalences organizing the hate rhetoric as banal mode of communication will save 'us' from seeing that the most powerful actor in building entitlements and privileges on our backs is the government itself.

What could be a way out of the hate rhetoric under the rule by government decree?

The rule by decree declared a state of danger in March 2020 in Hungary in response to the Covid-19 pandemic (Act XII of 2020) and was prolonged under the pretext of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The decisions immediately opened up the space without the necessity of parliamentary debates for the imposing of four Acts that are all contesting the meaning of the category of gender. They stigmatize any group associated with concept of 'gender' as a 'legitimate' object for a biopolitical disciplining and criminalization. The four legislative acts as a pretext for expanding the regime's power are as follows. (1) The stipulation of gender in April, 2022 that should mean "biological sex based on primary sex characteristics and chromosomes" when recording people's

"sex at birth" in the Hungarian civil registry and thus make it impossible to change anyone's legally recognized gender in their documents. (2) In May 2020, the parliament voted on a "recommendation" for the Government not to ratify the Istanbul Convention, the first legally binding international instrument for preventing and combating gender-based violence against women. (3) The long-promised bill against child sex offenders in June 2021, unexpectedly, though a last minute amendment, conflated non-heterosexuals with the category of "pedophiles". According to the changes it is prohibited to make pornographic content available to minors, as well as contents that depict sexuality "for its own sake". Most importantly, it outlaws "portrayal and promotion of gender identity different from sex assigned at birth, the change of sex and homosexuality" in schools and in public service advertisements for persons under 18. (4) in April, 2023 a new law was passed to encourage citizens to "report" any crime against "Hungarian way of living" defined as behavior that according to the citizen's understanding should violate the "constitutionally recognized role of marriage and the family", and to ensure authorities to investigate these "complaints" in order to "protect" marriage defined in the constitution as an institution "between one man and one woman" while adding that "the mother is a woman, the father is a man". The renewed propaganda of hate could easily draw on the legacy of the establishment of hate -speech as banal mode of political communication between 2014–2018.

What is at stake in understanding how this routine mode of hate rhetoric works is not simply the usual concern for a CDA analysis, namely, building a convincing argument to expose the rhetoric in the regime's political communication. It is much more important now to understand that once the hate rhetoric is made banal, positions contesting the regime's communicative strategies are easily caught within that logic of stigmatization. Hate speech becomes a routine that mobilizes our understandings of who 'we' and various groups of 'others' in relation to 'us' are seen – regardless of our political self-identification. This is precisely the case when, for instance, contemporary voices who self-identify 'in opposition with' the official propaganda reiterate and mobilize the dominant rhetoric of hate within feminism. A particularly painful example of the reiteration of the intimation of exclusions is the critique voiced by feminists who self-identify as politically 'progressive' when they target other feminists who, in their understanding are not 'real feminists' (Barát, 2022). The 'non-real' feminist should be compromised or appropriated by state power when they allegedly reduce the 'proper' political struggle against structural inequalities of economy to a matter of recognition in the eyes of the law. These 'improper' feminists are singled out as the 'enemy' of feminism from within for using the category 'gender' in a misleading way. Their stance is usually identified as 'queer feminism' that argues for gender to be a verb, a socially regulated practice of sexuality. That is apparently 'wrong' because it challenges the biological givenness of sexual difference into male/female and the corresponding sets of gender roles attached to them, respectively. Paradoxically, the progressive feminist logic tries to challenge the government's systemic stigmatization of gender as dangerous ideology. They try to reclaim the category of feminist critique that is to expose the naturalization of patriarchal relations of power that should naturalize the routine distribution of relative privileges of entitlements, status, recognition, and values associated with manhood at the expense of what comes to index womanhood. However, in their interpretation, the queer-feminist position undermines

the 'right' (read biologized) meaning of sexual difference when they argue for the intelligibility of the category 'trans-woman1 as one form of womanhood. That meaning of 'gender' is false and therefore non-scientific but ideological and politically conservative. As such, it is providing 'evidence' for the state propaganda's stigmatization of 'gender'. As I have argued early on (Barát, 2005, pp. 206–207);

> (discursive) practices [of meaning making] are ideological in that they […] maintain […] the status quo by naturalizing the given hegemonic relations of patriarchal power, […] the various types of discourses enacted in the definition of 'feminism' reinforce the patriarchal regulation of women's labour and desire precisely by taking gender as sexually pre-given.

In the face of the systemic and forceful hate propaganda, an effective rhetoric of critique should not be pitting reasons against the dominant mode of political communication. Firstly, and above all, because wielding the power to reset the terms of whose meaning should count as 'commonsense' is unimaginable in the current political situation. The feminist objective should not consist in countering the government agenda by setting up the 'right' (and only) meaning of 'gender'. Ironically, such a discourse strategy would keep us caught within the dominant logic of meaning making that is mobilized by the rhetoric of hate. Instead, we should focus on forging ways of stepping aside, shifting the perspective. Instead of dealing in drawing absolute distinctions into binary opposites between proper feminism fighting against structural versus improper feminism fighting against 'only' symbolic forms of injustice, we should assume the stance of discourse positionality. The position of the logic of an intertwined text/context relationship and see categorization as an act of drawing relative but politically relevant distinctions. Most importantly, it would entail underscoring the overlaps and similarities across the different feminist discourses, in opposition to the current regime's investment in drawing absolute boundaries. I contend that this shift can be made possible by the intimation of the affect of trust instead of hate. I argue that emotions are acts; they do things, as Sara Ahmed (2004) contends. This dynamic approach means that the affect of trust can be seen as a social practice that does not necessarily require for its formation absolute sameness. To the contrary. It is argued to be negotiated out of experiences of discomfort without transcending the participants' relative difference.

I am proposing a trust-based solidarity that is seen as the intertwined dynamic of agreeing and disagreeing, acknowledging the indispensability of discomfort for trusting you because I know not only that we agree to some extent but that I can disagree with you without running the risk of stigmatization. However, such a community of speech of trust still should have some shared point of departure. The corollary of underscoring of our similarities would hinge on the agreement that the different positions, the multiple logics of feminism, should they be queer-feminism, transfeminism, radical feminism, or liberal feminism, do have hegemonic masculinity, i.e. ideal manhood as their target in common. In contemporary Hungary the logic informing the four acts under the pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine evolves around the reiteration of this ideal figure of Man. As the four laws indicate, hegemonic masculinity is fought around the entitlements of the white/Christian/upper-middle-class/urban/cis/heterosexual/male/patriot. The new element of its 'gender' is its cisness. We,

feminists cannot afford not to see that the current political struggle to re-traditionalize women as 'happily reproducing mother' hinges precisely on naturalizing sexual difference at the expense of the visibility of the possibility of its change either legally, culturally, or medically. If we continue our debate within feminism along the dominant logic of the dichotomy of sexual difference, we end up enacting what Laurent Berlant (1996, p. 243) has called the spectatorial sports of self-destruction among the already harmed collectives of heterosexual women, lesbian women, non-binary and transwomen in the public sphere – while simply making the government's fight against us easier. And that we cannot afford, especially not now.

References

Act XII of 2020 on the Containment of the Coronavirus <https://berlin.mfa.gov.hu/assets/77/49/43/cc3672166e33b2cf015ce4371aeedf19417c2710.pdf)>

Ahmed, S. (2004). *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press.

Barát, E. (2022). Paradoxes of the Right-Wing Sexual/Gender Politics in Hungary: Right-Wing Populism and the Ban of Gender Studies In J. Takács, J. Ramme, C. Möser (Eds.), *Paradoxical Right-Wing Sexual Politics in Europe* (pp. 173–199). Palgrave Macmillan.

Barát, E. (2019). Revoking the MA in Gender Studies in Hungary and Right-wing Populist Rhetoric. *L'Homme*, *30*(2), 135–144. https://doi.org/10.14220/lhom.2019.30.2.9

Barát, E. (2017). Populist discourses in the Hungarian public sphere: From right to left (and beyond)? *Journal of Language and Politics* (16)4, 535–550. https://doi:10.1075/jlp.17026.bar

Barát, E. (2005). The 'Terrorist Feminist': Strategies of Gatekeeping in the Hungarian Printed Media In M.M. Lazar (Ed.), *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Gender, Power and Ideology in Discourse* (pp. 205–228). Palgrave.

Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel Optimism*. Duke University Press.

Cameron, D. (2006). *Language and Sexual Politics*. Routledge.

EIGE (2020). Gender Equality Index. <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2020/EL>

Enyedi, Zs. (2022). Academic Solidarity and the Culture War in Orbán's Hungary. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, *55*(3), 582–584. https://doi:10.1017/S1049096522000129

Gal, S., Kligman, G. (2000). *The Politics of Gender after Socialism: A Comparative-Historical Essay*. Princeton University Press.

Gee, J.P. (1999). *Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. Routledge.

Haraway, D. (1988). Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. *Feminist Studies*, *14*(3), 575–599. https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066

Munn, L. (2023). *Red Pilled – The Allure of Digital Hate*. Bielefeld University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839466735

Polyák, G. (2019). Media in Hungary: Three Pillars of an Illiberal Democracy. In E. Połońska, C. Beckett (Eds.), *Public Service Broadcasting and Media Systems in Troubled European Democracies* (pp. 279–303). Palgrave Macmillan.

Tonkiss, F. (1998). Analyzing Discourse. In C. Seal (Ed.), *Researching Society and Culture* (pp. 245–260). Sage.

Creative maladjustment in interactions between students and assistant teachers

Marthinus S. Conradie
University of Free State, Republic of South Africa
ORCID: 0000-0003-2929-8616

Introduction

This study is premised on individual interviews with Assistant Teachers (ATs), who are employed as part-time educators at a South African university, in a Department of English Literary and Cultural Studies. The study theorises core themes emerging from these interviews, using creative maladjustment as conceptualised by Adams et al. (2018, p. 338). This introduction briefly outlines two aspects of the context of the study, before delineating its principal argument.

First, the context is an introductory module in literary studies, during which ATs are tasked with helping first-year students to theorise racism as structural. ATs do this by supporting students' engagement with literary texts that critically unpack the racialisation of power. My discourse analysis of interviews with ATs uncovered the following pattern. ATs reflected on their interactions with students and expressed the view that many students initially exhibited high levels of excitement and analytic rigour. However, over time the level of students' active participation diminished. Moreover, the writing students submitted for assessment became increasingly superficial, while remaining passable, which is to say that students still scored at least 50%, as required by the institution in question. More specifically, the ATs considered students' writing superficial in the sense that issues such as poverty and racism are disconnected from each other, despite the linkages suggested by the literary texts under study, and despite the fact that students expressed an awareness of these linkages prior to completing the written assessment.

A second vital point of context is that most of the students with whom the ATs work self-identify as black. For many ATs, this fuelled an urgency to make sense of the steady attenuation of students' active participation. ATs voiced a conviction that students possess experiential insights into racism, which drove their hope that students would find the teaching materials personally relevant. Guided by critical race theory (CRT), my discourse analysis of the interviews aims to map the ATs' meaning-making practices.

The central argument of this study links creative maladjustment to neoliberalism. My proposition is that the diminution of students' active participation, and the

sympathy ATs express with this reaction, can be read in terms of creative maladjustment – "practices of refusal or resistance against socialisation into a pathological system" typified by institutionalised, structural inequities (Adams et al., 2018, p. 338). To clarify, during the interviews, ATs averred that students who experience racism feel that participating in tutorials cannot meaningfully promote justice. The ATs suggested that students feel that talking earnestly about racism with ATs during tutorials, and writing about it for assessment, might feel meaningless because these undertakings are unlikely to engender change. Consequently, students aim simply to pass the module (as evidenced during the section on my findings). I suggest that aiming to pass can be framed as a form of creative maladjustment. ATs participate in this form of creative maladjustment by sympathising with students' plight instead of castigating them as academically deficient.

With regards to neoliberalism, my analysis of the interviews discloses how ATs' relationships with students are obstructed by an institutional context that limits the affective support ATs can provide to students. This theme from the interviews is theorised in terms of the neoliberal conditions that impact AT-student relationships, especially restrictions on teaching time (Ali, 2022; Holscher, 2018; Perez & Salter, 2019). As such, my argument is not simply that ATs and students are emotionally vulnerable when they engage complex issues such as racism. Their concerns also dovetail with existing critiques against higher education in South Africa. Specifically, higher education often fails to interrupt exploitative relations and racialised marginalisation. The study is, therefore, addressed to scholars of CRT who are interested in creative maladjustment, neoliberalism and related issues in higher education.

The rest of this chapter demarcates the tenets of CRT. Creative maladjustment is conceptualised and linked to neoliberalism, before supplying information about the ATs. The interview protocols are explicated and, finally, the findings are expounded and interpreted through the prism of CRT.

CRT, higher education and ATs

CRT approaches higher education using in the following precepts: 1) institutions of higher learning exist in structurally unjust societies; consequently they can challenge or reproduce prevailing injustices; 2) in response, CRT exposes unjust realities, often using experiential knowledge; 3) insights gleaned from experiential knowledge create a basis for challenging dominant ideologies; 4) and steps taken to challenge dominant ideologies reflect a commitment to social justice (Ohito & LaGarry, 2023).

Grounding research in the precents of CRT demands opposition to policies, material dispensations, and quotidian routines that uphold marginalisation, instead of attending to racism as a matter of individual prejudice (Ohito & LaGarry, 2023). Strategies for such opposition can be honed by research into experiential realities since the knowledge thus yielded can drive steps towards greater equity. The present study conceptualises AT-student interactions as having the potential to nurture quotidian acts of resistance. Unfortunately, tutorial interactions can also reproduce broader social injustices. Mooring this study in CRT has the following implications for the research process.

Since racism is systemic, AT-student relationships are inevitably impacted by this reality. Mindful of this starting point, the research goal that birthed this study was to interview ATs about their experiences with first-year students, and to give them space to reflect on how they engage students on what it means to theorise racism as systemic. Scholars of CRT insist that students must be instructed on the systemic character of racism. A core motivation for this insistence is that hegemonic knowledge institutions, like universities, are not innocent of racial and intersectional injustices. One of the aspirations of CRT in education is to actively engage students about these realities (Ohito & LaGarry, 2023; Ashlee, Young, & Wilkinson, 2022).

Towards this end, CRT prizes experiential knowledge as a legitimate resource for academic inquiry. It stresses, "the importance of marginalised knowledge from the epistemic perspective of subordinated communities as a resource for critical consciousness" (Adams et al., 2018, p. 339). Put differently, CRT relies on experiential knowledge to challenge dominant ideologies. This goal is pursued by agitating for, "an asset-orientated perspective of disenfranchised communities" (Ohito & LaGarry, 2023, p. 5). Such perspectives can expose how deficit-orientated narratives obfuscate the structures that sustain oppression, leading to dominant constructions of reality in which subordinated communities are pathologized. For the context in which ATs work, if universities are serious about exposing and undoing injustice, then spaces where students can generate knowledge about racism are vital. Tutorial interactions might furnish such platforms. In keeping with CRT, ATs' experiences with students, and the discursively-mediated processes through which they allocate meaning to their exchanges with students, are understood as legitimate sources for study. ATs' reflections on their interactions with students can illuminate everyday forms of resistance against racist institutional practices by, for example, rejecting deficit-orientated perspectives in favour of asset-orientated narratives, which can expand CRT efforts to translate theoretical precepts into actionable steps towards social justice.

As discussed later, the ATs self-identify along various social axes. Rooting this study in CRT entails viewing racial identification as socially constructed. Given that the ATs are required to teach first-year students about racism, all of them confirmed such an understanding of race and social identity more broadly. Simultaneously, the ATs also recognised that racism exerts real-world repercussions on identification and that tutorial sessions constitute spaces where this relationship can be explored. ATs expressed a commitment to fostering spaces where students who experience racism can collaboratively deepen their insight into the structural and intersectional components of marginalisation.

The next two sections conceptualise creative maladjustment in relation to CRT and neoliberalism.

Creative maladjustment

Adams et al. (2018) reject the normative connotations between maladjustment and deviance/abnormality. For them, creative maladjustment develops, "critical consciousness to resist [the] repression of troublesome truths and to counter collective delusions

that normalise the status quo of racial violence" (Adams et al., 2018, p. 339). ATs and the discourses they use to read students and the broader pedagogic environment can oppose racial violence or reproduce it (Ohito & LaGarry, 2023). For instance, if students' behaviour is configured as an axiomatic mirror of their innate academic capabilities, racial violence can be perpetuated. Alternatively, conduct such as withholding active participation in knowledge-generation during tutorials can also be interpreted as an opportunity to grasp the impact of alienating aspects of the pedagogic environment.

Creative maladjustment counters collective delusions and interrupts racial violence by urging educators and researchers to value marginalised epistemologies. This study proposes that ATs can contribute insights from marginalised perspectives. ATs labour under conditions of constant uncertainty and vulnerability. As specified during a later section, they are employed based on annually-renewable contracts. Therefore, they do not share the security provided to fully employed members of university staff. Moreover, ATs are also pressured to ensure that as many students as possible pass the module, but they are not supplied with the resources (including the time) necessary to support the affective needs of students who are engaging troublesome truths about the severity of racism. As such, ATs are rendered vulnerable by the impact of neoliberalism on contemporary South African universities, as explicated under the next section.

Context: Creative maladjustment in a neoliberal university

CRT insists that student-educator relationships can foster creative maladjustment, especially when such relationships value marginalised knowledge from the epistemic perspective of subordinated communities, which create a lens through which to understand the institutional arrangements that should be opposed (Ohito & LaGarry, 2023; Adams et al., 2018). However, Holscher (2018, p. 31) cautions that owing to the increasingly neoliberal conditions under which South African universities operate, "relationships between students and lecturers [are] vulnerable to replicating and reinforcing [rather than resisting] the contextual injustices in which they are set". This section reviews relevant arguments from Holscher (2018) and others (Ali, 2022; Perez & Salter, 2019) as it pertains to creative maladjustment and the ATs under study.

For this analysis, neoliberalism is conceptualised as (Holscher, 2018, p. 34):

> a global shift in power balances in favour of corporate capital accumulation strategies [which constrain] states' ability to serve as regulative, ameliorative and redistributive agencies [leading to reduced] public spending particularly in the fields of education, health and welfare.

Holcher (2018) explicates how neoliberalism at South African universities undermine educators' ability to supply care to students who experience vulnerability along multiple axes, including affective, material/economic, and mental vulnerabilities. A full review of her argument oversteps the focus of this study, but her most relevant contention is that neoliberalist frameworks construct vulnerabilities as individualised misfortunes instead of structural injustices. Consequently, vulnerability signals individuals' inability to function independently in societies that esteem individual autonomy and self-actualisation, particularly within the

logics of free-market economies (Holscher, 2018, p. 35; Wale, 2020). The result is, "a tendency to disregard the experiences and judgement of care receivers" (Holscher, 2018, p. 35).

My proposition, rooted in a discourse analysis of the interviews, is that ATs believe that students feel that tutorials help them to engage relevant, yet painful, aspects of systemic racism, but ultimately students withdraw precisely because deep participation is painful and because they feel that tutorials cannot engender change. Additionally, ATs feel uncertain about how to support students. Holscher (2018), Ali (2022), and Perez and Salter's (2019) scholarship suggest that this dilemma can be linked to the above-mentioned impact of neoliberalism on South African universities.

Specifically, Holscher (2018), Perez and Salter (2019), and Ali (2022) argue that patterning universities around capitalist principles entails the production and trading of goods. It also entails prioritising the reduction of production costs and increasing returns by means of a "push to maximise the efficiency of labour" (Holscher, 2018, p. 36). Applying this logic to higher education yields a reductionist construction of learning as, "a tangible, measurable, tradable good, and managerial interventions are directed towards increasing efficiency in its production and sale" (Holscher, 2018, p. 36).

For the immediate conditions under which ATs work, this commodification of education exerts at least three effects. First, there has been a steep rise in student enrolments at the institution under study. In fact, a principal reason why ATs are employed is precisely because the module under study served nearly 800 first-year students between 2021 and 2022 when interviews were conducted.

Second, the institution has prioritised *pass-rates*, a shorthand for the requirement to, "deliver the institution's educational product with maximum efficiency [by producing] a maximum number of graduates in minimal time" (Holscher, 2018, p. 38).

Third, in keeping with neoliberal precepts, pass-rates must be maximised while reducing input costs, especially the number of fully employed teaching staff (Perez and Salter, 2019). ATs feel the brunt of this model. Their employment is based on annually-renewable contracts. Simultaneously, all ATs are also enrolled as candidates for master's degrees and are expected to complete and publish research as soon as possible.

ATs as research participants

ATs were recruited as research participants because they are tasked with providing supplementary education to first-year students enrolled for an introductory module in literary studies, organised around texts that theorise racism as structural, intersectional, and contemporary. Since each AT is assigned to around 50 students (divided into two groups), and since they are required to broach questions around racism explicitly, they are attractive as research participants. This section explicates the nature of ATs' work and justifies recruiting them as research participants.

The ATs are tasked with facilitating tutorials intended to create a platform where students can collaboratively produce meaning around the primary lectures and the texts under study. Lectures are delivered by fully employed staff, and ATs are expected to facilitate student-centred participation. Towards this objective, they convene one-hour tutorials twice per week for each group of around 25 students assigned to them. More

importantly, they are trained in a variety of teaching techniques to centre students' voices and to recognise them as legitimate knowledge producers, rather than positioning students as passive receivers of pre-determined information.

To aid students, all ATs must be available for a weekly consultation hour. As a group, they also attend weekly meetings with the fully employed member of staff responsible for delivering lectures (who did not consent to an interview). These meetings are intended to allow ATs to report on students' level of engagement with the study materials. Assessment is conducted using bi-weekly oral presentations from students, various writing exercises, and formal academic essays.

The activities that ATs are charged with undertaking suggest that they are legitimate participants for CRT research. The discourses they articulate during interviews to create meaning around their exchanges with students can expand CRT insight into the degree to which such interactions might advance resistance against racism and/or perpetuate oppressive norms. In this regard, it is particularly salient that ATs are accorded a relative degree freedom apropos the exact teaching techniques they employ with students.

To clarify, ATs are trained in a variety of pedagogic techniques, but are allowed to do whatever they deem most efficacious for the students assigned to them. They are expected to develop a strong understanding of students' unique educational needs, as well as the group dynamic, and to react as responsibly as possible. Nonetheless, despite this level of freedom, ATs also work under pressing constraints. They exert no influence over the texts under study, or the assessment procedures, nor can they question the overall design of the module, or the number of students enrolled. These dynamics render the discourses ATs might enact during interviews relevant to CRT studies.

Interviews

Individual interviews were selected over focus groups as a method for data collection to provide ATs with more liberty to discuss their relationships with other ATs. Between 2021 and 2022, fifteen ATs were employed. All fifteen consented to participate. This section supplies demographic information about the ATs and describes the semi-structured interview format.

With respect to teaching experience, two ATs had served for seven years. Two others had four years' experience, while eleven only had one year's experience before joining the study. In terms of racial identification, three ATs identify as black, two as coloured[1], eight as white, and two as Asian. All ATs identify as cis-female, apart from one cis-male and white AT.

The typical duration of each interview was approximately ninety minutes. Items on the semi-structured questionnaire were shared with ATs one month before each interview. The following topics were covered during all interviews:

[1] It should be noted that the racial designation and self-identification *coloured* encompasses a racial group in South Africa with a complex history and an ongoing contestation in terms of agency and identity formation. The works of Adhikari (2013) supply a meticulous and theoretically robust inquiry into coloured identification, but a detailed review surpasses the scope of this article.

- What strategies do ATs use to animate active participation among students?
- How do ATs share feedback on students' oral and written tasks?
- How might ATs' own racialised, gendered, and intersectional positionalities impact relationships with students?
- What frustrations and successes have ATs encountered?

While unpacking the last topic, the ATs raised a common concern. In their views, students initially engaged the prescribed texts vigorously. Gradually, however, participation diminished, and the writing students submitted for assessment offered passable yet shallow analyses. Particularly, most analyses circumvented linkages between racism, poverty, substance abuse despite the links suggested by the literary texts under study.

Methodologically speaking, the interviews are approached as, "interactions in which speakers are performing various activities" instead of "a neutral conduit for extracting information" (Kerr, 2020, p. 111). That is, instead of framing interviews as methods of extracting information that participants already possess, interviews become negotiated interactions in which knowledge is actively co-constructed.

Findings

Does talking make any difference?

Many ATs voiced a concern that students are not experiencing tutorial sessions as meaningful.

> Annie
> *During the first half of the semester, they talk about what the texts say about racism. They talk about how that relates to their lives. But later I get the impression sometimes that some students are just tired and over it. These are not easy things to talk about and why keep talking about it when talking isn't going to change anything? That's the impression I get. I see some of them say it in their dialogues. Characters in their dialogues would say: do you think this will change? Then the other character responds: no society will deteriorate; systemic racism will only go away slowly if at all. After students pull their hearts out, they still live with the issues.*

To contextualise this excerpt from the interviews, it should be clarified that some of the preparatory writing activities saw students producing dialogues instead of formal academic essays. The dialogues were intended encourage experimentation with comparatively less formal language. Dialogues allowed students to discuss the texts with imaginary friends. Having assessed these dialogues prior to the interviews, many ATs relied on them to evidence the proposition that some students were growing increasingly disillusioned with the stated purpose of tutorials. ATs suggested that the principal reason is students' sense that theorising racism as systemic is an affectively taxing process, aggravated by the view that, "talking isn't going to change anything". Put differently, tutorial sessions were not universally experienced as a liberatory opportunity to generate valuable knowledge around racism. Instead, students' motivation was incrementally lowered by the realisation that verbal and written participation will not

necessarily leverage change. During the interviews, several ATs evidenced their impressions by citing what students narrated during dialogues, but some also cited email correspondence with students.

Paisley
I was checking in with one student to see if she was doing okay with the work, and she emailed me back saying: I don't mind talking about racism. I just find it tiring at times because it seems like we aren't making the necessary progress when it comes to racism. She and other students said that they can talk about racism, but they don't really see the point.

Rebecca
I checked in with the group, and they said that they are okay with discussing racism although none of them love it. It's just that talking about it in class seems a little pointless in the long run. Personally, I think part of it is that students can see and live the economic effects of racism and then they see bad things happen to characters in the stories and it's hard not to worry that the same will happen to them and maybe it's easier to just try and not think about it much.

ATs are not expected to email students to verify their progress with the texts under study. Nonetheless, many reported doing so on a weekly basis. Once the ATs noticed a gradual diminution in students' active participation, they attempted to elicit an explanation via individual and sometimes group emails. During the interviews, many ATs framed students' withdrawal as emanating from an overall sense that, "they don't really see the point" owing to a lack of progress against systemic racial inequities in South Africa.

CRT has documented numerous institutionalised discourses that configure racially othered students as academically deficient. Therefore, it bears confirming that none of the ATs averred that students were unable to ascertain how the texts under study frame racism as systemic.

Caren
I think that most students understand the texts, but talking about racism openly as this huge systemic issue reminds them that it will always be a problem. I think many of them feel like talking about racism does not change anything and it's hard to think of it as an issue that is not going to go away overnight or even decades.

Janice
How students react to a text says something about their relationship with the text, but it's not a simple indication of their abilities or inabilities. My students start off well but change over time and I think it's because racism has no easy solutions so they might think talking makes no difference.

Instead of framing students as deficient, ATs attribute their incremental withdrawal to the anxieties induced by confronting the scope and intractability of structural injustice.

One AT who self-identifies as cis-female and coloured contributed the insight that for many students who are racialised as black theorising racism as systemic countervails their preference for discourses tethered to individualism.

Margaret
None of my students would openly deny that racism is structural, but they kept emphasising the power of individual choices and agency. It seems to me that this focus on individualism is attractive because it makes structural issues look surmountable. Otherwise, calling racism systemic just feels disempowering. I think that is why my black students keep talking about black South African celebs who have made it. They praise them as role-models, especially the entrepreneurs.

Although this AT was the only one to note this commitment to a discourse of individual agency, all ATs reported, and attempted to interpret, what they construed as a sharp contrast between students' initial levels of high engagement, followed by an incremental withdrawal. All accounts share a discursive construction of students as capable of discerning the systemic dimensions of racism, but also as vulnerable to a sense of disempowerment. When asked to elaborate on this subject, ATs expressed two additional, and interrelated themes, as discussed next.

Being assessed in English, and aiming to pass

Janice
Most students start out all passionate about discussing racism, but English is not their first language. I think that when big assessments loom they start doubting their ability to express the ideas they had verbalised. Add how emotionally draining the topic is and it begins to make sense that many students decide to write essays that are superficial, but passable later in the semester. Like they write about the poverty or micro-aggressions faced by characters, which is okay, but they don't link that to systemic racism.

Paisley
What they end up writing is not incorrect. It's just stale. Most write something that can pass without being deep. I asked them about it and some of them said that going deeper is tiring in terms of the emotional content and in terms of the level of English they believe they can use. Keeping it simple allows them to write something passable. If you think about it, it makes sense from their perspective. They are playing it safe.

It should be recalled that most of the students enrolled for this module self-identify as black. Consequently, opining that students harbour low expectations of themselves, and their command of English, could suggest that ATs' meaning-making practices reify long-standing discursive constructions of black students as unsuited for academic study (Wale, 2020). Such deficit framings obscure power-relations in hegemonic knowledge institutions like universities. However, the ATs assign more contoured meanings to students' behaviour. Specifically, it is telling that ATs construct this reaction from students – the

submission of essays that are, "superficial, but passable" – not as an unambiguous reflection of students' innate academic competence, commitment, or motivation. Instead, it is framed as a repercussions of twin vulnerabilities experienced by students: 1) the affectively-taxing nature of studying systemic racism, and 2) the fact that English is not the students' preferred language for self-expression.

To clarify, the students are not putting themselves at risk of failing the module (according to ATs). Rather, as the ATs see it, they are not submitting essays that match the acuity of the verbal discussions conducted at the start of the semester. Nor were the ATs content with encouraging students to simply aim for a passing grade. Instead, the ATs express concern, but also suggest that it might be understandable if students are, "playing it safe". As far as the ATs are concerned, playing it safe does not imply that students are unable or unwilling to hone the skills required to express sophisticated arguments in academic English. ATs read students as feeling that learning to enhance their writing is not only arduous, but also complicated by the affectively-taxing labour that confronts students when they unpack systemic racism and realise that the inequities that presently mark their lives are unlikely to be decisively attenuated very soon. Students are thus configured as responding to a vulnerability that, "makes sense from their perspective".

The consequence is that their knowledge cannot be gauged simply by the grades they score on essays in isolation. In this sense, the ATs' discursive accounts align with, "an asset-orientated perspective of disenfranchised communities", since they read students' reactions as shedding light on structurally unjust arrangements (Ohito & LaGarry, 2023, p. 5). This interpretation by the ATs yields the principal foundation for the argument that the concept creative maladjustment offers crucial insights into, 1) students' essays that are written to be, "superficial, but passable"; 2) students' possible impression that talking does not make a difference, and 3) ATs' proposition that neither the essays nor students' level of verbal participation should be read as uncomplicated markers of students' competence.

Creative maladjustment and a sense of disempowerment

Neoliberal perspectives might insist that individual students must develop the resilience needed to strive for personal academic excellence under all circumstances, regardless of the pressures they endure. The corollary is that any factors that curb performance constitute obstacles to be solved through individual coping skills (Holscher, 2018). Here, it should be recalled that ATs' observations about the quality of students' writing were not produced in isolation. Rather, they emerged alongside the ATs' impression that students' motivation to participate actively during tutorial sessions steadily declined as a function of their sense that no amount of verbal or written participation can make decisive headway against structural racism. This section argues that the waning of students' participation, the writing of passable essays, and ATs' expressions of understanding and sympathy for this behaviour could be construed as practices of creative maladjustment. To make this argument, this section starts by briefly locating students and ATs in a set of interrelated, institutional contexts.

As mentioned earlier, neoliberal frameworks in South African universities have occasioned the rise of managerial structures designed to refashion, "universities to be savvy and profitable businesses" (Ali, 2022, p. 291). Students' academic performance fits into this structure in the sense that their academic records can bolster or harm the institution's reputation in the marketplace for local, national, and global higher educational. Additionally, for the ATs under study, this problem manifests in a module that aims to teach students about structural racism which, although laudable in principle, is being done without giving ATs the resources that are exigent for supporting students' ability to navigate such affectively challenging learning.

The degree to which students and ATs are familiar with how tutorial sessions are ensconced in neoliberal conditions is unknown. Nonetheless, the interviews at least suggest that students are unlikely to feel that their participation in officially-sanctioned institutional spaces, including tutorials, are likely to secure a position from which they will be able to impact the advancement of social justice on their own terms, or vis-a-vis the experiential knowledge they are able to call upon. In short, the interviews do not suggest that students experience themselves, their identifies and their knowledges as valued. Analysed from this vantage point, students' prioritisation of academic writing that proves, "not incorrect […] just stale" or "something than can pass without being deep" emerges as a subversive practice. Its subversive character emerges from its implicit resistance against assimilation into an institutional system that has not convinced students that their voices, needs and concerns are adequately prized. That is, their experiential knowledge is not adequately valued since, although they are invited to participate during tutorials, the wider institution does not take them seriously enough, and cannot be counted on to agitate for broader change. Students can thus be read as enacting a form of creative maladjustment.

ATs participate in this practice from a different angle. First, they attempt to recognise some of the vulnerabilities to which students are subject as they explore the materials under study. They also refrain from constructing students as academically inadequate when the affective strain of unpacking systemic racism becomes apparent. By undertaking this approach, ATs can be said to join students in what could be construed as a practice of creative maladjustment, although it is implicit, unplanned, and uncoordinated, especially in comparison with more explicit forms of political action such as the 2015–2016 protests that erupted across several South African universities in response to colonial forms of education (Wale, 2020). The students assigned to the ATs who participated in this study only joined the university after those protests. The interviews suggest that they remain unconvinced that progress has been made since those protests, with the implication that they do not believe that the university values and attends to their voices.

It should be mentioned here that with respect to students' proficiency with academic English, many ATs insisted that since they are first-year students, they still have time to grow, sharpen their writing/argumentation skills and expand their confidence.

Khosa

They are only first-year students. They do not have all the terms and vocabulary yet for expressing their ideas, but they can get that over time. Now what they need help with most is how disempowering learning about racism can be.

Such reflections reiterate that ATs avoid a deficit understanding of students' aptitudes, in favour of focusing attention on the affective labour students undertake upon learning about systemic racism.

The next section expands my argument that ATs and students are participating in an oblique enactment of creative maladjustment by setting the findings gleaned from the interviews in a more detailed conversation with Holscher's (2018) work on neoliberalism in South African universities. This part of the analysis centres the question: If ATs were able to ascertain that students needed support to navigate the affectively-taxing aspects of learning about systemic racism, why did they fail to reinvigorate active participation from students?

Caring in a neoliberal university

An earlier section reviewed Holscher (2018), Ali (2022) and Perez and Salter's (2019) theorisations of how neoliberal conditions drive institutions to maximise student enrolments and the rate of student graduation, while minimising the investment of resources including fully employed educators and teaching time. ATs are aware of the pressure to help as many students as possible obtain a minimum final grade of 50% on core assessments. Given the pressure to pursue this goal, many ATs proposed that dedicating teaching time to students' affective reactions to issues surrounding racism would reduce the time available to complete an analysis of the literary texts under study in a way that would enable students to score at least 50%.

Specifically, on the one hand, all ATs observed that students experienced a sense of vulnerability when confronting systemic racism especially vis-à-vis its scope and inter-generational intransigence. Moreover, ATs proposed that this is precisely what stymies students' ability to score high grades, combined with the challenge of writing in English. On the other hand, the ATs did not think it feasible to set time aside to collaboratively contemplate practical solutions or any concrete steps that students might take towards activism. This fear of running out of time to meet their contractual obligations induced many ATs to suggest to the interviewer that writing merely passable essays, "makes sense from their perspective". In fact, it seemed to make sense to ATs as well, given that they could not suggest an alternative given that they did not know how to provide the affective support students needed. The ATs reported being aware of student counselling services and evinced a willingness to direct students to these services. Nevertheless, ATs felt that doing so was inadequate since they had had been the ones to encourage students to actively engage the study materials and felt responsible for offering support.

Some ATs constructed the above problem apropos what they considered a disciplinary limitation inherent to literary studies, at least as they are required to teach it.

Annie

When I think about it, it all looks like what we should be doing is giving students concrete steps they can take, something to make them feel empowered and capable of doing something. However, the way we do literary studies now is not designed to do this. The focus is on analysing the text and to actively involve students in interpreting

the text in terms of their own lives, but not to help them feel empowered afterwards. So, I don't know what to do when I get the sense that they are down. Even if I did know, I don't know where to find the time.

Mimi
We get to use literature to expose what systemic racism looks like. We get to challenge racism. We get to encourage students to make meaning for themselves. That's good. But when and how do we give students something to help them up when they get down? No wonder students go silent.

These reflections indicate ATs' uncertainty about how to furnish students with affective support both within the strict confines of the discipline of literary studies and in terms of the time-constraints produced by contractual obligations. In part, the problem emanates from institutional arrangements in which student-AT relationships become, "fixed, priced and traded [until] time itself becomes a production factor […] prone to be rationed and rendered scarce" (Holscher, 2018, p. 44). Such conditions are not conducive for sustaining the levels of trust required to encourage students to navigate their affective reactions to the texts under study and to continue to actively produce knowledge despite its embodied impact and the allure of alleviating the pressure by withdrawing from the arduous process.

Conclusion

This study has used Adams et al. (2018) creative maladjustment to theorise core themes produced during individual interviews with ATs about their exchanges with first-year students in the context of an introductory module in literary studies designed to explore systemic racism. This section first discusses a set of limitations affecting the study before mapping some conclusions.

This study is limited by the fact that ethical clearance was not granted to interview students or to access their academic writing. Adding such layers could have afforded more insights into, for example, the intersectional differences between students. Accordingly, the argument is mainly premised on the discourses produced by ATs during the interviews, as they reflect on interactions with students. More research is therefore needed for gaining traction on aspects of the AT-student relationship that did not surface during the interviews. In that vein, it should be reiterated that the creative maladjustment described above is unplanned, oblique, and uncoordinated. Neither students nor ATs engaged in resistance through collective means, to my knowledge. Moreover, it should be remembered that the variables affecting students' academic performance is complex and cannot be limited to a single dynamic. Nevertheless, if students are indeed questioning the worth of academic excellence (at least as delimited by traditional metrics including grades) then it might expand scholars' understanding of contemporary experiences of education, thus highlighting avenues for improving education. Along these lines, it bears repeating that most students did not endanger themselves of failing the module, according to the ATs. Rather, they submitted academic writing marked by a lower level of

criticality than ATs expected, based on students' initial levels of insight and enthusiasm. The veracity of this impression demands more rigorous study. Additionally, some ATs expressed confidence that students would improve over time, as they continued their studies. Still, the ATs voiced a desire to support students' ability to navigate the distress they experience.

To clarify, although the ATs insisted that teaching about systemic racism is laudable, they also acknowledged that considerable care is vital if institutions intend to pursue this endeavour responsibly. The interviews suggest that: 1) many students find instruction on racism relevant, but 2) they encounter a gamut of affective struggles during the process. ATs, for their part, exhibit some awareness of these struggles, but remain uncertain about how to respond sensitively. The problems ATs articulated centre on 1) the strictures of literary studies, as least vis-à-vis the way ATs are required to teach it, 2) their responsibilities to focus on that discipline and, most importantly, 3) insufficient time to help students navigate their affective reactions to study material. An asset-orientated view of the knowledge produced by ATs and students is inherent in the concept creative maladjustment, which impels further implications including the following.

First, ATs should be trained and granted the teaching space to help students feel that their scepticism about whether the institution values their voices is warranted. In fact, such scepticism is an exigent component of critical thinking. It can yield constructive action, including collaboration with like-minded peers and other actors in the institution who concur that students' voices should be centred more rigorously.

Second, ATs should be trained and allowed to help students feel that their affective responses are valid. The scope of the problem posed by systemic racism is indeed daunting, and feeling disempowered upon confronting the issue is understandable. This is a major undertaking, and although ATs cannot supply counselling services on their own, they can at least be equipped to help students surface, explore, and validate affective reactions. Holscher (2018), Adams et al. (2018), and Rolon-Dow et al. (2022) offer strong indications that such validating experiences can at least embolden students to remain committed to a critical education.

Third, even though the first-year module under study does not offer direct avenues for activist action against racism, ATs should be trained and permitted to help students understand that engaging actively with existing knowledge about the operation of racialised power is nevertheless a fruitful, if incomplete, step. Cultivating knowledge about the racialisation of power is crucial. Moreover, an introductory module alone cannot create a sufficient foundation for action, which makes continued study vital both for nurturing an increasingly refined level of knowledge, but also for planning what political action might look like.

Here, it might be worth sharing with students that translating theory into concrete action for social justice remains complicated even for established scholars of CRT. Nevertheless, multiple models and frameworks exist (Ohito & LaGarry, 2023). Even so, ATs require training and institutional support to cultivate a sense that students' affective responses are not distractions from learning, but valid and valued dimensions of learning, and to help students navigate the challenges inherent in confronting racism. Supporting students in this way should not be construed as an ancillary component of the core content of a module. Instead, it should be meaningfully incorporated into module design.

This should be done alongside regular consultation with ATs, allowing them to explain what resources they need to aid students, instead of presuming the nature of these needs (Holscher, 2018). Taking such steps are cardinal given how rapidly educational landscapes can change in response to technologies, cultural shifts, and unforeseen events such as the Covid-19 pandemic. Under all circumstances, it will remain important to allocate time for ATs to gauge students' affective needs and to attend to them sensitively, and to liaise with other organisations on campus that are dedicated to student representation and wellness.

References

Adams, G., Salter, P., Kurtis, T., Naemi, P., & Estrada-Villalta, S. (2018). Subordinated Knowledge as a tool for creative maladjustment and resistance to racial oppression. *Journal of Social Issues*, *74*(2), 337–354.

Adhikari, M. (2013). *Burdened by race: Coloured identities is southern Africa*. Cape Town: UCT Press.Brown and Company.

Ashlee, K., Young, N., & Wilkinson, P. (2022). Critical whiteness studies and racial justice activism with white student affairs professionals. *New Directions for Student Services*, 27–37.

Ali, S. (2022). Managing racism? Race, equality and decolonial educational futures. *British Journal of Sociology*, *73*(5), 923–941.

Holscher, D. (2018). Caring for Justice in a Neoliberal University. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, *32*(6), 31–48.

Ohito, E., LaGarry, A. (2023). An intersectional framework for anti-racist pedagogy in uncertain times. *Teachers and Teaching*. doi: 10.1080/13540602.2023.2172392

Perez, M., Salter, P. (2019). Trust, innocence, and individual responsibility: Neoliberal dreams of a colourblind peace. *Journal of Social Issues*, *75*(1), 267–285.

Rolon-Dow, R., Covarrubias, R., & Montero, C. (2022). Shallow inclusion: How Latinx students experience a predominantly white institution "Doing diversity work". *Journal of Leadership, Equity and Research*, *8*(2), 135–157.

Wale, K. (2020). Towards critical cultural openness: (in)vulnerability in white student narratives of transformation in South Africa. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *43*(7), 1189–1207.

The problem of education quality and parents as "responsible choosers" in the Chilean education policy

Gonzalo Hidalgo-Bazán
University of Bristol
ORCID: 0000-0003-1850-2802

Introduction

Improving education quality has become an omnipresent challenge in various contexts and a recurrent discussion at different levels: in the educational policy, the school management, the classroom and families. At the international level, Quality education has become the primary Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4) in education in the agenda promoted by UNESCO. However, despite being described as a shared objective, education quality is characterised by its complex, dynamic, value-based and multidimensional character, which always depends on the context's characteristics and participating actors (Adams, 1993; Barrett et al., 2006). Education quality implies asking about the best ways to prepare for life, which can be answered based on diverse interests, values and conceptions that enter into a dispute, thus revealing its eminently political character (Winch, 1996).

Considering this political character of the quality discussion, this chapter aims to interrogate the problem of "education quality" in Chilean educational policy. For this purpose, a poststructural policy analysis has been carried out through the What is the Problem Represented to be? (WPR) approach developed by Bacchi and Goodwin (2016). Based on this analysis tool, the chapter examines the assumptions and rationalities through which education quality is constructed as a problem. In addition, the chapter will address how this problematisation of education quality affects the subjectification and the role attributed to parents within the educational system in Chile.

The main body of this chapter is structured in four sections. The first one briefly describes the Chilean educational policy context, including historical elements, change processes, and recent discussion. The following section describes the theoretical tools and the process of analysis through which the policy texts were interrogated. It then describes the "problem of education quality" in Chilean policy and how, despite recognising the complex nature of the concept, it focuses almost exclusively on the assessment of learning outcomes. Before the conclusions, the chapter discusses the place given to parents in the constitution of the education quality problem.

Education policy in Chile: Neoliberal imposition and resistance

Chile is often mentioned in the literature as an extreme example of market-driven policies in the education system (e.g. Santori, 2018; Verger, Fontdevila, & Zancajo, 2016). It is essential to mention that the depth reached by this type of policy is due to a "neoliberal revolution" imposed during a civic-military dictatorship (1973–1990) that transformed the Chilean educational system (Slachevsky, 2015). As a result of the dictatorial political context, the regime's policymakers had the very unusual occasion to work on "clean slates" (Ball, 2017). As Corvalán and García-Huidobro (2016) state, "In no country in the world, the change was as radical and as rapid as in Chile" (p. 30).

Thus, Chile became a laboratory for the implementation of neoliberal policies. In the field of education, Bellei (2015) refers to "the great experiment" to describe the process of changes that included aspects such as 1) the decentralisation of public education from the central state administration to local authorities; 2) a quasi-voucher funding system which does not distinguish between public and private schools, promoting the competition between schools and parents; 3) standardised test in a national scale to guide the school choice process; and 4) extensive privatisation, establishing minimum requirements to open new schools, which were free to set up as for-profit corporations, without losing state funding (Bellei, 2015). After the dictatorship, democratic governments continued, complemented, and refined the market education model (Bellei & Vanni, 2015; Falabella, 2015). In this period, a share-funding scheme was implemented, allowing private schools to charge a fee to parents without losing the state subsidy (Cox, 2003). Thus, parents could top up the voucher provided by the state with their own resources. This policy framework has been described as the leading cause of Chile being one of the countries with the highest socioeconomic segregation in its educational system (Valenzuela, Bellei, & Ríos, 2014).

Regarding education quality, during the dictatorship, the "Sistema Medición de la Calidad de la Educación" (SIMCE) [Education Quality Measurement System] was implemented, which to this day continues to be the primary evaluation device for Chilean education. The evaluation consists of several compulsory and census-based tests that each year aim to measure the degree to which students in every school achieve learning objectives. These tests have strongly influenced how education quality is thought and understood in Chile, constantly referred to as synonymous with education quality in the media. However, it is important to mention that the link between education quality and the use of assessment devices, statistics, and focus on performance and learning has a long tradition in the country, even prior to the changes imposed during the dictatorship (Gysling 2016; Ramos Zincke and Falabella 2020).

However, despite being well known for its intensified market conditions, one crucial characteristic of Chilean neoliberalism is that it has always been accompanied by resistance and critical discourse to the marketisation process from several educational actors (Ramos et al., 2022). As a result of social organisation and mobilisation, during the last decades, policies have been implemented in order to de-marketise the Chilean education system. One of the most relevant is the "Inclusion Act", enacted in 2015, which regulates three aspects. First, it prohibits profit at all establishments that receive state funding.

Second, the law regulates the school admission processes and restricts the possibility to select and discriminate students for social, religious, cultural or academic reasons. Lastly, the shared funding between parents and the state will be progressively eliminated (Ministerio de Educación, 2015). Although this legislation does not replace the voucher funding system and the competition between schools, it represents an important change in the relationship between families and the education system. This legislation, together with the one that regulates the assessment of educational quality, will be analysed to interrogate how education quality is constituted as a problem. The following section delves into the theoretical and methodological aspects of this analysis.

Poststructural policy analysis: Policy as discourse and problematisation

This chapter, far from the positivist perspective that understands policy as a rational and evidenced solution for social problems, understands policy as a "process rather than a product, involving negotiation, contestation or struggle between different groups who may lie outside the formal machinery of official policy making" (Ozga, 2000, p. 2). Like other social practices, the policymaking process and the emergence, maintenance and change of policies are explained by the constitutive character of power, hegemony and discourse (Howarth, 2010).

Ball (1993) defines policy as discourse, specifying how they exercise power through the production of knowledge and "truth", articulating meaning and naturalising practices, and with it, what can be said, thought and spoken. Therefore, rather than understanding policies as answers or solutions to specific problems, they are approached as the ones that constitute problems in particular ways (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). Drawing on the Foucauldian concept of problematisation, my study seeks to understand "how and why certain things (behaviours, phenomena, processes) became a problem" (Foucault, 1988, p. 16). From this perspective, problematisation is not understood as a consequence or reaction to a particular historical context or situation but as a response that is always created and that constitutes diverse empirical phenomena as a problem (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016; Foucault, 1988). In summary, this chapter problematises the "problem of quality" in the Chilean education policy.

Moreover, as Bacchi & Goodwin (2016) argue, our daily lives are strongly influenced by rules and regulations that shape what we do and how we act. Therefore, for the authors, approaching policy as discourse and recognising its productive and constitutive character allows us to focus not only on the effects of power and discourse in the process in which individuals create policy but also on how policies create subjects. Through the idea of government, understood as "the conduct of conduct...a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons" (Gordon, 1991, p. 2), this chapter explores how policy shapes parents' behaviours and their participation in the education system. An essential aspect of the idea of government is that, under neoliberalism, it adopts a rationality based on technologies and forms of knowledge that promote self-discipline and self-regulation, which is generally described as neoliberal governmentality (Gordon, 1991). Thus, the state exercises governance from distance

and marketisation through a "free market where relations between citizens and experts are not organised and regulated through compulsion but through acts of choice" (Rose, 1996, p. 54). Therefore, given the importance of school choice in the Chilean educational system, this chapter explores the place of parents in the "problem of quality" in Chile and the actions and practices that policy expects from them.

The study based its analysis on the analytical strategy developed by Bacchi & Goodwin (2016) called "What is the Problem Represented to be?" (WPR approach), which consists of interrogating policy texts with a series of questions with the aim of problematising the 'problem' of quality, how it is produced in policy, the assumptions underlying its construction and how the 'problem' of quality becomes a governmental instrument that shapes practices, relations, and parents' subjectivities. The chapter will focus mainly on three questions: 1) What is the problem of "education quality" represented to be? 2) What assumptions underlie this representation of the "problem"? 3) What effects on the subjectivation of parents are produced by this representation of the problem? (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). The chapter considered the analysis of texts corresponding to three legislations, which are described in the following table:

Act	Text	Description
Act Nº 20.370 – General Act for Education	General Act of Education – Main legislation body	Law establishing the regulatory framework for education in the country
Act Nº20.529 – National system for quality assurance in kindergarten, elementary and high school education and its supervision.	Presidential Message	Document that initiated the parliamentary discussion of the law. It includes the diagnosis that supports the change
	Main legislation body	Creates the national system for quality assurance in education and its supervision.
	Decree Nº381	Establishes the other indicators of educational quality
	What are the indicators of Personal and Social Development and what do educational institutions do to promote them?	Dissemination document of "Other educational quality indicators"
Act Nº20.845 – Inclusion Act	Presidential Message	Document that initiated the parliamentary discussion of the law. It includes the diagnosis that supports the change
	Main legislation body	School inclusion law that regulates the admission of students, eliminates shared financing and prohibits profit-making in educational establishments that receive state funding.

The problem of "education quality" in Chile

Education quality occupies a preferential place in the country's public and political discussion, continuously referred to as one of the main priorities of education policy. In Chilean education policy, the concern for quality has been described as a "second generation" challenge, which emerges as a product of increased expectations in a country that is moving towards development and also as a way to highlight the progress that the country has made in ensuring aspects related with basic conditions of education provision (Ministerio de Educación, 2007). As Kauko, Takala, and Rinne (2018) argue, the concept of quality remains abstract and allusive until it is operationalised in concrete evaluation techniques and forms. This section describes how education quality is portrayed as a particular type of problem in Chilean educational policy. From the analysis of the texts, four aspects of the constitution of the problem of quality are identified, namely, education quality as a problem of learning, education quality as a problem of management, education quality as a state school problem, and education quality as a problem of absence of the State and market failure.

Education quality as a problem of learning

The different policy texts analysed explicitly refer to the complexity of education quality, describing it, for example, as "a dynamic concept that has to adapt permanently to a world whose societies are undergoing profound social and economic transformations" (Ministerio de Educación, 2007, p. 3). These documents even explicitly recognise the need to expand and broaden notions of quality to include aspects that go beyond the domain of academic knowledge (Ministerio de Educación, 2015; 2019b). Moreover, the different texts reviewed declare as one of the principles of Chilean education its "integral" character, listing multiple areas of development related to moral, spiritual, intellectual, affective, physical, civic, aesthetic, and creative, among others (Ministerio de Educación, 2010; 2013; 2015).

Despite the references to comprehensive education and the dynamic nature of quality in education, analysing the instruments and practices of educational quality assessment in the legislation, it becomes evident that the problem of quality refers almost exclusively to the degree to which students achieve learning outcomes, particularly in Spanish and Mathematics. This emphasis can be seen, for example, in the description of the aims of the Education Quality Office created by one of the legislations:

> "Evaluate student learning achievement according to the degree of compliance with the standards, referring to the general objectives indicated in the law and their respective curricular bases using standardised measurement instruments and procedures external to the establishments. It must also evaluate the degree of compliance with other indicators of educational quality" (Ministerio de Educación, 2011, p. 10).

As it is possible to read in the above quote, the law contemplates "the degree of compliance with other indicators of educational quality" since it has defined a set of criteria

to complement the evaluation of learning outcomes with indicators that "consider both aspects of personal development and aspects that benefit society as a whole" (Ministerio de Educación, 2013, p. 8). However, the treatment given to these other indicators reflects the hegemonic character of learning in the discussion of education quality. In contrast to the assessment of learning outcomes, the "other indicators of educational quality" or "Indicators of Social and Personal Development" are referred to in the central bodies of legislation as "the others" without specifying the details, emphasis, and objectives of their evaluation. The details of these indicators were presented after the enactment of the law through a decree. These indicators are school climate, academic self-esteem and motivation, participation and citizenship education, healthy habits, school attendance, school retention, gender equity in learning and graduation of students attending technical-vocational schools.

Education quality as a learning problem is observable numerically in the weighting of these criteria to order the schools according to performance categories. While all the "social and personal development indicators" described in the previous paragraph cannot exceed 33% of the evaluation, learning outcomes measured through standardised tests must weigh at least 67% (Ministerio de Educación, 2011). Moreover, in the face of repeated negative evaluations of schools, the sanctions established by the legislation, such as school closures, only consider compliance with learning standards (Ministerio de Educación, 2011). Furthermore, the documents through which the Ministry of Education disseminates these criteria justify the importance of virtually every one of the "indicators of social and personal development" based on their contribution to student learning. It seems that the only ethical justification for incorporating other aspects into the discussion of education quality is a direct link to learning. Thus, Oyarzún and Falabella (2021) argue that the evaluation of these indicators is an illusion, a discursive strategy that does not alter the standardised, census-based and high-stakes evaluation paradigm.

Although quality could refer to any objective of the education system, the definition of quality as learning outcomes currently has a hegemonic character controlling the contingency and complexity of education quality (Kauko et al., 2018). Education quality portrayed as a problem of learning outcomes reflects the underlying aims attributed to education, related mainly to the transmission of particular contents and pieces of knowledge. Biesta (2011), analysing education in the era of measurement, describes *learnification* as "the tendency to replace the language of education with a language that only talks about education in terms of learning" (p. 5). The author, like other scholars, warns that the almost exclusive focus on learning makes it difficult to address questions related to the purposes of education and narrows them by marginalising essential aspects and objectives of educational work such as social inclusion, democratic principles, critical thinking and even children's happiness (Biesta, 2011; Falabella, 2014; Hunkin, 2018). The conflation between learning and education quality promotes a depoliticisation and technification of the educational discussion, thus reducing the number of social actors that can be part of that conversation (Biesta 2011). As mentioned above, the association between quality and the results of performance measurement and learning has a long history in Chile (Gysling, 2016; Ramos Zincke, & Falabella, 2020), so *learnification* has been one of the elements that characterise the problematisation of education quality in the country.

Education quality as a problem of leadership and management

The process of technification and depoliticisation of the discussion on education and quality described by Biesta (2011) has another expression in the policy texts analysed. The problem of quality is also represented as a deficiency in school management and leadership. For example, the presidential message that initiated the parliamentary discussion to create the quality assurance system defines the establishment of:

> "performance goals established for each person or institution that participates in the production of educational quality (what students, teachers and schools should know and be able to do at each grade and level of the system), considering not only learning indicators but also process and intermediate results" (Ministerio de Educación, 2007, p. 7).

As Ozga et al. (2011) argue that in the education field, quality assurance technologies have gained sophistication in the light of new public management moving from the mere evaluation of the qualities of a produced object to its "organisationalisation", focusing on the processes through which a school develops its activity. This is explicitly observable in the definition of "indicative performance standards", which evaluate aspects such as pedagogical management, human resources management, pedagogical management standards, the results of performance evaluations, and pedagogical leadership, among others (Ministerio de Educación, 2011). The texts reviewed constantly refer to the technical and educational capacities of the institutions and their managers, making it possible to observe a particular confidence in the transformative power of their management skills. An example of the importance attributed to management in relation to the problem of quality is reflected in the assignment of an "interim administrator" in schools with repeated negative evaluations as a last resort to lead and improve school results.

Undoubtedly, school management plays a fundamental role in the educational success of institutions. However, in a scenario of high competition due to market policies, with high social and educational segregation and an emphasis on the evaluation of learning outcomes through standardised tests, a technicist approach to the idea of management may overlook social, economic and cultural aspects that may be at the basis of the problem of quality. Thus, as Camargo (2012) argues, in Chile, the technification of the discussion of quality dissociates inequality from structural differences and generates a hegemonic discourse that prevents redistributive changes that could affect economic growth. According to the author, quality is portrayed as a "magic formula that would solve, eventually, inequality" (Camargo, 2012, p. 30). Moreover, in this same context, the representation of the quality problem as a management-learning tandem reinforces the positioning of a depoliticised educational discussion that is oriented around the question of *how* to the detriment of *why*, thus narrowing the discussion on the purpose of the teaching, the school and the educational system (Biesta, 2011).

Education quality as a municipal (state) school problem

When examining the policy texts and regulatory actions related to quality assurances targeted at different types of schools, it is possible to identify important differences in their evaluation and monitoring in the Chilean educational system, namely, municipal (state) schools, subsidised private schools and fully private schools. After reviewing the policy texts, the reader could get the impression that the "problem of education quality" in Chile resides almost exclusively in municipal schools and, to a lesser extent, in subsidised private schools that receive public funding. State institutions are the target of a more significant number of regulatory actions. For example, the legislation establishes a teacher evaluation system only for teachers in municipal schools, and in the case of subsidised private schools, the regulatory action is only limited to validating the instruments that schools voluntarily submit to the Ministry's Quality Office. Despite evidence indicating that, when controlling for the socio-economic level variable, there are no significant differences between state and private subsidised schools (Mizala & Torche, 2012).

Moreover, the difference between the different types of schools when interrogating the "problem of education quality" becomes even more evident when analysing the position of fully private schools. These represent 5% of the total number of schools in the country (Ministerio de Educación, 2019a) and are the ones that receive students coming from the most privileged sectors of the population. The legislation on quality excludes these schools from practically all monitoring, evaluation and control actions, and they can only be supervised in the event of allegations and complaints. The difference in the way in which the policy positions the different schools concerning the "problem of quality" is deepened when the legislation establishes the possibility of visiting private schools ranked in the high-performance category "in order to identify the best practices of those establishments" (Ministerio de Educación, 2011, p. 17). Unlike state-funded schools that require monitoring, private schools are positioned as a source of educational quality experiences and practices.

This differentiation of treatment between different schools can be explained by one of the principles governing Chilean legislation, which is "freedom of education", understood as the right of parents to choose the school, but also as the "right to open, organise and maintain educational establishments" (Ministerio de Educación, 2010, p. 5). Freedom of education is constantly referred to as a limit for quality assessment, including, for example, in the definition of "personal and social development indicators" (Ministerio de Educación, 2013). The difference that the legislation establishes in the control of education quality among the different establishments implies differentiated demands in terms of management, work and resources that have an impact on the functioning of schools, and, at the same time, it could reproduce prejudices and hierarchies in the way the community see different schools within the educational system.

Education quality as a problem of market failure and state absence

As mentioned above, the implementation and consolidation of neoliberal educational policies were always accompanied by a critical discourse by multiple actors in the educational system. Thus, it is possible to appreciate in the analysed texts, especially in

the "Inclusion Act", the aim of "leaving behind the idea of education as a consumer good to be traded in the market" (Ministerio de Educación, 2014).

In contrast to those who advocate marketisation, competition and profit as a stimulus to education quality (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Jofré, 1988), it is possible to find direct attributions to market logic as the cause of the "problem of quality" in the analysed policy texts. The presidential message of the law that creates the quality assurance system explicitly states that "the market and competition alone are not enough to ensure quality", partly because, contrary to market theory, schools with low performance have not seen their enrolment affected (Ministerio de Educación, 2007). This criticism was also a response to the influential student movements of 2006 and 2011, which strongly impacted the educational policy discussion in the country (Bellei, Cabalin, & Orellana, 2014). Profit and education quality are portrayed in an oppositional relationship. In the legislation, profit becomes a problem because resources are not invested in the educational services of schools. For example, according to the legislation's diagnosis, for-profit schools invest less in teaching, hiring teachers with less experience and shorter working days. Thus, the legislation aims to "ensure that all the contributions that society allocates to education are invested in it and its constant improvement" (Ministerio de Educación, 2014, p. 5).

As a consequence, in the face of market problems, a return of the State is demanded, being necessary that "the State returns to the role of educational planner and promoter that corresponds to it" (Ministerio de Educación, 2007, p. 8). However, this return of the State does not necessarily imply a greater involvement in educational provision or a profound change in the market logic based on privatisation, competition and school choice. The accountability relationship in education established by quality assurance policies transforms the state's role. It allows the emergence of new forms of governance that control the educational service, its objectives and results without directly taking charge of the educational provision (Verger and Parcerisa 2019). As Falabella (2014) argues, the state in this new form of governance does not lose its power, surveillance, and control capacity. Instead, it relieves the responsibility of performance in the communities inside the schools. As the author describes in other of her works, "It is not a 'free market', but instead a 'performative market'" (Falabella, 2021, p. 116). The following section delves into the place and responsibility of parents in the representation of the problem of quality.

Parents as "responsible choosers"

Education policies constitute particular kinds of subjects, impacting their behaviours and subjectivities (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). According to Bacchi and Goodwin (2016), another step in their approach to policy analysis is interrogating how we are governed through these "problems". This section analyses the subject positions that Chile's legislation and hegemonic quality discourse assign to parents, especially considering that Chilean education policy attaches special importance to their role. The general education law, in one of its first pages, establishes rights and duties, and states that:

> "Education is a right of all persons. Parents have the right and duty to educate their children; the State has the duty to grant special protection to the exercise of

> this right and, in general, the community has the duty to contribute to the development and improvement of education" (Ministerio de Educación, 2010, p. 3).

It is striking that in this fragment, as in other parts of this legislation, parents are mentioned before students as subjects of the right to education. In addition, the legislation explicitly protects the right of parents to freely choose the educational establishment of their children (Ministerio de Educación, 2010). Parents, positioned as choosers of their children's education, become fundamental actors in regulating the educational system and its quality (Corvalán & Román, 2016).

Given the importance of parents as choosers, the information that schools and the educational system provide to the community, and in particular to parents and caregivers, becomes a fundamental aspect in the problematisation of "education quality" in the texts analysed. The texts analysed contain innumerable references to the information addressed to parents and caregivers. For example, the quality assurance law, which refers to disseminating learning assessment results and other quality indicators, states: "In the case of parents and guardians, they will receive relevant information, easy to understand and comparable over time for the establishment. In addition, information about the schools in the same commune and nearby communes will be included" (Ministerio de Educación, 2011, p. 21). This quote not only refers to the importance of information to guide parents' educational decisions but also promotes competition by providing nearby options for parents to compare the "quality" of schools. This information, provided so that parents can "choose the best possible education for their children" (Ministerio de Educación, 2007, p. 5), makes parents responsible so that, through their choices, they can solve the quality problem. Parents are thought of as responsible choosers.

Much of the legislation refers to information as a vital aspect of quality assurance, with families being one of the primary recipients. The responsabilisation of parents and the objective of the policy to influence their behaviours and decisions within the educational market is explicit in the decree that defines "other indicators of educational quality", which states that information "should have an impact on parents and guardians, including greater empowerment with respect to the quality of education their children receive" (Ministerio de Educación, 2013, p. 6). This empowerment with respect to the quality of education, however, always has as limits the freedom of education and the autonomy of schools to define their educational projects. The legislation establishes the parents' duty to "respect and comply with the school's educational project" (Ministerio de Educación, 2010, p. 5), so that when faced with discrepancies with the school's project, it is possible to assume that parents are expected to return to the educational market and look for another school that fit better with their expectations, reinforcing their role as choosers. Thus, as responsible choosers, parents must navigate the complexities of the education market, having the primary duty of "informing themselves" to make the best educational decision (Ministerio de Educación, 2010).

The positioning of parents as choosers models individualistic and consumerist orientations within the educational system (Olmedo & Wilkins, 2017). As Ball (2017) argues, 'choice policies create social spaces within which strategies and opportunistic behaviours can flourish and within which middle classes can use their social and

cultural skills and capitals advantages to good effect' (pp. 143–144). Several research in Chile and other contexts have shown the strong link between school choice and high levels of segregation and stratification in the school systems (e.g. Bonal & Bellei, 2018; Reay, 2004; Saporito, 2003; Valenzuela et al., 2014). Education quality also has a role as a driver of segregation. In Chile, parents' notions of quality are richer and more complex than the hegemonic perspective that understands quality as academic outcomes (Córdoba, 2014; Corvalán & Román, 2016; Raczynski & Hernández, 2012). However, as has been reported in various contexts, these rich and complex notions of education quality are often closely linked to the social, ethnic and religious composition of educational institutions, deepening segregation in educational systems (Bellei et al., 2018; Boterman, 2013; Freidus & Ewing, 2022; Karsten et al., 2006; Olmedo & Santa Cruz, 2011; Van Zanten, 2003). Therefore, these studies indicate that the discussion about the "problem of quality" in everyday life within families keeps its political, multifaceted and contested character.

Conclusion

The chapter interrogates the problem of educational quality in three pieces of Chilean legislation and, in particular, parents' place in this problematisation process. Despite the contested, political and dynamic character of the concept of quality, it is represented in the Chilean educational policy mainly as a problem of learning outcomes and management within schools. According to Leyton and Slachevsky (2021), the discourse of quality in Chile has become a limit, a generator of educational experiences that suppresses other ways of thinking about it, maintaining the market logic. The almost exclusive focus on learning narrows the questions about the role and the purpose of the school and education and promotes technical, depoliticised and individualistic perspectives.

As Youdell (2011) argues, neoliberal reforms are expressed not only in promoting marketisation and privatisation agendas but also in implementing ideas and technologies from the private sector, which prioritise, for example, logics of efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and performance measurement, which can be clearly seen in the discussion of educational quality. The auditing, accounting and management technologies are crucial for neoliberalism since they allow the establishment of a public services market that operates with certain autonomy and, in turn, permits a re-inscription of government techniques based mainly on self-regulation (Barry, Osborne, and Rose 1996). Thus, quality assurance technologies and school choice play a fundamental role in what Collet and Grinberg (2021) call "managerial governmentality" in the promotion of self-entrepreneurism and constant self-monitoring through processes of normalisation and accountability that impact not only parents but all actors in the educational system.

The discussion on education quality is fundamental within education systems; however, it is necessary to recognise and keep open its political, contested and multifaceted character in order to include different perspectives, aims and expectations on the education system in order to address other crucial challenges such as the social cohesion, democratic principles and the desegregation of the school system.

References

Adams, D. (1993). Defining Educational Quality. *Educational Planning*, *9*(3), 3–18.

Bacchi, C., Goodwin, S. (2016). *Poststructural Policy Analysis: A Guide to Practice*. Palgrave Macmillan US.

Ball, S. (1993). What Is Policy? Texts, Trajectories and Toolboxes. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *13*(2), 10–17. doi: 10.1080/0159630930130203

Ball, S. (2017). *The Education Debate*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

Barrett, A., Chawla-Duggan, R., Nikel, J., & Ukpo, E. (2006). *The Concept of Quality in Education: A Review of the "international" Literature on the Concept of Quality in Education*.

Barry, A., Osborne, T., & Rose, N. (1996). Introduction. In *Foucault and political reason: Liberalism, neo-liberalism and rationalities of government*, A. Barry, T. Osborne, & N. Rose (Eds.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Bellei, C. (2015). *El gran experimento: Mercado y privatización de la educación chilena [The great experiment: Market and privatization of Chilean education]*. LOM Ediciones.

Bellei, C., Cabalin, C., & Orellana, V. (2014). The 2011 Chilean Student Movement against Neoliberal Educational Policies. *Studies in Higher Education*, *39*(3), 426–440. doi: 10.1080/03075079.2014.896179

Bellei, C., Contreras, M., Canales, M., & Orellana, V. (2018). The Production of Socio-Economic Segregation in Chilean Education: School Choice, Social Class and Market Dynamics (pp. 221–240). In *Understanding School Segregation: Patterns, Causes and Consequences of Spatian Inequalities in Education*, X. Bonal, C. Bellei (Eds.). London: Bloomsbury Collections.

Bellei, C., Xavier, V. (2015). 'Evolución de Las Políticas Educacionales En Chile: 1980–2014' ['Evolution of Educational Policies In Chile: 1980–2014']. In *El gran experimento: Mercado y privatización de la educación chilena*, C. Bellei (Ed.). Santiago, Chile: LOM Ediciones.

Biesta, Gert J.J. (2011). *Good Education in an Age of Measurement: Ethics, Politics, Democracy*. 1st edition. London–New York: Paradigm Publishers.

Bonal, X., & Bellei, C. (2018). 'Introduction: The Renaissance of School Segregation in a Context of Globalization'. In *Understanding School Segregation: Patterns, Causes and Consequences of Spatial Inequalities in Education*, X. Bonal & C. Bellei (Eds.). Bloomsbury Academic.

Boterman, W.R. (2013). 'Dealing with Diversity: Middle-Class Family Households and the Issue of "Black" and "White" Schools in Amsterdam'. *Urban Studies*, *50*(6),1130–1147. doi: 10.1177/0042098012461673

Camargo, R. (2012). 'Dealing with Income Inequality during the Bachelet Administration: A Critical Analysis of the Discourse of Chilean Political Elites'. *Latin American Perspectives*, *39*(4),19–33.

Chubb, J.E., Moe, T.M. (1990). *Politics, Markets and America's Schools*. Washington: The Brookings Institution.

Collet, J., Grinberg, S. (2021). 'La Education Managerial y Sus Fugas: Entre La Individualización y Lo Común' ['Managerial Education and its Leaks: Between Individualization and Commonality']. In *Hacia una escuela para lo común*, J. Collet, S. Grinberg (Eds.) Madrid: Ediciones Morata.

Córdoba, C. (2014). 'La elección de escuela en sectores pobres: Resultados de un estudio cualitativo' ['School choice in poor sectors: Results of a qualitative study']. *Psicoperspectivas. Individuo y Sociedad*, *13*(1). doi: 10.5027/psicoperspectivas-Vol13-Issue1-fulltext-301

Corvalán, J., García-Huidobro, J.E. (2016). 'Educación y Mercado: El Caso Chileno' ['Education and the Market: The Chilean Case']. Pp. 17–79. In *Mercado escolar y oportunidad educacional: libertad, diversidad y desigualdad [School market and educational opportunity: freedom, diversity and inequality]*, J. Corvalán, A. Carrasco, & J.E. García-Huidobro. Santiago: Ediciones UC.

Corvalán, J., Román, M.(2016). 'Permanencia En Escuelas de Rendimiento Medio En El Cuasi Mercado Educativo Chileno' ['Permanence In Middle-Performing Schools In The Chilean Quasi-Educational Market']. Pp. 189–207. In *Mercado escolar y oportunidad educacional: libertad, diversidad y desigualdad*, J. Corvalán, A. Carrasco, & J.E. García-Huidobro. Santiago, Chile: Ediciones UC.

Falabella, A. (2014). 'The Performing School: The Effects of Market & Accountability Policies'. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *22*(70).

Falabella, A. (2015). 'El mercado escolar en Chile y el surgimiento de la nueva gestión pública: el tejido de la política entre la dictadura neoliberal y los gobiernos de la centroizquierda (1979 a 2009)'['The school market in Chile and the emergence of the new public management: the fabric of politics between the neoliberal dictatorship and the governments of the center-left (1979 to 2009)']. *Educação & Sociedade*, *36*(132), 699–722. doi: 10.1590/ES0101-73302015152420

Falabella, A. (2021). 'The Seduction of Hyper-Surveillance: Standards, Testing, and Accountability'. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *57*(1), 113–142. doi: 10.1177/0013161X20912299

Foucault, M. (1988). 'On Problematization'. *History of the Present*, (4),16–18.

Freidus, A., Ewing, E.L. (2022). 'Good Schools, Bad Schools: Race, School Quality, and Neoliberal Educational Policy'. *Educational Policy*, *36*(4),763–68. doi: 10.1177/08959048221087208

Gordon, C. (1991). 'Governmental Rationality: An Introduction'. In *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, G. Burchell, C. Gordon, & P. Miller. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Gysling, J. (2016). 'The Historical Development of Educational Assessment in Chile: 1810–2014'. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, *23*(1), 8–25. doi: 10.1080/0969594X.2015.1046812

Howarth, D. (2010). 'Power, Discourse, and Policy: Articulating a Hegemony Approach to Critical Policy Studies'. *Critical Policy Studies*, *3*(3–4), 309–335. doi: 10.1080/19460171003619725

Hunkin, E. (2018). 'Whose Quality? The (Mis)Uses of Quality Reform in Early Childhood and Education Policy'. *Journal of Education Policy*, *33*(4), 443–456. doi: 10.1080/02680939.2017.1352032

Jofré, G. (1988). 'El sistema de subvenciones en educación: la experiencia chilena' ['The system of subsidies in education: the Chilean experience']. *Estudios Públicos*, 32, 193–237.

Karsten, S., Felix, C., Ledoux, G., Meijnen, W., Roeleveld, J., & Van Schooten, E. (2006). 'Choosing Segregation or Integration?: The Extent and Effects of Ethnic Segregation in Dutch Cities'. *Education and Urban Society*, *38*(2), 228–247. doi: 10.1177/0013124505282606

Kauko, J., Tuomas, T., & Rinne, R. (2018). 'Comparing Politics of Quality in Education'. In *Politics of quality in education: A comparative study of Brazil, China, and Russia*, J. Kauko, R. Rinne, & T. Takala (Eds.). Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge.

Leyton, D., Slachevsky, N. (2021). 'Calidad Como Límite de La Igualdad En Educación. Naturalización de La Desigualdad En La Elite Programática de Centro-Izquierda En Chile'['Quality as a Limit to Equality in Education. Naturalization Of Inequality In The Center-Left Programmatic Elite In Chile']. *Revista Izquierdas*, 50.

Ministerio de Educación. (2007). 'Mensaje de S.E. La Presidenta de La Republica Con El Que Se Inicia Un Proyecto de Ley Que Crea La Superintendencia de Educación' [Message from H.E. The President of the Republic Initiating a Bill Creating the Superintendency of Education'].

Ministerio de Educación. (2010). 'Ley General de Educación: Decreto Con Fuerza de Ley 2' ['General Education Law: Decree with Force of Law 2'].

Ministerio de Educación. (2011). 'LEY NUM. 20.529 Sistema Nacional de Aseguramiento de La Calidad de La Educación Parvularia, Básica y Media y Su Fiscalización' ['LAW Nº 20.529 National System for Quality Assurance in Kindergarten, Elementary and High School Education and its Control'].

Ministerio de Educación. (2013). 'Decreto 381: Establece Los Otros Indicadores de Calidad Eductiva a Que Se Refiere El Árticulo 3, Letra a), de La Ley Nº 20.529 Que Establece El Sistema Nacional de Aseguramiento de La Calidad de La Educación Parvularia, Básica y Media y Su Fiscalización' ['Decree 381: Establishes Other Educational Quality Indicators Referred to in Article 3, Letter a), of Law No. 20.529 Establishing the National System for Quality Assurance in Kindergarten, Basic and High School Education and its control'].

Ministerio de Educación. (2014). 'Mensaje de S.E. La Presidenta de La Republica Con El Que Inicia Un Proyeco de Ley Que Regula La Admisión de Los y Las Estudiantes, Elimina El Financiamiento Compartido y Prohibe El Lucro En Establecimientos Educacionales Que Reciben Aportes Del Estado' ['Message from H.E. The President of the Republic Initiating a Bill Regulating the Admission of Students, Eliminating Shared Financing and Prohibiting Profit in Educational Establishments Receiving State Contributions'].

Ministerio de Educación. (2015). 'LEY NÚM. 20.845 de Inclusión Escolar Que Regula La Admisión de Los y Las Estudiantes, Elimina El Financiamiento Compartido y Prohíbe El Lucro En Establecimientos Educationales Que Reciben Aportes Del Estado' ['Law No. 20.845 on School Inclusion that Regulates the Admission of Students, Eliminates Shared Financing and Prohibits Profit in Educational Establishments that Receive State Contributions'].

Ministerio de Educación. (2019a). *Estadísticas En Educación 2018 [Statistics In Education 2018]*. Centro de Estudios MINEDUC.

Ministerio de Educación. (2019b). '¿Qué Son Los Indicadores de Desarrollo Personal y Social y Qué Hacen Los Establecimientos Educacionales Para Promoverlos?' ['What Are Indicators of Personal and Social Development and What Do Educational Institutions Do to Promote Them?'].

Mizala, A., Torche, F. (2012). 'Bringing the Schools Back in: The Stratification of Educational Achievement in the Chilean Voucher System'. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *32*(1), 132–144. doi: 10.1016/j.ijedudev.2010.09.004

Olmedo, A., Santa Cruz, E. (2011). 'El Proceso de Valoración de Los Centros Educativos Por Parte de Las Familias de Clase Media. El Papel Del Orden Expresivo En La Búsqueda de La «distinción»' ['The Process of Valuation of Educational Centers by Middle Class Families. The Role of Expressive Order In The Search For "Distinction"']. *Papers*, *2*(96), 515–537.

Olmedo, A., Wilkins, A. (2017). 'Governing through Parents: A Genealogical Enquiry of Education Policy and the Construction of Neoliberal Subjectivities in England'. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *38*(4), 573–589. doi: 10.1080/01596306.2015.1130026

Oyarzún, G., Falabella, A. (2021). 'Indicadores de Desarrollo Personal y Social: La ilusión de la evaluación integral de la calidad' ['Indicators of Personal and Social Development: The illusion of comprehensive quality assessment']. *Psicoperspectivas. Individuo y Sociedad*, *21*(1). doi: 10.5027/psicoperspectivas-Vol21-Issue1-fulltext-2194

Ozga, J. (2000). *Policy Research in Educational Settings: Contested Terrain*. Open University Press.

Ozga, J., Dahler-Larsen, P., Segerholm, C., & Simola, H. (2011). 'Introduction'. In *Fabricating Quality in Education: Data and Governance in Europe*, J. Ozga, P. Dahler-Larsen, C. Segerholm, & H. Simola (Eds.). Routledge.

Raczynski, D., Hernández, H. (2012). 'Elección de Colegio, Imagenes, Valoraciones y Conductas de Las Familias y Segregación Social Escolar' ['School Choice, Images, Family Values and Behaviors, and School Social Segregation'].

Ramos, M., Guajardo, F., Orellana, V., Bellei, C., Canales, M., & Contreras, M. (2022). *Educación: La promesa incumplida: Esfuerzo, miedos y esperanzas de familias chilenas en el mercado escolar ['Education: The unfulfilled promise: Effort, fears and hopes of Chilean families in the school market']*. Editorial Catalonia.

Ramos, Z.C., Falabella, A. (2020). 'Dispositivo de Evaluación Educacional y Gubernamentalidad En Chile: Los Orígenes (1844–1970)' ['Educational Evaluation Device and Governmentality in Chile: The Origins (1844–1970)']. *CUHSO (Temuco)*, *30*(2), 240–269. doi: 10.7770/2452-610x.2020.cuhso.02.a02

Reay, D. (2004). 'Exclusivity, Exclusion, and Social Class in Urban Education Markets in the United Kingdom'. *Urban Education*, *39*(5), 5375–5360. doi: 10.1177/0042085904266925

Rose, N. (1996). 'Governing "Advanced" Liberal Democracies'. In *Foucault and political reason: Liberalism, neo-liberalism and rationalities of government*, A. Barry, T. Osborne, & N. Rose (Eds.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Santori, D. (2018). 'Public Narratives under Intensified Market Conditions: Chile as a Critical Case'. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *39*(1), 53–68. doi: 10.1080/01596306.2016.1229267

Saporito, S. (2003). 'Private Choices, Public Consequences: Magnet School Choice and Segregation by Race and Poverty'. *Social Problems*, *50*(2), 181–203. doi: 10.1525/sp.2003.50.2.181

Slachevsky, N. (2015). 'Una Revolución Neoliberal: La Política Educacional En Chile Desde La Dictadura Militar' ['A Neoliberal Revolution: Educational Policy In Chile Since The Military Dictatorship']. *Educação e Pesquisa*, *41*(SPE), 1473–86. doi: 10.1590/S1517-9702201508141660

Valenzuela, J.P., Bellei, C., & de los Ríos, D. (2014). 'Socioeconomic School Segregation in a Market-Oriented Educational System. The Case of Chile'. *Journal of Education Policy*, *29*(2), 217–241. doi: 10.1080/02680939.2013.806995

Van Zanten, A. (2003). 'Middle-Class Parents and Social Mix in French Urban Schools: Reproduction and Transformation of Class Relations in Education'. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *13*(2), 107–124. doi: 10.1080/09620210300200106

Verger, A., Fontdevila, C., & Zancajo, A. (2016). *The Privatization of Education: A Political Economy of Global Education Reform*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Verger, A., Parcerisa L. (2019). 'Test-Based Accountability and the Rise of Regulatory Governance in Education: A Review of Global Drivers'. Pp. 139–158. In *Education Governance and Social Theory: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Research*, A. Wilkins, & A. Olmedo (Eds.). Bloomsbury Academic.

Winch, C. (1996). *Quality and Education*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Youdell, D. (2011). *School Trouble: Identity, Power and Politics in Education*. Abingdon: United Kingdom: Routledge.

Exploring ethical dimensions of pet culture in art: Ethics of care in art pedagogy

Luba Kozak
University of Regina, Canada
ORCID: 0009-0007-9303-3571

Introduction

Reading animals through more inclusive lenses, such as ecocriticism and postcolonial theories, enables us to reposition pets from the periphery to the forefront of art pedagogy, increasing their visibility and shedding light on the issue of social exclusion. This study focuses on a close reading of a pivotal case study, John Giles Eccardt's portrait of *Lady Grace Carteret (1713–1755), Countess of Dysart with a Child (Lady Frances Tollemache?, 1738–1807), and a Black Servant, Cockatoo and Spanie*l (1740), which I will refer to as *Lady Grace* for the sake of brevity. My main argument is that by critically re-evaluating how human-animal relations in art are taught can lead to an acknowledgement of the presence of animals as more than just symbols (Aloi, 2012; Cain, 2017), which will not only restore a sense of non-human identity and agency, but also achieve a deeper understanding of social wellbeing for both marginalised non-humans and humans. My rationale for this stems from an advocacy approach (Horsthemke, 2018; Cronin, 2018) and activist perspective where animal welfare is linked to a broader understanding of social welfare, and therefore underscores the need to ethically rethink art pedagogy and the speciesist politics it perpetuates by overlooking the lived experiences of non-human beings and the lessons we can derive from interspecies coexistence that arises from the practice of pet ownership.

Human-animal relations were a controversial topic that was debated on in the early modern period due to geographical explorations that introduced new cultural and zoological knowledge to Britain. At this specific geopolitical time, Britain was experiencing significant cultural changes due to colonial expansion, which forced British culture to define their relations with others, including animals. In particular, foreign and exotic animals that were introduced into British society (Grigson, 2016; Clutton-Brock, 2012). Portraiture offers a unique possibility for reinterpreting the meaning of animals based on the depiction of relationality with humans, thereby providing an opportunity to imagine the lived experiences of these animals based on the human-animal bond that is still relevant today. I have chosen to focus on portraiture in particular because it is a genre that aimed to capture the likeness of its subjects (Pointon, 1998). Portraiture distinctly

represents animals in comparison to other popular art genres of the time, such as landscape or history painting, where animals typically played symbolic roles and their individuality or subjectivity was not emphasised. Portraiture also offers a unique representation of animals who are depicted with intentional connection to elite families within intimate, domestic settings. Therefore, it highlights the intersection between the notions of domestication and familiarity of the other, which raises ethical considerations about what it means to know the other.

Background and Literature Review

In a general sense, pedagogy is commonly defined as the study of teaching methods (Peel, 2023). Christine Ballengee-Morris & Patricia Stuhr (2001, p. 6) argue that education is part of cultural experience and should include issues of power, history, and self-identity. And while they do not extend these considerations to non-human animals, they stress that the dynamics of history and culture influence our contemporary perspectives and values (Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001, p. 7). I am interested in how cultural experiences, like pet culture, engage with the concepts of power, history, and self-identity in relation to human-animal relations, as expressed in art. Scholars Karin Dinker and Helena Pedersen (2016) examine critical animal pedagogy as a way to expose asymmetrical power relations in culture and education, but most scholarly investigations are limited to the sciences (Dolby, 2020; Mueller et al., 2017), neglecting valuable social insights offered by art. Engaging with critical theories like ecocriticism, posthumanism, and postcolonial theory, this research highlights the importance of ethics of care in discourses about alterity by arguing that animals in art must be seen as part of interspecies relationship building linked to social well-being, not just pictorial accessories. By challenging the metaphorical value of animals, this chapter also aims to contribute to the emerging field of vegan theory in the humanities, which seeks to recognize the overlooked, absent non-human figures (Quinn, 2021, p. 12). Deborah Smith-Shank (2007) notes that art pedagogy is shifting towards a more interdisciplinary and semiotic approach to visual cultural studies and Mira Kallio-Tavin (2020, p. 299) writes that "scholars in the field of art education continue developing sustainable, responsible, and just relationships with nonhuman animals," which gives hope for ethical progress in art pedagogy and interpretations (Hagberg, 2008).

Although Kallio-Tavin (2020) offers invaluable perspectives on contemporary art education that challenges anthropocentric views, there is a gap in considerations of historical interpretations. This chapter is inspired by Maria Saari's (2020) book, *Education for Total Liberation: Critical Animal Pedagogy and Teaching Against Speciesism*, which includes a collection of articles on the topic of critical animal studies that challenge animal oppression in education research. In Dinker and Pedersen's (2020, p. 45) chapter, for instance, the authors critique education for "(re)producing injustices and inequalities". By rethinking the symbolic value of animals and challenging the reproduction of their meanings in the field of art history through an ethics of care approach, I am building on the ideas of authors in this book by critically examining how human-animal relations in art are taught, to provide a deeper understanding of multispecies social wellbeing.

In *Picture Ecology*, ecocritical scholar Andrew Patrizio (2021) emphasises the need for ecocritical interpretation through pedagogy. Patrizio writes,

> I want to propose that the most powerful future direction for ecocritical art history, activism, and theory is *teaching*… to teach ecocritically is to amplify the interdisciplinary scale of our work and embrace environmental thinking that originates in different worlds, putting them to work in relation to art practices, theories, and histories (19).

Ecocritical art history is a valuable lens through which to look at representations of animals because, as Patrizio (2021, p. 26) writes, it "notices rather than ignores how once abstracted, disembodied and spectacularized peripheral natures" operate together. An ecocritical lens therefore sheds light on the nonhuman animal, bringing it and historical relationships with animals tinto focus instead of continuing to exist in the margins of artworks, overshadowed by anthropocentric perspectives. The specific concept of animal individuality within the context of ecocritical art history is valuable to consider because it is an aspect that pushes against a generalised idea of what it means to belong to the vague notion of 'nature' and thus is a restoration of justice through its emphasis on visibility.

As Patrizio (2021, p. 37) argues, "Ecocritical art histories depend, as Haraway's feminism depends, on paying attention to 'the problem of responsibility for the generativity of all visual practices' and so become 'answerable for what we learn how to see'". By acknowledging the emotional bond between humans and non-human pets and how this impacts their visibility, and therefore individuality, studying art through an ecocritical lens is not only a way to observe and analyse, but it also allows for an engagement with the ethical and social implications of how art shapes our understanding of the environment and our relationship with others (Brady, 2010). Applying an ecocritical approach to the study of animals in art offers valuable insight because it can redefine and disrupt ideas about the construct of nature to reposition the social statuses of humans and animals. Giovanni Aloi (2015, p. 21) argues, "Learning about the making of the paintings and tracing back the origin of animal materialities in the work of art has made to emerge a current problematic important to human-animal relationships within an ecological context". Considering nature as both paradoxical and hierarchical construct within art, and since ecocriticism aims to foster "non-hierarchical modes of thinking" (Garlake, 2023), ecocritical art history can reveal oppressive structures and biopolitical nuances. If nature is a constructed concept in art, and even if art itself might be a construct, nature's autopoiesis (basically meaning self-creation) remains because it can recreate its own elements through reinterpreted structures and new meanings. In simpler words, nature's changing landscape, including the malleability of non-human animal identity through domestication, makes it autopoietic, which makes it possible to propose new meanings even within original historical contexts when a deliberate, reflexive approach recognizes and embraces the complexities of human-animal relationships. Additionally, the act of reflexivity, which is guided by the principles of ethics of care theory (Engster, 2006), encourages that we pay close attention (Patrizio, 2021; Van Dooren et al., 2016). Both the concepts of caring and attention are subsequently fundamental and connected to owner-pet relations.

Emotions play a central role in human-animal relations, but how these emotions are visually translated and how they impact our understanding of animal individuality is not carefully considered in ecocritical art history. Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin (2015, p. 221) write that, "While the presence of complex animal emotions must remain to a degree speculative and always runs the risk of being dismissed as unscientific," imagining how relationships are shaped through emotional bonds offers valuable insights into philosophical and social understandings independent of scientific knowledge hierarchies. While some critical theories like postcolonial theory prioritises emotional connections with animals in order to recognize both the injustices and the empathy we have for animals (Huggan & Tiffin, 2015, p. 228), connecting postcolonial theory with the ecocriticism can offer even richer insights, especially within the field of art history. Patrizio (2021, p. 37) also supports the idea that postcolonial and ecocritical theories can work together to expose the tropes of colonisation and race that are embedded in discriminatory attitudes like speciesism and sexism. As Karl Kusserow (2021, p. 13) writes, "By re-engaging entanglements between matter and life, eco-art history serves to productively disturb and overwrite the anthropocentric foundations of Enlightenment art history with its roots in European colonial expansionism".

Ethics of Care as Theory, Method and Praxis in Relation to Non-Human Others

Ethics of care is a normative theory that can be defined as a "relational and context-bound approach toward morality and decision making" (Dunn & Burton, 2020). Relationships are central to ethics of care, which makes it a useful framework for thinking about pet culture, although ethics of care scholarship focuses more on human relations by asking what does it mean to care. In this chapter, I answer this fundamental question by suggesting the recognition of the presence of non-human animals in traditionally exclusive fields of study, such as art history, is an example of what it means to care because of the timeless human-animal relation that is still relevant today. Reflexivity and emotions are core aspects of care theory that align with Nel Noddings' perspective, a prominent feminist figure in the development of care theory, who asserts that caring encompasses an emotional sensitivity towards others (Slote, 2007, p. 10).

Ethics of care is deeply engaged with questions about morality, but in support of Noddings' views, Michael Slote (2007, p. 11) argues that ethics of care is both partial and incomplete. Slote highlights the moral pitfall when it comes to ethics of care, which is that if we cannot establish caring relationships with individuals we will never know, like non-human others, then our moral interactions with them are governed by principles of justice rather than a caring ethic. As long as we continue to ignore the agency of non-human others and their lived experiences, then we will continue to perpetuate an injustice that has moral ramifications. My perspective stems from the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas (1961) who argues that we are morally obligated to others. In his book *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas posits that we cannot know – nor should we – the other and that their existence is independent to ours. This is a progressive way of thinking about animals, since we cannot ever know the animal mind, especially that of the historical animal that has left no records behind, except

as I propose, a trace of its authentic image within the visual arts. While many discourses about animals across disciplines have depended on models of comparison or appropriating the animal as a reflection or extension of human identity, Levinas' philosophy could offer an alternative approach. It could enable the spectator to transcend their own experience by acknowledging that the animal's experience is independent from the human's. A proximity with pets allows humans to imagine their lived experiences, although Levinas does not consider how multispecies partnerships shape each other's experiences.

In Peter Allmark's (1995) essay, "Can There Be An Ethics of Care?," he highlights the conceptual difference between 'care' and 'caring,' explaining that inherently, care is not necessarily good, but depends on intention and action. Within the context of this chapter, for example, care *for* a non-human pet can be understood differently than caring *about* the animal. I propose that a mode of ethical questioning can help facilitate spectators practise caring. Taiwo Afolabi (2021a, p. 353) writes that ethical questioning is a tool that researchers and cultural practitioners can use to scrutinise the stems they are working in. Afolabi (2021a) argues that ethical questioning involves an intentional reflection before taking action, which I apply to the action of analysing an artwork and the subjects it represents, and also where the spectator can be understood as a substitute for the researcher that Afolabi refers to. The process of ethical questioning encourages relational and inquiry-driven approaches that consider different viewpoints, including environmental, political and social dimensions (Afolabi, 2021b). Ethical questioning is grounded in ethics of care theory because it encourages introspection about the needs of others, with the ultimate aim to create a more equitable framework. Care in various settings requires a grasp of the intricate nature of relational, social, and temporal dimensions that will allow for care ethics to engage in a transformative practice (Barnes et al., 2015). I propose that caring for marginalised subjects in art, like non-human animals, by thinking about relational connections not only transforms our perceptions of them by reinstating their subjecthood, but is also linked with social justice through the act of making these subjects visible.

Daniel Engster (2006) writes, "We have duties to care for others because we have appealed to others for care, and other individuals have duties to us because they have appealed to others for care." Engster raises two significant points that I wish to unpack. Firstly, while modern scientific studies can confirm the health benefits of animal companions for humans (Eachus, 2001; Wells, 2009; Wien, 2018) reported that pets lead to "decreased stress, improved heart health, and even help children with their emotional and social skills". Art historian Ingrid Tague (2015) also supports this claim by arguing that companion animals also contributed to the emotional well being in historical contexts. Engster (2006) argues that in care ethics, our duties to animals arise out of the concrete, empirically verifiable relationships we have with them. Furthermore, Engster (2006) writes that care ethics is not only concerned with individual welfare on a surface level, but is more about forging good relationships. Ethics of care connects with the virtues of empathy and mercy by prioritising empathetic relationships with others. The notions of empathy and mercy were also both culturally prominent notions in eighteenth-century British society. In his book *Mercy and British Culture*, James Gregory (2022) explores artistic representations of mercy, considering how it shaped ideas of gender, race, and human/non-human nature. Gregory (2022) highlights how the idea of mercy conflicted with anthropocentric views and moved into a political realm that raised concerns about moral and ethical relations with others.

Gregory (2022) also writes that while the term sympathy increased in usage and mercy declined, mercy reflected ideas about dominance and dependence. However, Slote (2007, p. 13) points out that empathy and sympathy, although commonly used interchangeably, are indeed different. Slote (2007) argues that empathy enables a genuine connection with someone and embraces their feelings, sympathy is a more shallow approach that only allows one to feel *for* the other, not *with* the other. While Gregory (2022) does not connect the action of empathy with the virtue of mercy, it is interesting that he underscores how it was understood to involve the aspects of dominance and dependance, which I argue defines owner-pet relations. As Rachel Swinkin (2012, p. 33) writes, the rhetoric of sensibility and subsequent sentimental education encouraged empathy and compassion towards non-human creatures that went beyond moral teachings. Although a rhetoric of sympathy did not have the same weight as a rhetoric of empathy did in the eighteenth-century, this is a new approach that ethics of care can help foster by encouraging spectators to empathise with pets in art, thereby imagining the non-human other other through an intentional form of reflexive practice to increase their visibility.

Henry Ajumeze (2023) emphasises that narratives or myths are human constructs, therefore we are free to change perspectives through a retelling of stories. Ajumeze (2023) calls for a transvaluation, which he defines as a different way of thinking that recognizes ignored or undervalued aspects, of the way animals are performed and understood in narratives, advocating for an acknowledgment of their central role in performances. This gesture would not only extend an ethics of care approach to animals, but to the planet as well, as a form of sustainability and reconnection. Ajumeze (2023) stresses that narratives about animals need to be retold where animals are the heroes in their own narratives, which makes them visible. I agree, but the ongoing challenge, at least in the field of art history, is to recognize them first as subjects in art. In Sarah Cohen's (2021) book, *Enlightened Animals in Eighteenth-Century Art*, she turns her attention to the animal subject as a worthy protagonist in art, rather than only focusing on the complexity of human productions of art and philosophical writing that point to humanistic intentions and responses. My approach aligns with Cohen's focus on the representation of animal physical agency, but also considers the expression of emotional responses of humans towards animals as well as a connecting link, which was influenced by pet-keeping culture. I am also building on recent scholarship on the subject of the 'non-human turn.' As Richard Grusin (2015, p. 21) argues in *The Nonhuman Turn*, it is a new direction for thinking about the relationships between humans and the nonhuman world and allows for the recognition of "nonhumanness in us all". I suggest that this logic also allows for the possibility of considering the "humanness" in us all, further blurring the lines of identity and adds another layer of discourse in the field of ecocriticism.

Case Study: Semiotics and the Symbolic Animal in Art Pedagogy

Art historian Marcia Pointon (1998, p. 112) asserts that portraiture is part of a symbolic structure where the subject of the portrait participates in the production of meanings that are not defined by a standard of likeness and the body is a cultural symbol. Art history pedagogy depends on a semiotic reading of artworks, "where semiotics is used as

a tool for conceptualising the meaning of animals, as well as the meaning in animals and in animal lives" (Tüür, 2014, p. 7). In my analysis of Eccardt's painting of *Lady Grace Carteret*, I begin with a traditional semiotic interpretation of its pictorial elements, but by highlighting the exchange between both human and non-human figures in the painting, I aim to demonstrate how reading the painting through an ethics of care approach emphasises the importance of relationality, which sheds light on marginalised or excluded subjects beyond their mere semiotic meanings.

John Eccardt's portrait, *Lady Grace Carteret (1713–1755), Countess of Dysart with a Child (Lady Frances Tollemache?, 1738–1807), and a Black Servant, Cockatoo and Spaniel* (1740), depicts an elegantly dressed aristocratic woman and her young daughter who are positioned in the center of the work. Beside the child, a black African servant boy is portrayed holding up a white cockatoo for her to play with. On the opposite side, a Spaniel dog is portrayed standing beside his mistress, Lady Grace Carteret, pushed into the shadows of the painting. There seems to be an implication that the dog is being ignored by the other figures in the painting, evident by the way he lifts his front left paw anxiously, as if it is begging for attention. For the purpose of this chapter, I will focus my attention on an analysis of the triangular interaction between the young noble child and the white cockatoo that the black servant boy holds. The young Lady Frances Tollemache, is dressed in an expensive blue and white satin gown, with a white lacy bonnet on her head, affirming her elite status and connection to her mother, Lady Grace Carteret, who she casually leans against her shoulder. The child looks out at something beyond the canvas, and although it was common for common for eighteenth-century portraitists to paint black youth gazing in admiration towards their mistress (Molineux, 2005, p. 497), I would argue that it is unclear if the child is looking at Lady Grace Carteret or at the same thing as the child is. This uncertainty complicates the African boy's status as either a racialized subject or one who is more aligned with the child because of their potentially shared outlook.

Although the child looks in the opposite direction, she maintains a physical connection to the white cockatoo bird by touching its erected crest. The bird is depicted with a slightly parted beak, as if ready to make a sound or perhaps already has and gazes up at the child, who does not reciprocate the visual exchange. According to animal behavioural research, cockatoo's can either raise or lower their crests as a form of communication, whether to indicate their excitement or defensiveness (Zoological Society of Ireland, 2002). Because the child seems to be holding onto the bird's crest, the bird's reaction animates it as more than just a symbolic element of exoticism in the painting. It is unclear whether the bird is reacting in a positive or negative way by raising its crest, raising the question if the young child has forcefully lifted the cockatoo's crest up or if her playful interacting with the non-human animal points to a interspecies friendship that is mutually reciprocated. Reflecting back on Ajumeze's (2023) argument to reposition animals as heroes in their own narratives as a way to push back against their conventional symbolic representation in art, thinking about the response and interaction between the human and non-figure that emerges from pet culture can serve a way to critique the aspect of non-human performance and static staging of animals in portraiture. In other words, paying attention to the emotional response of the bird situates it in a position of power that enables the animal to have its own narrative, elevating it from its subaltern status.

Pet Culture in Art: Interspecies Social Inclusion and Exclusion

Eccardt's portrait, *Lady Grace*, underscores ideas about domestication and gender roles associated with mothering in terms of nurturing, training, and taming that are connected with the figure of Lady Grace Carteret. I am interested in how these ideas about domestication that she embodies shape her interactions with all the other figures within the painting to reveal domestic power dynamics, which sheds light on broader social attitudes towards children, enslaved individuals, and non-human pets in eighteenth-century Britain. I am particularly interested in how the intimacy of private, domestic relationships can demonstrate ways to challenge social expectations of power dynamics to highlight how the internal family unit can act as a place for political negotiations within a broader societal context.

Lady Grace presents a dichotomy of subjects in relation to one another while maintaining an element of relationality that conflicts within the political landscape of the eighteenth-century aristocratic domestic sphere. Catherine Molineux (2005, note 22) notes that eighteenth-century portraitists conventionally positioned black slaves in the same position as pets, both domestic and exotic, which suggested a paralleled status. The African boy can be understood like an exoticized pet, whose status is problematized by holding the cockatoo, another exotic pet with whom the aristocratic child directly engages with. This compositional decision implies a sense of hierarchy among the 'pets' that is further amplified by the spaniel who is ignored and pushed into the corner of the painting. This seems to suggest that a familiarity with canine pets was so well established that it no longer held the same kind of interest as the exotic pets, both humans and non-human.

In Denise Farmery's (2018) article "The Black Figure in 18th Century Art", he discusses how portraits reflected British ideas about slavery, often contrasting black figures with white British sitters. Farmery (2018) points out that black figures were rarely recognized as sitters, except for a few exceptional cases, such as Thomas Gainsborough's *Portrait of Ignatius Sancho* (1768), who held a significant position in British society and worked for the affluent Montagu family. Due to the rise in interest in natural history that led to debates about species, racial discourses were also debated on. Pointon (1998, p. 146) writes that the introduction of black slaves into portraiture Europeanized the image to enhance the subject's status, but this classical understanding of the role black figures had in European portraits does not consider the relationship or indeed emotional bond that could have emerged between the figures. In other words, it ignores the aspect of relationality that an ethics of care approach can bring forth. Rethinking human-animal relations through the representation of pet culture exposes oppressive structures in semiotic readings of art and will engage with the practice of what Ajumeze (2023) calls transvaluation' – a recognition of ignored elements. Thus, it is not only a form of social justice that recognizes the colonial identities of non-human animal others, but also racialized others, by destabilising their symbolic presence.

Going Against 'Nature' to Find Non-Human Individuality and Subjecthood

It is important to consider how the concept of nature, which ecocritical scholar Kate Soper (1995) argues is a political construct, conflicted with the idea of non-human individuality in the eighteenth-century. Art historian Dianna Donald (2017, p. 29) writes that in the eighteenth-century, nature was viewed as a divine artefact that man exercised dominion over and while there were problems of classification or interpretation among natural historians and artists, this was attributed to man's imperfect understanding of God's creation. Issues of classification were further complicated because animals resisted categorization based on their perceived limitless morphology (Donald, 2017, p. 29). However, the eighteenth-century naturalist Oliver Goldsmith unconventionally argued that the "characterisation of animals should go beyond morphology and be understood like human biography of portraiture, as liberal as the writing or painting of human history" (Donald, 2017, p. 32). Furthermore, while the eighteenth-century Swedish naturalist Carolus Linnaeus stressed the importance of studying the actions and interactions of animals in their 'natural' states, Donald writes that he was dismissive about the complexity of animal behaviours in his detached observations of domesticated pets, specifically cats and dogs (Donald, 2017, p. 32).

Although Linnaeus emphasised that close observations were only feasible in relation to domesticated animals, the observation of animal characters within the 'natural' setting of the domestic sphere and the influence of human-animal pet relationships was not considered as a contributing factor that altering the character of the animal in this unnatural/neo-natural setting. Instead, there is a clear paradox in understanding how the idea of 'nature' is impacted by domestication, where pet animals and the behaviours they exhibited in these settings influenced ideas about their individuality or character. I propose, however, that rather than thinking about the concept of pets and the domestic sphere as an oppressive structure or environment (albeit one that forced non-human animals to adapt their behaviour), it could it be thought of as a space where interconnectedness evolved and shared histories began if thought of through an ecocritical lens where multispecies work in partnerships with each other within the phenomenon of pet culture (Bencke & Bruhn, 2022). I ask: how can art serve as material evidence that was able to capture these dynamic multispecies relationships?

As scholar Thierry Hoquet (2013, p. 68) explains, a controversy between the eighteenth-century French naturalists Goerges-Louis Lecler, Comte de Buffon and Etienne Bonnot de Condillac regarding the tensions between the idea of species and individuals existed in the eighteenth-century, where Condillac asserted that animals feel like us and that their nature is impenetrable to humans. Hoquet (2013, p. 68) calls for a nominalistic approach to the concept of 'animal individuals' and argues that the the philosophical meaning of the term 'individual' holds two significant aspects: 1) it is a unique quality in artistic expression and 2) it conveys a political weight that implies a sense of autonomy on behalf of the subject who is deemed an 'individual,' thus liberating them from oppressive structures. Based on Hoquet's explanation, it can be understood that the notion of individuality stands at the junction between art and politics, which is also where the notion of 'nature' in ecocritical art history typically is located as well, thus demonstrating how individuality and nature are complementary concepts that can inform each other.

It is important to distinguish between what is meant by the terms identity and individuality. According to Martine Nida-Rumelin (2017, p. 279), from a realist perspective, conscious beings are considered perfect individuals, but where the identity of an entity remains unchanged across time, individuality refers to a unique essence that also remains unchanged. Building on Nida-Rumelin's (2017) somewhat unclear explanation, which does not fully distinguish the two concepts, I understand identity to be a socially constructed notion that can change if challenged through critical theories like ecocriticism and postcolonial theory, whereas individuality is indeed a unique essence that speaks to the agency of a being. The notion of individuality, as Hoquet (2013) argues, is also politically charged, which positions it within the realm of ethics and justice. Therefore, it is vital to first acknowledge individuality, which can be achieved through anti-anthropocentric lenses like ecocritical thinking, in order to then challenge and change the identity of subjects. In the case of non-human animal representations in art, this would require acknowledging their individuality first in order to shift the way they are read from objects to subjects. Ecocritical thinking can help facilitate this because it is the ethical approach, as ecocritical scholars like Alan Braddock (2023, p. 108) and Patrizio (2020, p. 2021) contend. Paying closer attention to the role of pets and pet culture can lead to new recognitions of animal individuality by highlighting the importance of relationality and affect as part of this unique human-animal relationship, which makes it possible to imagine a familiarity that then leads to an acceptance of interconnectedness with non-human animals.

Reconciling with Nature: Indigenous Knowledge

A common perspective adopted by scholars who are part of the 'nonhuman turn' movement is shifting away from thinking *about* animals to thinking *with* animals (Grusin, 2015; Daston & Mitman, 2005). One of the problems with this idea, however, is that before we can begin to think with nonhuman animals, we must first come to terms that our shared histories involve remembering about the significant role played by non-human animals in human society and recognizing their lived experiences. As Braddock (2023) supports,

> The time has come for art history to expand its understanding of agency by regarding nonhuman animals, plants, and other phenomena, including the material constituents of art, as being alive, animate living partners, persons, and fellow subjects rather than as mere objects, matter, or even uncanny things – a kind interpretive property" (108).

Nonetheless, we cannot jump to thinking with animals or truly understanding harmonious coexistence without first restoring their historical presence and agency as a form of justice. While there may be limited traces of historical animals left, as historian Erica Fudge (2000, p. 2) starkly points out when she writes "I had to look to humans to find the animals, but all that is available to the historian are records of use, edibility, training, exploitation". While the historical animal may indeed only exists in fragments or in an objectified form, such as in the example of a leather bound book

or a paintbrush made of animal hair with which a painting was made, we are still confronted by their material presence and an attempt to capture their likeness, especially in the genre of portraiture.

In the context of Indigenous scholarship and epistemology, the concept of environmental reconciliation takes on multifaceted social and political dimensions (Leah et al., 2018). What I mean by 'reconciliation' extends beyond the mere acknowledgment of past wrongs due to Western colonialism and injustices done to Indigenous Peoples, which in the Canadian context is linked with the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Erasmus, 1996) that urged Canadians to begin a national process of reconciliation in response to residential schools. Instead, I propose the term reconciliation as an ethical framework that embraces non-Western ideologies and can extend beyond human relations. 'Reconciliation'(Cambridge, n.d.) is defined as two groups who restore friendly relations, but this definition reveals a paradox when examined through an Indigenous lens, and especially in relation to non-human animals. It raises the question of whether there ever existed genuinely friendly relations at any point in history between Indigenous communities and settler societies, and humans and non-humans. The concept of 'friendly' itself becomes subject to scrutiny, as it may be grounded in social expectations. Pet culture serves as an example, questioning whether the complexity of this category of human-animal relations could truly align with the criteria of friendliness. I propose this idea can be applied in the field of art history, where animals are often portrayed in ways that promote the idea of reconciliation based on visual cues of interspecies friendship or companionship, evident by compositional details like the proximity and physical touch between humans and animals, highlighting the care and attention with which the artist and patron paid in their attempt to capture the essence of a beloved pet.

Thinking about the way we see animals in art through the lens of reconciliation can be an effective strategy to achieving an ethical relationship with historical animals and their material presence in art can help foster these new perspectives (Anderson & Guyas, 2012). According to an article published by UNESCO (2021), titled "Earth Day: We Must Reconcile Humans with Nature," it contends that "UNESCO promotes linkages between nature and culture and considers the intrinsic value and the importance of biodiversity for our identity." It is at this intersection between nature and culture, however, that the non-human seems to blur into the vague notion of 'nature' and there is a lack of consideration for individuality in relation to cultural production.

Although the notion of reconciliation is complex and politically charged, an ecocritical and Anthropocenic lens provides an alternative perspective to the term that is linked with both social injustices and environmental injustices (Hicks & King, 2007; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Reframing reconciliation in this context offers a different conceptual paradigm, focused on sustainability discourses and ethical relationships with the natural world. It calls for a holistic reconciliation with the environment, acknowledging that such reconciliation is unattainable without including animals in the conversation (Kahn, 2003). Reconciliation thus becomes a framework for addressing the broader spectrum of injustices, fostering a more harmonious coexistence between humans, animals, and the environment through an ethics of care approach that emphasises relationality (Whyte et al., 2016).

Conclusion

This chapter investigated how art pedagogy often excludes non-human subjects and the emotional bonds between humans and animals, examining John Giles Eccardt's portrait *Lady Grace Carteret (1713–1755), Countess of Dysart with a Child (Lady Frances Tollemache?, 1738–1807), and a Black Servant, Cockatoo and Spaniel* (1740) as a case study. Using a mode of ethical questioning and an ethics of care framework, in addition to engaging with more inclusive theories like ecocriticism to examine how art represents the lived realities of animals in human interactions, this chapter highlights the impact of animals' material presence in art on perceptions of social inclusion and exclusion.

The chapter argues for a reevaluation of pets in visual culture, which can lead to fresh insights into Western human-animal relationships and contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable society. It builds on existing literature on ethics of care and animal studies (Corman & Vandrovcová, 2014), as well as art history discourse, with the aim of making the animal subject more visible in art to challenge anthropocentric pedagogy. The chapter concluded by proposing a strategy of reconciliation as a form of restorative justice that acknowledges the injustices and marginalisation of non-human animals. This reframing of reconciliation as a concept addresses social injustices by recognizing the historical non-human subject can lead to more harmonious interspecies coexistence (Haraway, 2008).

Acknowledgements

I want to express my gratitude to the Centre for Socially Engaged Theatre (C-SET), housed in the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance, at the University of Regina, and to the University of Regina for supporting my participation at this year's 16th International UNESCO Summer School at the Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw, Poland. This incredible opportunity has had a profound impact on my personal and professional growth.

I would also like to extend a special thank you to Dr. Taiwo Afolabi (Director of C-SET) for his unwavering encouragement and support in the development of this research project for the UNESCO Summer School.

References

Afolabi, T. (2021). A. From writing ethics to doing ethics: ethical questioning of a practitioner. *Research in Drama Education*, *26*(2), 352–357. doi: 10.1080/13569783.2021.1880317

Afolabi, T. (2021). B. Theorizing ethical questioning in applied theatre research. *Applied Theatre Research*, *9*(2), 99–116. doi: 10.1386/atr_00051_1

Ajumeze, H. (2023). Performance and Reconfiguring Human and Non-Human Species. Howlround, webinar series. https://howlround.com/happenings/performance-and-reconfiguring-human-and-non-human-species

Allmark, P. (1995). Can there be an ethics of care?. *Journal of Medical Ethics*, *21*, 19–24.

Aloi, G. (2012). "Deconstructing the Animal in Search of the Real". *Anthrozoös*, *25*(1), 73–90.

Aloi, G.. (2015). Animal Studies and Art: Elephants in the Room. Essay. In *Beyond Animal Studies Antennae*. http://animot.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/ALOI-Animal-Studies-and-Art-Elephants-in-the-Room_compressed.pdf

Anderson, T., Guyas, A.S. (2012). Earth Education, Interbeing, and Deep Ecology. *Studies in Art Education*, *53*(3), 223–245. doi: 10.1080/00393541.2012.11518865

Ballengee-Morris, C., Stuhr, P.L. (2001). Multicultural Art and Visual Cultural Education in a Changing World. *Art Education (Reston)*, *54*(4), 6–13.doi: 10.1080/00043125.2001.11653451

Barnes, M. (2012). *Care in Everyday Life : an Ethic of Care in Practice*. Policy Press. Bencke, I., Bruhn, J. (2022). *Multispecies Storytelling in Intermedial Practices*. Punctum books.

Brady, E. (2010). Animals in environmental art: relationship and aesthetic regard. *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, *9*(1), 47–58. doi: 10.1386/jvap.9.1.47_1

Braddock, A.C. (2023). *Implication : An Ecocritical Dictionary for Art History* (First ed). Yale University Press. doi: 10.12987/9780300275322. Cain, A. (2017). *Decoding Animals in Art History, from Immortal Peacocks to Lusty Rabbits*. *Artsy*. https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-decoding-animals-art-history-immortal-peacocks-lusty-rabbits

Clutton-Brock, J. (2012). *Animals as Domesticates a World View through History*. Michigan State University Press.

Cohen, S. (2021). *Enlightened Animals in Eighteenth-Century Art*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Corman, L., Vandrovcová, T. (2014). Radical Humility: Toward a More Holistic Critical Animal Studies Pedagogy. *Counterpoints (New York, N.Y.),* 448, 135–157.

Cronin, K. (2018). *Art for Animals: Visual Culture and Animal Advocacy, 1870–1914*. Vol. 12. Penn State University Press. doi: 10.5325/j.ctv14gpbw4

Daston, L., Mitman, G. (2005). *Thinking with animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism*. Columbia University Press.

Dinker, K.G., Pedersen, H. (2016). Critical Animal Pedagogies: Re-learning Our Relations with Animal Others. In *The Palgrave International Handbook of Alternative Education* (pp. 415–430). Palgrave Macmillan UK. doi: 10.1057/978-1-137-41291-1_27

___. (2020). Critical Animal Pedgagogy: Explorations Toward Reflective Practice. In *Education for Total Liberation: Critical Animal Pedagogy and Teaching Against Speciesism, Educational Studies* (pp. 44–62). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Dolby, N. (2020). *Learning Animals: Curriculum, Pedagogy and Becoming a Veterinarian*. CRC Press.

Donald, D. (2017). *Picturing Animals in Britain*. Yale University Press.

Dunn, C., Burton, B. (2020). Ethics of care. In *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc.

Eachus, P. (2001). Pets, people and robots: The role of companion animals and robopets in the promotion of health and well-being. *International Journal of Health Promotion and Education*, *39*(1), 7–13. doi: 10.1080/14635240.2001.10806140

Eccardt, J. (1740). *Lady Grace Carteret (1713–1755), Countess of Dysart with a Child (Lady Frances Tollemache?, 1738–1807), and a Black Servant, Cockatoo and Spaniel*. Oil on canvas. National Trust, Ham House, Richmond, England.

Engster, D. (2006). Ethics of Care. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, *37*(4), 521–536. https://uwethicsofcare.gws.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Engster-care-ethics-and-animal-welfare.pdf

Erasmus, G., Dussault, R. (1996). *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. The Commission.

Farmery, D. (2018). The Black Figure in 18th Century Art. *The Johnston Collection*. https://johnstoncollection.org/THE-BLACK-FIGURE-IN-18th-CENTURY-ART~68391.

Fudge, E. (2000). *Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern English Culture*. Macmillan Press Ltd.

Gainsborough, T. (1768). *Portrait of Ignatius Sancho*. Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Garlake, E. (2023). Towards an Ecocritical Art History. *Environmental History Now*. https://envhistnow.com/2023/05/04/towards-an-ecocritical-art-history/

Gregory, J. (2022). *Mercy and British Culture: 1760–1960*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. Grigson, C. (2016). *Menagerie*. Oxford University Press.

Grusin, R. (2015). *The Nonhuman Turn*. University of Minnesota Press.

Hagberg, G. (Ed.). (2008). *Art and Ethical Criticism*. Blackwell Publishing.

Haraway, D. (2008). *When Species Meet*. University of Minnesota Press.

Hicks, L.E., King, R.J.H. (2007). Confronting environmental collapse: Visual culture, art education, and environmental responsibility. *Studies in Art Education*, *48*(4), 332–335. doi: 10.1080/00393541.2007.11650111

Hoquet, T. (2013). Animal Individuals: A Plea for a Nominalistic Turn in Animal Studies?. *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History*, *52*(4), 68–90, doi: 10.1111/hith.10688.

Horsthemke, K. (2018). *Animal Rights Education*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Huggan, G., Tiffin, H. (2015). *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*. Routledge.

Kahn, R. (2003). Towards Ecopedagogy: Weaving a Broad-based Pedagogy of Liberation for Animals, Nature, and the Oppressed People of the Earth. *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, *1*, 36–53.

Kallio-Tavin, M. (2020). Art Education Beyond Anthropocentricism: The Question of Nonhuman Animals in Contemporary Art and Its Education. *Studies in Art Education*, *61*(4), 298–311. doi: 10.1080/00393541.2020.1820832

Kusserow, K. (2021). *Picture Ecology: Art and Ecocriticism in Planetary Perspective*. Princeton University Art Museum.

Leah, L. et al. (2018). *Learning Across Indigenous and Western Knowledge Systems and Intersectionality*. Guelph: University of Guelph.

Levinas, E. (1961). *Totality and Infinity*. Duquene University Press.

Martusewicz, R., Edmundson, J., Lupinacci, J. (2015). *EcoJustice education: Toward diverse, democratic, and sustainable communities* (2nd Ed.). Routledge.

Molineux, C. (2005). Hogarth's Fashionable Slaves: Moral Corruption in Eighteenth-Century London. *ELH*, *72*(2), 495–520. doi: 10.1353/elh.2005.0020

Mueller, M., Tippins, D., Stewart, A. (2017). *Animals and Science Education Ethics, Curriculum and Pedagogy*. 1st ed. Springer International Publishing.

Nida-Rümelin, M. (2017). *Realism about Identity and Individuality of Conscious Beings*. Proceedings of the 38th International Wittgenstein Symposium in Kirchberg. doi: 10.1515/9783110524055-021

Pedersen, H. (2019). The Contested Space of Animals in Education: A Response to the "Animal Turn" in Education for Sustainable Development. *Education Sciences*, *9*(3), 211. doi: 10.3390/educsci9030211

Patrizio, A. (2020). Animalities and implantations. In *The Ecological Eye: Assembling an Ecocritical Art History*. University Press.

___. (2021). Extreme Attention: The Ecological Eye in Art History. In *Picture Ecology: Art and Ecocriticism in Planetary Perspective,* K. Kusserow, (Ed.). Princeton University Art Museum.

Peel, E. (2023). *Pedagogy*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. https://www.britannica.com/science/pedagogy

Pointon, M. (1998). *Hanging the Head*. London: Paul Mellon Centre.

Quinn, E. (2021). *Reading Veganism: The Monstrous Vegan, 1818 to Present*. Oxford English Monographs.

"Reconciliation." *Cambridge Dictionary*, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/reconciliation. Accessed 17 Sept. 2023.

Russell, J. (2019). Attending to Nonhuman Animals in Pedagogical Relationships and Encounters. In *Animals in Environmental Education* (pp. 117–137). Springer International Publishing.

Saari, M. (2020). Education for Total Liberation: Critical Animal Pedagogy and Teaching Against Speciesism. *Educational Studies*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Slote, M. (2007). *The ethics of care and empathy*. Routledge.

Smith-Shank, D.L. (2007). Reflections on semiotics, visual culture, and pedagogy. *Semiotica*, *2007*(164), 223–234. doi: 10.1515/SEM.2007.027

Soper, K. (1995). *What Is Nature?*. Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Swinkin, R. (2012). *The limits of sympathy: Animals and sentimentality in eighteenth-century British literature and culture, 1759–1810*. Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1023395336). Retrieved from https://login.libproxy.uregina.ca:8443/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/limits-sympathy-animals-sentimentality-eighteenth/docview/1023395336/se-2

Tague, I. (2015). *Animal Companions, Pets and Social Change in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Tüür, K., Tønnessen, M. (2014). The Semiotics of Animal Representations. In *The Semiotics of Animal Representations* (Vol. 10). Brill.

UNESCO. (2021, April 21). *Earth Day: We must reconcile humans with nature*. Web. https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/earth-day-we-must-reconcile-humans-nature

Van Dooren, T., Kirksey, E., Münster, U. (2016). "Multispecies Studies:

Cultivating Arts of Attentiveness." *Environmental Humanities*, *8*(1), 1–23. doi: https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-3527695

Wien, H. (2018). The Power of Pets. *National Institutes of Health*. https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2018/02/power-pets

Wells, D. (2009). The effects of animals on human health and wellbeing. *Journal of social issues*, *65*(3), 523–543.

Whyte, K. et al. (2016). Ethics of caring in environmental ethics. *The Oxford handbook of environmental ethics*, 234.

Zoological Society of Ireland. (2002). *Citron-crested Cockatoo*. Web. https://www.dublinzoo.ie/animal/citron-crested-cockatoo/

Surfacing tensions with an ethics of care: A poststructural reflection on social inclusion research

Julianne D. Gerbrandt
University of New Brunswick
ORCID: 0009-0005-3749-0845

Introduction

When I heard about the theme of the 16th International UNESCO Summer School, Researching Social Inclusion, Political Discourse, Policy, and Education, I saw an opportunity to step outside the field of educational research to think about the relationship between education and society from a macro level. I joined a group of graduate students from around the world to engage in 12 days of lectures, workshops, and discussions about some of the most challenging social issues in modern times, including the pressures of migration, the ongoing war in Ukraine, the impacts of the climate crisis, and the consequences of recent innovations in artificial intelligence. As we discussed methodological approaches to doing research about these social challenges, the topic of research ethics became a recurring theme.

As an educational researcher in a Canadian context, I am accustomed to thinking about institutionalized forms of ethics (i.e., navigating the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (Government of Canada, 2023)) as well as personal forms of ethics (e.g., thinking about how I position myself in relation to potential research participants). As we discussed the social crises of 2023 and imagined how things might improve or intensify in the future, I came to identify several tensions that emerge at the intersection of institutional ethics and personal ethics. In this reflective chapter, I will share how an ethics of care informs my conceptualization of the following three tensions: confronting colonial tools of control, objecthood vs. subjecthood, and the seduction of 'bigger is better.' I begin by explaining my theoretical orientation, which I situate within the tradition of feminist poststructuralism. I will then outline the three tensions and how an ethics of care can offer an additional layer of insight.

Theoretical Framework

Feminist Poststructuralism

Poststructural thinking wades into the murky margins of the scientific method and invites us to reconsider the structures upon which scientific thought rests. In this theory, "language is understood as the most powerful constitutive force shaping what we understand as possible and what we desire within those possibilities" (Davies, 2000, p. 181). Poststructuralism "rejects notions of epistemological and methodological certainty provided by the natural sciences" (Collins, 2000, p. 41), which has resulted in a messy field that prioritizes "the process of exploration" (Gannon & Davies, 2011, p. 315) rather than strictly and unquestioningly adhering to predetermined methods.

Feminism and poststructuralism "work similarly and differently to trouble foundational ontologies, methodologies, and epistemologies" (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000, p. 2). St. Pierre and Pillow (2000) describe the relationship between these theories as something that can be worked in and worked out as "feminist and poststructural, a relationship that gestures toward fluid and multiple dislocations and alliances" (p. 3). Feminist theorists working with the ideas of poststructuralism have pursued the "political and epistemological project of asserting difference in a non-hierarchical manner, refusing to disembody and therefore to desexualize a vision of the subject" (Leach, 2000, p. 224). Feminist poststructuralists question Enlightenment assumptions about reason, historical progress, objectivity, and the scientific method (Lather, 1992; St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). They trouble binary categories of male and female, "making visible the constitutive force of linguistic practices and dismantling their apparent inevitability" (Gannon & Davies, 2011, p. 312). By making binary assumptions related to gender and sexuality visible, analysable, and revisable, feminist post-structuralism invites us to question other binaries in the social world (Gannon & Davies, 2011). It is not that poststructural thinking is good, and structural thinking is bad; instead, poststructural thinking "offers critiques and methods for examining the functions and effects of any structure or grid of regularity that we put into place" (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000, p. 6). Rather than adopting feminist poststructuralism as an easy alternative to Enlightenment ideas, it encourages us to remain suspicious of binary assumptions.

Another feature of poststructural thinking is its recognition of the constitutive relationship between the self and everything around it (Gannon & Davies, 2011). This means that every self is constituted in historically specific and socially regulated ways, ways that can be questioned or challenged, accepted or revised. Put differently, to know something is to know it in context, which includes the relationship between the thing that is known and the person who claims to know it. Gannon and Davies (2009) describe us all as both "subjects-in-process" as much as we are "subjects-in-relation," which draws attention to two key post-structural assumptions. First is the idea that everyone and everything is dynamic, unfinished, and incomplete. The words we use to describe people constitute discourses and practices. Second, we can be identified and understood only in relation to others. In a way, poststructuralism warmly invites discussion about the uncomfortable topics that exist at the periphery of what an Enlightened thinker might consider worthwhile subjects. Rather than ignoring the liminal spaces rife with contradictions, tensions, and human incoherence, we might re-imagine the aporias (Lather, 2006) as fertile ground for mining (Lather, 2007).

I am at once swept up in the ideas of feminist post-structuralism and overwhelmed by them. I have found comfort in Lather's (2007) advice to her graduate students that it is important to learn how to interpret and understand the world before attempting to deconstruct it. While I suspect there are limitations when working with any theory, I echo St. Pierre and Pillow (2000) in "possibilities for different worlds that might, perhaps, not be so cruel to so many people" (p. 1). This is where I turn to the more concrete and tangible concept of care to help refine what a poststructural lens to social research could mean.

Ethics of Care

Care ethics are nestled within feminist-postmodern approaches to moral education (Rabin, 2019) and foreground the duties of care that exist in the social world. Care is a holistic concept that unites the mind and body while resisting the Western assumption of rational mind over feeling body (Taggart, 2019). Rather than accepting the Enlightenment assumption that saw reason triumph over emotion, an ethics of care offers "an overarching moral framework for understanding how people can engage with each other in various spaces in civil society" (Langford, 2019, p. 4). The messy, deconstructed poststructural way of thinking about the world makes space for a feminist ethics of care that centers, accepts, and appreciates emotions such as sympathy, empathy, sensitivity, and responsiveness (Langford, 2019). Such a shift in mindset in the context of educational research can be considered a moral, political, and social act (Arndt & Tesar, 2019).

A key feature of an ethics of care is the importance of relational thinking. An ethics of care views people as relational beings and the human condition as a state of interdependence (Barnes, 2019). Care and ethical caring involve "diverse relationships, not all of which are face-to-face, and which frequently involve different people who occupy different positions at different times" (Barnes, 2019, p. 28). An ethics of care draws attention to the importance of reciprocal and ongoing trust in relationships. By caring with, we stand together in solidarity; we share the responsibility of care with others and reject a unidirectional assumption of who gives and who receives care (Tronto, 2013). Ethical interactions are "frequently ordinary events" (p. 61) that can be described as either care-full or care-less, a distinction that highlights the potential contribution of every interaction to a relationship (Langford & White, 2019). Ethical care processes are "dynamic, reiterative, reciprocal, and generative" (Langford & White, 2019), a flowing-in and flowing-out that occurs as we interact with others. This ebb and flow relates to Taggart's (2019) "attitude of compassion toward oneself" (p. 111), which he describes as a necessary precondition for mindful and empathetic interactions with others. Ethical interactions are thus interactions within the self as well as interactions with others.

Perhaps care should be viewed as a radical resistance to patriarchal norms, where instead of feeling the need to justify its place in educational research, perhaps we ought to be questioning the dichotomy between professionalism and care. This binary worldview mirrors the tensions between an objective, dispassionate, scientific lens and the value of a subjective, passionate, and humanistic lens. An ethics of care is attentive to context and "requires a preparedness to listen to the particularity of the circumstances, experiences,

and ideas of others" (Barnes, 2019, p. 26). In my research context, where political tensions are entangled with both a deeply rooted linguistic divide and a neoliberal assumption about public education, centering care as a research priority feels transgressive but necessary.

Feminist researchers have confronted challenges with navigating an ethics of care and power. Langford and White (2019) caution against making assumptions about who needs care, as these assumptions are "prone to misinterpretation and infused with power relations" (Langford & White, 2019, p. 65). The focus on social relationships does not negate power imbalances between care-giver and care-receiver, who may find themselves shifting between these positions in any interaction. Invoking the concept of care as a moral and ethical framework in social inclusion research requires unpicking "the ways in which care relations may be ones of subjugation, ambivalence, concern, and solidarity" (Rosen, 2019, p. 92).

Ethical Tensions

As summer school participants, we came from a variety of academic disciplines and contexts. On the surface, our specific areas of research appeared to have little in common. Yet somehow, over the course of 12 intensive days filled with formal and informal learning opportunities, we found ourselves discussing common ethical tensions that manifested both in our work and in our understanding of social inclusion. I will now describe three such tensions and how they might be understood in relation to poststructural ethics of care.

Tension 1: Confronting a Colonial Tool of Control

Early career researchers in the social sciences are tasked with navigating complicated theories, methodological approaches, data collection processes, and institutional expectations. This navigation is rife with contradictions as we simultaneously distill the work of others, relate it to our own work, and wonder whether our understandings are 'getting it right.' A tension that crept into our discussions was the complexity of obtaining ethical approval and how it related to colonialism.

One such colonial tool we discussed was the consent form required by Research Ethics Boards (REBs) for research involving human participants. At first glance, the REB process is a necessary protective measure that outlines a minimum duty of care from both the researcher and their sponsoring institution towards participants. Tilley (2016) described the purpose of REB as the consideration of "the ethical implications" (p. 108) of the proposed research but warns that meeting the minimum standard may not be enough for a researcher interested in engaging in respectful, human-centered research. This warning makes sense when we pause to question whose interests are protected by the REB. Do they serve to protect participants, communities, researchers, or institutions? In Canada, universities are "ideologically constructed as public institutions" (Lewis, 2008, p. 692), which means that institutional interests could be conflated with public interests. This is problematic when public interests are dictated by the values and ideologies of those who hold power. While REBs may serve as a layer of protection for research participants, we wondered about the procedure for when the participants themselves

disagreed with what the REB considered ethical. For instance, the language of consent forms is full of sterile, academic vocabulary that can be indecipherable to people outside of academia. This is an example of ethics creep, "a dual process whereby the regulatory structure of the ethics bureaucracy is expanding outward, colonizing new groups, practices, and institutions," (Haggerty, 2004).

The more I reflected on this discussion point, the more I wondered about the distance between institutional ethics and my understanding of care ethics. While I may be committed to conceptualizing my research as relational, as a doctoral student, I am also an appendage to a problematic public institution. There is a duty of care that exists between the researcher and the research-ee, something that is unavoidably unidirectional in some instances. An ethics of care does not replace the institutionalized mechanisms that control how research with human participants proceeds; instead, it offers theoretical tools that create space for confronting the assumptions that underlie them. In this space, "between an impossible certainty and an interminable deconstruction, a science of both reverence and mistrust, the science possible after our disappointment in science" (Lather, 2007, p. x), we can identify, question, and confront colonial tools of control.

Tension 2: Objecthood and Subjecthood

Not everyone who participated in the summer school is currently doing research that involves human participants, yet we found ourselves repeatedly cycling back to a tension that exists between the object and subject of a given study. As researchers interested in topics related to social inclusion, we make invisible decisions about what warrants study and how we view ourselves in relation to it. Smith (2005) described this as "a covert ideological framework" (p. 176) that reflects the unequal power dynamic between researchers and participants. We each of us have a gaze, and where we focus this gaze can be the result of underlying assumptions about social relations, research in the social sciences, and the interplay between social and professional responsibilities.

It is important that research participants feel they can trust the researcher; otherwise, they may not be willing to participate in the study at hand. But from the perspective of the researcher, what is the value of obtaining instrumental trust (i.e., getting access to participants) compared to establishing what might be described as ethical trust? I find myself wondering why some researchers are reluctant to describe their interactions with participants as relationships. Though there is a strong tradition in empirical research that uses dehumanizing vocabulary (i.e., "research participants", "sub-cases", …), I work with people. People have complex needs, are uniquely motivated, and exist beyond the limits of a bounded social space. Like Brooks (2017), I wonder whether researchers sometimes view others as objects, things that we evaluate in terms of whether we have power over them. As a researcher and a feminist, I am committed to exploring possibilities of 'power with' as I reject "the colonial hope of speaking for" (Lather, 2007, p. 38).

Research can be extractive, especially when we slip into an instrumental view of participants. An ethics of care means that I check in with participants and honour the relationship between us. Gannon and Davies (2011) describe this as a particular concern of post-structural ethics and respect:

> Post-structural ethics in contrast struggles toward a different kind of respect for the other, one which does not divide researcher from researched, but comprehends their mutual embeddedness in discourse and relations of power. The research cannot thus be totally planned in advance but maintains its openness to the other, and to the ethical demands that arise in the encounter with the other, where the researcher will become someone-she-was-not-already (p. 315).

I am interested doing the type of research that is relational and dynamic, the type of research that expects change to occur within everyone involved. I want to set myself up to become someone I was not already. By foregrounding the relationship between research-er and research-ee, perhaps social inclusion research can blur the lines between the object and the subject of study.

Tension 3: The Seduction of 'Bigger is Better'

One of the highlights of my experience at the summer school was the opportunity to use data analysis tools to identify their affordances and limitations. I was particularly intrigued by Sketch Engine (Lexical Computing, 2016), a tool used in the field of corpus linguistics. Though none of us identified as being engaged in quantitative methods of data analysis, we accepted the invitation to consider the implications of incorporating a quantitative flavour to enhance our more qualitative leanings. And after a two-day intensive workshop using Sketch Engine, we had a rather gloomy discussion about what it might offer us as researchers interested in social inclusion.

Though many of the summer school participants could be described as early career researchers, we were under no illusions about the types of research that are valued by governments, funding agencies, and the general public. There exists a pervasive assumption that bigger is better, whether we are describing the number of participants, the quantity of data analysed, or the number of sub-cases within a case study. This is a tension that I confront every day, and I heard similar sentiments from my summer school colleagues. We wondered whether the adoption of a mixed methods approach would increase the potential impact of our work, knowing that statistical analysis could offer the veneer of credibility to those outside of the field of research.

When I think about the seduction of 'bigger is better' through a poststructural ethics of care, I find myself at an impasse. My understanding of care ethics exists on a micro level, and it encompasses the relations that occur between people. I believe that human existence is messy, complicated, and difficult to distill into digestible representations for others to understand. I fear the implications of using tools that actively hide individual complexities in pursuit of generalizable patterns. To do research involving people is to commit "the violence of interpretation" (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 273), and I wonder how to withstand external forces that prefer an illusion of objectivity that is connected to 'bigger is better' thinking. But this is a necessary and unavoidable complexity that I must confront, and I am comforted by the belief it is better to grapple with this tension than to be wilfully blinded to it. Still, I wonder how this perspective will change as I advance in my career.

Summary and Conclusion

The 16th International UNESCO Summer School created the conditions for early career researchers from different contexts to explore topics, methods, and theories related to social inclusion. Over the course of 12 days, we drew from our respective fields to discuss global challenges related to hateful discourses, children's rights, education policy, and migration. We surfaced tensions that resisted our attempts to resolve them, including the use of colonial tools of control, the objecthood/subjecthood divide, and the seduction of 'bigger is better.'

I see the world through the lens of feminist poststructuralism, and I believe in the value of thinking through the aforementioned tensions with an ethics of care. That said, I am under no illusions about institutional demands or the influence of public perception. I turn to care ethics as a soothing balm, an additional layer of humanity that needs to be reapplied as external demands scrape pieces away. Whether we are discussing the complexities of socially constructed identities, the urgent need for intercultural communication, or the perceived lack of agency as early career researchers, we are also questioning hegemonic assumptions about the role of social sciences. Research involving human participants is full of tensions, and it behoves us to think through them with care.

References

Arndt, S., Tesar, M. (2019). An ethics of care in culturally diverse early childhood settings: Toward an ethics of unknowing. In R. Langford (Ed.), *Theorizing feminist ethics of care in early childhood practice: Possibilities and dangers* (pp. 37–58). Bloomsbury Academic. doi: 10.5040/9781350067509

Barnes, M. (2019). Contesting and transforming care: An introduction to a critical ethics of care. In R. Langford (Ed.), *Theorizing feminist ethics of care in early childhood practice: Possibilities and dangers* (pp. 17–36). Bloomsbury Academic. doi: 10.5040/9781350067509

Brooks, D.N. (2017). (Re)conceptualizing Love: Moving Towards a Critical Theory of Love in Education for Social Justice. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis*, *6*(3), Article 3. https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/jctp/article/id/537/

Collins, P.H. (2000). What's going on? Black feminist thought and the politics of postmodernism. In E.A. St. Pierre, W.S. Pillow (Eds.), *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education* (pp. 41–73). Psychology Press.

Davies, B. (2000). Eclipsing the constitutive power of discourse: The writing of Janette Turner Hospital. In E.A. St. Pierre, W. S. Pillow (Eds.), *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education* (pp. 179–198). Psychology Press.

Gannon, S., Davies, B. (2011). Feminism/Post-structuralism. In B. Somekh, C. Lewin (Eds.), *Theory and methods in social research* (2nd ed., pp. 318–325). Sage.

Government of Canada, I. A. P. on R. E. (2023). Introducing the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 (2022): The Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics (PRE). https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2022_introducing-presentation.html

Haggerty, K.D. (2004). Ethics Creep: Governing Social Science Research in the Name of Ethics. *Qualitative Sociology*, *27*(4), 391–414. doi: 10.1023/B:QUAS.0000049239.15922.a3

Langford, R. (Ed.). (2019). *Theorizing feminist ethics of care in early childhood practice: Possibilities and dangers*. Bloomsbury Academic. doi: 10.5040/9781350067509

Langford, R., White, J. (2019). Conceptualizing care as being and doing in ethical interactions and sustained care relationships in the early childhood institution. In R. Langford (Ed.), *Theorizing feminist ethics of care in early childhood practice: Possibilities and dangers* (pp. 59–77). Bloomsbury Academic. doi: 10.5040/9781350067509

Lather, P. (1992). Critical frames in educational research: Feminist and post-structural perspectives. *Theory Into Practice*, *31*(2), 87–99. doi: 10.1080/00405849209543529

Lather, P. (2006). Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: Teaching research in education as a wild profusion. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *19*(1), 35–57. doi: 10.1080/09518390500450144

Lather, P. (2007). *Getting lost: Feminist efforts toward a double(d) science*. State University of New York Press.

Leach, M. (2000). Feminist figurations: Gossip as a counterdiscourse. In E.A. St. Pierre, W.S. Pillow (Eds.), *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education* (pp. 223–236). Psychology Press.

Lewis, M. (2008). New Strategies of Control: Academic Freedom and Research Ethics Boards. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *14*(5), 684–699. doi: 10.1177/1077800408314347

Lexical Computing. (2016, April 5). What is Sketch Engine? https://www.sketchengine.eu/

Rabin, C. (2019). "I already know I care!": Illuminating the complexities of care practices in early childhood and teacher education. In R. Langford (Ed.), *Theorizing feminist ethics of care in early childhood practice: Possibilities and dangers* (pp. 125–144). Bloomsbury Academic. doi: 10.5040/9781350067509

Rosen, R. (2019). Care as ethic, care as labor. In R. Langford (Ed.), *Theorizing feminist ethics of care in early childhood practice: Possibilities and dangers* (pp. 79–96). Bloomsbury Academic. doi: 10.5040/9781350067509

Smith, L.T. (2005). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. Zed Books. https://www.bloomsbury.com/ca/decolonizing-methodologies-9781786998125/

St. Pierre, E.A. (2000). Nomadic inquiry in the smooth spaces of the field: A preface. In E.A. St. Pierre, W.S. Pillow (Eds.), *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education* (pp. 258–283). Psychology Press.

St. Pierre, E.A., Pillow, W.S. (2000). *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education*. Psychology Press.

Taggart, G. (2019). Cultivating ethical dispositions in early childhood practice for an ethic of care: A contemplative approach. In R. Langford (Ed.), *Theorizing feminist ethics of care in early childhood practice: Possibilities and dangers* (pp. 97–123). Bloomsbury Academic. doi: 10.5040/9781350067509

Tilley, S. (2016). *Doing respectful research: Power, privilege and passion*. Fernwood Publishing.

Tronto, J. (2013, March 28). *Democratic caring and global responsibilities for care*. Hollywood, CA: Western Political Science Association. https://www.wpsanet.org/papers/docs/Tronto%20WPSA%20paper%202013.pdf

The educational process of juveniles in correctional institutions in Poland: Reflections about the educational realities and the well-being of students

Jessica Kristin Nowak
University of Białystok
ORCID: 0000-0001-9479-1381

Introduction

This chapter delves into the intricate landscape of the educational situation confronting juvenile delinquents within correctional institutions in Poland. The overarching aim of this chapter is to provide an insight into the realities faced by these students and to address their unique educational needs within the context of social rehabilitation.

The initial section of this exploration offers a succinct characterization of the legal framework governing the educational landscape within correctional institutions in Poland. It emphasizes the enduring responsibility of education to furnish all participants in the process with the essential conditions for holistic development – encompassing the physical, mental, and worldview dimensions (Markowska-Manista). Grounded in scholarly perspectives, such as Widelak (2013) and Jęczen (2016), the chapter underscores that education is not only an avenue for knowledge acquisition but also a transformative opportunity to rectify and refine the maturation processes in the lives of these individuals.

Crucially, the resocialization function within schools dedicated to socially maladjusted individuals emerges. As posited by Widelak (2013), this function is deemed the most significant, emphasizing the pivotal role of education in guiding juveniles towards positive societal reintegration.

This chapter draws its inspiration from a study carried out as a component of another project. The study involved qualitative research conducted in the educational settings of the Correctional Facility in Białystok. The participatory research I conducted, allowed me to delve into the lived experiences of both students and teachers. Employing participant observation and in-depth interviews, the research captured the intricate dynamics at play. Various tools, including a field diary, observation sheet, and interview instructions, complemented the research process. Ethical considerations were paramount, with

explicit consent obtained from each participant, ensuring transparency in the utilization of voice recorders and subsequent data analysis through transcription and codification techniques. Through this comprehensive approach, the chapter seeks to contribute valuable insights into the nuanced educational landscape within correctional institutions and the imperative role education plays in the resocialization journey of juveniles diagnosed with addiction.

To conclude this section, I offer a brief self-reflection on my positionality in relation to the institution and research participants. This project was my first opportunity to have personal contact with juveniles. As a first-year PhD student in the Department of Creative Social Rehabilitation with a background in criminology, I saw it as a valuable opportunity to learn practically about the environment in the area of my scientific interests. However, it quickly turned out that, in my eyes, these people were not only scientific research subjects but less privileged peers. Minors, who were discussed so much in my society, turned out to be ordinary teenagers. Moreover, the quickly emerging relationship between us made me realise that, in other circumstances, it could have been my friends.

What caught my attention was their incredible desire for selfless contact with other people, which made me realise how much they are harmed by the system. This was also confirmed by the way they perceived themselves and the judicial vocabulary they used to describe themselves.

Numerous conversations allowed me to learn different life stories and understand their approach to the world, which led to a connection at a personal level. All this contributed to the desire to find ways to conduct further conversations with these boys, which was a long-awaited springboard for them. This will led me to co-run a non-profit organisation that allows me to work with minors and have more informal relationships. Even though we, as a charity, conduct various activities, it is the relationships we create that are the most valuable to me. Participation in their lives sensitised me to numerous issues I will undoubtedly consider in my further research as well as in life.

The placement in the Correctional Institution: a brief legal characterisation

The subject of juveniles placed in the Polish judicial system is a vast and complex topic. The main law regulating (Ustawa z dnia 26 października 1982 r. o postępowaniu w sprawach nieletnich, Dz.U. 2018.969) these issues in Poland was replaced in 2022 by a new act (Ustawa z dnia 9 czerwca 2022 r. o wspieraniu i resocjalizacji nieletnich, Dz.U. 2022, poz. 1700), which had a significant impact on the juvenile justice system and on the structure of social rehabilitation facilities. Although these regulations and the system are essential issues, it is impossible to present them all in this work due to their complexity. In this text, I will focus on one element of the system: the correctional institution and the process of placement in it. The purpose of this section of the chapter is to present the most essential information concerning this process in order to provide the basic information about the institution referred to in the text.

The legal act that regulates proceedings in the case of minors in Polish law does not provide a legal definition of a Correctional Institution (polish: zakład poprawczy).

However, for the purpose of this chapter, I define it as a closed institution that cannot be left voluntarily or joined freely. The age of juveniles that can be placed in the facility is from 13 to 21 years old. In exceptional cases, the court may extend the stay, but no longer than until the age of 24. Persons to whom this option was applied are transferred to a separate correctional facility.

Although the legislator has not defined the concept of a correctional institution, the term "placement in a correctional institution" is used. Such activity is referred to as a correctional measure (polish: środek poprawczy), and it is the only measure of this kind that can be found in the legal act. Other measures mentioned are educational measures and therapeutic measures, and their forms are set out numerically in the act. The family court can impose all of them as the only body with such authority.

The correctional measure is the most severe and should be used only when other lower-level measures have not helped, i.e. educational and therapeutic measures. It is worth mentioning that placement in the Correctional Institution, like all other available measures, is understood in Polish law as a form of assistance to young people and not a form of punishment.

Education in Correctional Institutions: the educational realities

Every juvenile correctional facility in Poland enables minors to continue their education. This results from the constitutional right of every citizen of the Republic of Poland to education and the right to upbringing and care. Moreover, according to Polish law, every young person is obliged to attend school, and only when they reach the age of majority do they have the possibility to resign and leave the education system. This also applies to minors placed in social rehabilitation institutions. For this reason, schools are placed on the premises of Correctional Institutions and other rehabilitation facilities, which allows for the actual exercise of this right and duty.

Often, these are primary schools, as well as second-level vocational schools (Nowak, Markowska & Więcławski, 2022). This selection of schools is very beneficial for minors. Vocational classes offered in correctional facilities are valuable because, in addition to education, they enable the acquisition of a specific profession. The practical vocational training is intended to enable the pupils to acquire new skills. Obtaining such qualifications can be very helpful in finding a job after leaving the institution, which is crucial in the overall process of social readaptation (Noszczyk-Bernasiewicz & Bernasiewicz, 2012).

Primary schools are no less significant. It should be noted that young people in rehabilitation institutions do have significant learning gaps, and each pupil is at a different educational level. In some situations, adolescents and adults must still complete primary school education. Attending school in rehabilitation facilities is often a unique opportunity to improve their school situation and often only a chance to complete their education.

Among the reasons can be distinguished various factors, including the fact that being placed in a closed institution makes it less likely and possible to miss school. In addition, being placed in a closed institution and having a limited ability to dispose of one's time

affects the perspective on education. Some people want to make use of this time, others go to school out of boredom. Some see it as meaningful and a chance for a better future.

The limited number of people in the class is also helpful. In the establishment where the research was carried out, this number varied between 2 and 6 pupils. This modest number of pupils is an advantage for both pupils and teachers, as it allows them to concentrate on the individuals and to devote more time and attention. It also helps teachers keep a more watchful eye on pupils in terms of behaviour, making it easier to teach.

Schools located at social rehabilitation facilities are regulated by the same legal act as public schools. This means that those schools are, like public schools, a structural part of Poland's education system. Moreover, students in those facilities follow the same core curriculum as students in public schooling. It is assumed, therefore, that the manner and quality of the teaching is to be the same in both cases.

There is a supplementary act detailing the organisation of the school year in schools in correctional institutions and juvenile shelters, which considers the specificity of educational and rehabilitation work in these institutions. However, the regulations only concern differences in how classes are organised, including more school days per week and no holidays. The systemic difference in the work organisation between the schools in question and other educational establishments results from the nature of the place. Nevertheless, they do not cover issues related to the quality of education, adjusting methods, or recognising needs in any other way.

The educational reality: characteristics of the examined facility

Within the rehabilitation facility, two educational institutions cater to distinct aspects of skill development. Firstly, there is the Primary School No. 41, a nurturing ground for young individuals where they undergo training with a focus on carpentry skills. This school equips explicitly minors with the necessary knowledge and hands-on experience essential for a future in carpentry.

Secondly, the Industrial School No. 13 plays a pivotal role in vocational education within the facility. Specializing in carpentry, building, and finishing work fitting, this institution provides comprehensive training to students, preparing them for careers in these specific fields. The emphasis here is practical skills that can be applied in real-world scenarios.

The school not only offers general education but also extends its support to students facing specific challenges in their academic journey. This tailored assistance is designed for individuals experiencing difficulties such as low grades, a negative attitude in class, or health issues. Through individualized teaching methods, the school strives to address and overcome these obstacles, fostering a conducive learning environment for every student.

When discussing the school, it is essential to mention Group A, which includes minors not attending school. Group A is a pioneering concept developed at the Rehabilitation facility in Bialystok. A specific legal loophole inspired the idea, as juveniles were obliged to attend school even after the age of 18, which is against Polish law. As a result, a separate group was created, which can be attended by graduates and adults who do

not desire education. Not only are the individual decisions of the students taken into account, but their fundamental rights are also ensured.

The students are in group A during the time parallel to school hours and can participate in organised classes or perform their own activities. They can also use the available rooms, such as the library and gym, or contact the diagnostic team for biofeedback and relaxation classes.

At the same time, care is taken to ensure the group does not appear too attractive. For this reason, the group's alumni do not have the opportunity to participate, for example, in school events. This attitude stems from the concerns of the staff, who are aware that school is perceived negatively among these young people. The concern relates to the fact that over-attractiveness of the group discussed could lead to a reduction in motivation to attend school.

Moreover, the Correctional Institution, where this educational initiative is implemented, is tailored for boys and juveniles diagnosed with addiction. Addiction introduces an extra layer of influence on the educational process and school reality.

Research shows that the attitude to classes also results from the current emotional disposition of the student, which depends on various factors. I want to focus on the impact of addiction in the course of lessons, particularly addiction to psychoactive substances. The prevalent form of addiction observed among minors within this facility is substance abuse, encompassing nearly every student. This highlights that drug usage constitutes a significant issue among young individuals exhibiting signs of social maladjustment. While some may have additional dependencies, the prevalence of this particular addiction category can be viewed as a specific norm within this context.

Teachers have astutely observed discernible emotional lability among students, a phenomenon intricately linked to the psychophysical facets of addiction. This heightened emotional sensitivity manifests notably in the form of frequent nervousness, a palpable manifestation of the compelling need within these students to partake in drug consumption. The psychological and physiological grip of addiction creates a constant undercurrent of anxiety, contributing to a volatile emotional state that significantly impacts the student's overall well-being and ability to engage effectively in the educational environment.

Moreover, a characteristic manifestation is the pervasive distraction and compromised concentration experienced by students, stemming from various factors related to their struggle with addiction. This includes immersive daydreaming about drugs and their consumption, where their thoughts drift away from the academic lesson. Additionally, the mental preoccupation with finding ways to access drugs becomes a persistent hurdle, diverting their focus away from the educational tasks.

Furthermore, the classroom environment is often disrupted as students openly share comments related to their drug cravings. This not only interrupts the flow of the lesson but also serves as a poignant reminder to their peers about the challenges they grapple with. This collective impact on attention and focus underscores the complex interplay between addiction and the educational process, necessitating a nuanced approach to address both the immediate disruptions and the underlying issues at play.

The pervasive impact of addiction extends beyond emotional and social dimensions to profoundly affect cognitive functions, notably memory. The intricate interplay

between substance dependency and cognitive processes creates a formidable barrier to effective learning. Observable consequences include a noticeable difficulty among pupils in recalling and retaining the academic content they have been exposed to.

The impairment in memory functions is a critical facet of how addiction disrupts the learning process. Students grappling with addiction often find themselves challenged in retrieving information, hindering their ability to build upon previously acquired knowledge. This memory deficit not only compromises academic performance but also creates a cycle of frustration and impedes the development of a solid educational foundation.

Attending class poses its own set of challenges for these individuals. Having spent a significant portion of their lives evading educational pursuits, active participation in lessons becomes a daunting task. The mere act of sitting through a 45-minute session becomes a considerable struggle. Hyperactivity is a common trait among them, exacerbated by their past or ongoing substance use, even if not within the current educational environment. Despite the absence of drug use in the present setting, they grapple with lingering effects and mental and emotional challenges. Adding to the complexity, these individuals find themselves compelled to engage in academic studies, creating a unique confluence of circumstances within this specific group.

Relations between juveniles and the community: Reflections about the discourse

In this section, I outline some of the discourses that exist around the relationship between juveniles and the community. The narrative on juveniles and their education is positioned in a neat discourse. There is a preponderance of scholarly literature that frame juveniles as rebellious and as resisting education, while others frame them as vulnerable minorities whose needs are being neglected. This reflects the state of affairs of the non-academic reality where those identified as socially maladjusted are marginalised, overlooked and stigmatised.

In some discourses, these young people are viewed as a threat to the community. It is due to juveniles being framed by the society as criminals. Their demonisation contributes to a loss of subjectivity, as the socially unacceptable act judges a person they commit rather than being seen as human.

A second and related discourse is that communities in Poland stigmatize juveniles. These people are perceived through the prism of stereotypes and a multitude of negative traits. The stigmatization process begins already in the classroom, and the educational experience of minors provides some confirmation of it. It is not uncommon for these individuals to have no positive memories of school. Unlike their peers, they do not associate this time with friendships, excitement or other positive memories. School, in their minds, is only associated with learning.

On the other hand, learning was often a difficulty they could not cope with. The school system in Poland can be described as a form of punishment and reward. When it comes to people not coping in school, it is quickly limited to punishment only. A lack of support among adults, both in the family and school system, can lead to many negative consequences, with a notable effect being leaving school or even dropping out.

The conducted research showed me that teachers who use strengthening methods for students support their learning process. One of the basics is showing these young people they do have potential. For this reason, practical classes were particularly empowering and liked by many. It allowed students to show in a tangible way that they have skills, e.g. by building something during carpentry classes. Another valuable thing about these activities was the volunteering element that was sometimes included. It made them feel important and needed. The last thing I want to emphasize about vocational classes is the relationship between the teacher and the student. This teacher's respect for his pupils, his human approach full of understanding, as well as his demands, led to a unique bond. It did not resemble an ordinary relationship but one based on mentoring. A confirmation of it is the way the pupils addressed the teacher as "Master", while the teacher, in turn, addressed them in a shrill way as "teddy bears".

Some typical behaviour seen among these young people at school, but also outside of it, is to reciprocate the goodness and respect they feel they receive. It was noticeable in the relationship with the master and teachers, but also in their relationships with people from the open society. One thing I can say about the young people I have worked with is that these are people for whom values and their internal code are extremely important -which ironically is the opposite of what the stereotype of a juvenile delinquent predicts.

Experience gained from practice: reflections about the juveniles perspectives

The research was an inspiration to co-start a charity that aims to help socially excluded people. That allows me to work with juvenile offenders and have ongoing connections with young people placed in Correctional Institutions. Having the opportunity to build a relationship based not on the official principles of the researcher but as a trustworthy older friend allows a better understanding of one another. The privilege of this kinship enables me to get to know these young people's backgrounds, life stories and experiences.

Relating this knowledge to the subject under discussion, I would like to share the importance of learning about the perspective of minors regarding their lifestyle, which translates into their attitude towards learning or work.

Many of these young people see illegal acts as a usual way of earning money. It is not uncommon for them to come from families where this is how the family was supported. Living in dysfunctional families has also contributed to adapting to harsh conditions and finding ways to survive. Illegal activity was one of these ways. Among the young people I work with, drug dealing is a very popular way to earn money. From their perspective, it is an easy and quick way to make money. Some are not afraid of the consequences, as they see prison as their future. That is due to a pattern set by other family members. Since parents and siblings are in penal institutions, it seems natural for them to end up in the same place.

This perspective of these young people is also strengthened by their internalization of the labels of "deviants" imposed on them by society. Adopting such a perspective by young people contributes to numerous adverse effects that make it challenging to improve their situation. One of these factors is lower self-esteem. The lack of confidence in

themselves and their abilities even leads to situations where these people see no point in making efforts because they are sure about their failure. Another critical factor is various types of self-sabotage behaviours.

Conclusion

The educational realities in school in Coreccrectional Institutions differ from public schools in an open environment. Many variables condition this process, an example of which is the attitude in classes – it results from the current emotional disposition of students, which depends on various factors. Some of them are their law or health problems. Moreover, previous drug use, that is frequent among juveniles, also affects the educational process, by hindering the cognitive functions, including memory. All these factors make learning even more difficult, which was already problematic for students staying in social rehabilitation facilities.

Another critical issue is the low self-esteem of juveniles which impacts their action in every area of their life, including schooling. Frequently, a notable disinclination to exert effort is observed among these individuals, stemming from a pervasive lack of self-belief.

The behaviour of minors and their needs, as well as capabilities differ meaningly from their peers. Therefore, it appears, that it is impossible to conduct lessons in the same way as in public schools in an open environment.

For this reason, there is a compelling need to customize lessons and methodologies to accommodate these students' unique requirements and overall well-being. That entails adjusting the strategies employed for methods of passing the subject. Additionally, it is essential to tailor activities to align with their mental states. This adaptation extends to structuring lessons within a specific class, incorporating an empathetic approach that involves discussing the individual student's situation or challenges. Integrating conversations about the student's unique circumstances into the course of lessons creates a more personalized and responsive learning atmosphere, fostering enhanced comprehension and engagement.

References

Noszczyk-Bernasiewicz, M., Bernasiewicz, M. (2012). Sytuacja szkolna nieletnich w zakładach poprawczych i schroniskach dla nieletnich analiza jakościowa [The educational situation of minors in correctional facilities and shelters for minors – qualitative analysis]. *Chowanna*, t. 1, 121–131.

Nowak, J., Markowska, N., Więcławski, P. (2022). Edukacja w Zakładzie Poprawczym w Białymstoku [Education at the Juvenile Correctional Facility in Białystok]. In K. Sawicki, U. Markowska-Manista (Eds.), *Zakład Poprawczy w Białymstoku w systemie resocjalizacji z perspektywy zespołowych badań terenowych*.

Jęczeń, J. (2016). Resocjalizacja poprzez edukację [Social resocialization through education]. *Roczniki Teologiczne*, *63*(1), 5–19.

Urban, B., Stanik, J.M. (2008). *Resocjalizacja. Teoria i praktyka pedagogiczna [Social rehabilitation. Pedagogical theory and practice]*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Widelak, D. (2013). Pomiędzy edukacja a resocjalizacją: ontologiczny drogowskaz demarginalizacji [Between education and resocialization: ontological signpost of demarginalization]. *Cieszyński Almanach Pedagogiczny*, (2), 150–159.

Markowska-Manista, U. (n.d.). Featured Content. Bloomsbury Education and Childhood Studies. Retrieved from https://www.becs-bloomsbury.com/featured-content?fbclid=IwAR2rE-BRRxKstz9GVXUDd82cAmLIGmdvaIloewIjztext2tjI2MvPmk0UsZk

Universal voices on children's education: Connecting ideas of Rabindranath Tagore and Janusz Korczak

Swati Chawla
University of Applied Sciences Potsdam
ORCID: 0009-0002-4967-1916

Introduction

This chapter investigates the two pioneers' ideas and philosophy on children and their education, pedagogy – Rabindranath Tagore from India and Janusz Korczak from Europe. Both of them were innovators in their respective fields, and their concepts till date forms the basis of an effective educational system.

Tagore was a poet, had a kind, open heart and was interested in the issues not just of his own country but also of the entire globe. In 1901, Tagore founded 'Santiniketan' (Abode of Peace) as an Indian West Bengali school. Whereas Korczak was a doctor by profession worked at children's hospital. Last but not least, he was the director of the Orphans' Home and the co-founder of Our Home. He was also a volunteer in the community, a newspaper columnist, a tutor, and the director of the Orphans' Home (c.f. Odrowąż-Coates, 2020).

This chapter begins by talking about each person's unique thought process and their contributions to the area of education, how the two were inspired by one another without ever even physically meeting, which is a pretty fascinating concept. Further, this chapter compares the pioneers' perspectives on different educational parameters. In the end, the chapter discusses how their ideas to date can help in giving an outlook about the true meaning of education, in dealing with the challenges of today's modern quality education system, and models.

About Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) was a great philosopher, educator, novelist, poet and painter from India. He was born in Calcutta (now Kolkata), India, in a wealthy family with a long cultural and literary tradition. He started writing at a young age.

He was awarded the rare honour of the Nobel Prize for Literature. His works translated into different languages by writers such as André Gide in French and Juan Ramon Jimenez in Spanish. Tagore was undoubtedly known to Western intellectuals, reason

behind he himself translated his exquisite thoughts in English just as other writers rendered it in other diverse tongues. (UNESCO, 1961)

Tagore established 'Santiniketan' (Abode of Peace) as a school in 1901 situated in the West Bengal of India. In its short life of sixty years Santiniketan has given a Chief Justice of India, Chief Ministers and Minister of States and Judges of the High Courts, great educationists, scientists, artists and philosophers to India. In 1921, his school became 'Viswa Bharti University.' (UNESCO, 1961, p. 14)

Tagore was fond of theatre and drama. Some of his famous theatre: the Kings of the Dark Chambers, The Post Office, The Immovable, The Waterfall and the Red Orleander.

Tagore's key ideas about education

Tagore's own experiences taught him that education is disconnected from one's own culture and social life and therefore it became a burden for the child. He did not believe in any narrow or rigid educational formulae. His conception of education was in broad human terms. His ideas always focused on all-round development of personality and achieving balance.

In his system, art had its place along with mathematics and science. He also focused on moral education. The pursuit of truth, beauty and goodness was end of human life and the purpose of education was to train men and women to seek, recognize and achieve them. He believed that the education is the foundation of society; that the teachers of today are the arbiters of the destiny of society of tomorrow and the day after. How men are trained, what ideals they imbibe: what type of character they develop, what knowledge is imparted to them: what the disciplines through which they go; what is how their mind is formed – these are the things which ultimately shape the destinies of man. Tagore knew that life has plenty of challenges and conflict in life, but he held that there is large harmony in which the smaller challenges and conflicts finds its solutions. Tagore taught that the intellect should be developed along with the emotions. Tagore did not believe in blind conformity. He always protested against the institutions which has become immobile, their customs have become outmoded, and beliefs that have become dead. Schools which did not allow the free development of the mind were for him prison houses and not centres of light. The child learns so easily because they have a natural gift, but adults, because they are tyrants, ignore natural gifts, and say that children must learn through the same process that they learned by. This is one of man's most cruel and wasteful mistakes. We as humans rob the child of his earth to teach him geography, of language to teach him grammar. His hunger is for the Epic, but he is supplied with chronicles of facts and dates. (UNESCO, 1961, pp. 13–15).

About Janusz Korczak

Janusz Korczak's (1878–1942) real name was Henryk Goldszmit. The life and work of Henryk Goldszmit – better known under the pen name of Janusz Korczak – was devoted to the life, fate, and rights of children. Korczak had a rich personal history. He was graduate of the Faculty of Medicine at the Imperial Warsaw University. He worked in children's shelters

in the Ukraine, he was member of the "Sea Star" Masonic Lodge and a sympathizer of the Polish Theosophical Society. Also, he gave a radio broadcast during the siege of Warsaw in September 1939 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, 2012).

He was renown a social activist who promoted the idea of children's self-governance in his one-of-a-kind orphanages; an intellectual who fought for children's rights in all of his spheres of activity: he presented his educational concepts in a total of 24 books and a writer who understood the specifics of communicating with children: his children's novels – some of which have been translated into 20 languages – demonstrate his linguistic sensitivity and his ability to adapt a literary genre to a particular content and readership; an effective promoter of ideas who made use of contemporary new media.

His best-known novel, King Matt the First, shows to what extent children's sensitivity, spontaneity, and ingeniousness can change the world – but also how effectively the adult world fights such change. The story of a little boy who, as the ruler – reformer of the world, attempts to make children and adults equal in their rights is to a great extent a literary portrayal of Korczak himself. It has been translated into more than twenty languages.

He created a unique children's newspaper and his own radio program; a man consistent in thought and action: he was devoted to children till the very end. Korczak's innovative methods also involved the use of new media in order to make his ideas popular and to engage children in the life of society.

Korczak's key ideas about education

Korczak as a resilient person (Liebel, Markowska-Manista, 2018), as an activist, as a teacher, pedagogue, doctor, writer (Olczak-Ronikier, 2002) but first of all as a human being lived in his own times.

Korczak highlighted the need for a dialogue with the child and for treating children as equals. Also, he stressed the importance of wellbeing. By profession, Korczak was a doctor, a paediatrician. Korczak wrote about illnesses and other imperfections of human organisms he encountered. He wrote about typical, "civilizational" diseases resulting from prevalent poor living standards (Sawicki, 2011) shortage of medicaments and lack of access to medicaments or medical treatment particularly among the poor.

Disabilities had an important place in Korczak's practice and writing – in the nomenclature of this period. Korczak believed "that a separate educational system (special schools) has to be established for children with developmental dysfunctions (in current terminology – special care children), he suggested that educating them together with "fully abled" children would not yield good results. These beliefs were reflected in the set of regulations of Orphans' Home and Our Home, which explicitly stated that children with disabilities could not live in these institutions" (Frączek, 2013, p. 312). Korczak was part of an important group of activists – consisting in particular of pedagogues, physicians, and lawyers – who saw an urgent need for social change. As a social activist, writer, columnist, who worked as a doctor in a Jewish children's and military hospitals, Korczak was acutely sensitive to the maltreatment of children – especially those orphaned and impoverished, as well as the ones suffering as a result of problematic family relations. Korczak advocated children's rights also as a writer and author of pedagogical treatises.

According to Valeeva and Demakova (n.d.), Korczak believed that children possess a multitude of rights, which adults must implicitly admit. The child has the right for respect of his ignorance and his cognitive labor; his failures and tears; mysteries and deviations of the hard labor of growth; the current hour and the present day; the mystery of correction; efforts and credulity. No less important is to admit the child's right to be what he is. Adults must also admit the child's right to: participate in discussions and judgments which concern him directly; experience considerate attitude towards his problems; express his ideas; organize his life independently; use his virtues and conceal his faults; protest; to make mistakes; have a mystery; move; property; play; and, finally, the right to die.

According to Jean Piaget, a renowned Swiss psychologist (who visited the Orphan's home) said this great man had the courage to trust the children and young people who were in his care, and even went so far as to make them responsible for issues of discipline and to entrust to individual children the most difficult tasks.

Subtle connections between Rabindranath Tagore and Janusz Korczak

According to Markowska-Manista in the chapter cultural dimensions of Lessons in Dying, on July 18, 1942, Janusz Korczak's Orphans' Home hosted the last theatrical performance by Jewish children in the ghetto in occupied Warsaw. It took place only several days before the start of Großaktion in Warsaw and before the children's and Korczak's deportation to the Treblinka extermination camp. The theatre drama called 'Post Office' was written by Rabindernath Tagore.

Rabindranath Tagore's drama "The Post Office" staged at Janusz Korczak's Orphans' Home in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942. W.B.Yeats, who met Tagore in London and was much taken with this poet from the East, arranged for the play to be performed in 1913 by the Irish Players.

The Post Office", written in 1912 by Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, is a play whose original title Daakghar, is translated and interpreted as showing the process of facing hardships, and the metaphorical "call to leave home" in the context of overcoming the opposition of life and death, the transition between being and non-being. Through this play, Korczak wanted to prepare children for the transition from life to death. Through the prism of making them accustomed to difficult, borderline situations and giving them space to understand their right to die based on the aforementioned recognition of the child's humanity in the present.

While preparing material for the Orphans' Home newspaper, Korczak described there one of his dreams about a trip to India, which never came true, and about meeting Rabindranath Tagore:

> I'm on some wide road. I can see the sea. It is very hot. Strangely dressed people are walking and riding on two-horse carts and on elephants.
> – Yes – on elephants.
> I ask myself: – What country is this?
> – India. (...) And behold, a beautiful old man with a large grey beard, good eyes and a wise forehead approached me. – It seemed to me that I knew him, that I had seen him before.

> But yes: it was Rabindranath Tagore. (...)
> And this strange thing happened, which often happens in dreams. Rabindranath Tagore invited me to his school.
> – You also have a school, he said. – In your school, a student of mine – Miss Esther, is a teacher. Isn't she?
> – She is.
> – That's good. If it does not trouble you very much, I will give you a small book for her. A post office has just been built in our city. It's a new and nice building. So I wrote about the post office for my boys, and if Miss Esther wishes, let your boys perform it too (...).

The play was broadcast on French radio, during World War II when the country was under Nazi Occupation. On July 18, 1942 there was an extraordinary performance – in the Warsaw Ghetto, in an orphanage run by Janusz Korczak, who put on the play with the children as actors. He said this of his young troupe: "The play is more than a text, it is a mood, it conveys more than emotions, it is an experience and the actors are more than actors, they are children." Asked why he had chosen Tagore's play, he is said to have replied: "We must all learn to face the angel of death." Three weeks later, together with the children of the orphanage, he was taken to Treblinka death camp (Alexander, 2012).

Comparing Tagore and Korczak's thoughts about children's education

The chapter attempts to compare the ideas of Tagore and Korczak on following education parameters: aim of the education, methodology, curriculum, curriculum transaction, role of teachers and assessment, etc.

S. No.	Parameters	Tagore[1]	Korczak
1	**Aim**	Emphasis on naturalism, self-realization, moral and spiritual development, freedom, intellectual development, love for humanity, physical development, etc.	Emphasized on children's rights – treating children equal. The fundament of his paedology, i.e. a holistic, interdisciplinary, socio-psycho-physiological approach to children. Also focused on acutely sensitive to the maltreatment of children – especially those orphaned and impoverished, as well as the ones suffering as a result of problematic family relations.

[1] Philosophy of education according to Rabindranath Tagore https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341736830_Philosophy_of_education_according_to_Rabindranath_Tagore [accessed: Apr 19 2023].

S. No.	Parameters	Tagore[1]	Korczak
2	**Methodology**	Methods which are helpful in enhancing concrete knowledge, self-concept and related to real life situation such as activity method, teaching while travelling, or by walking, discussion, question–answer technique, co-operation technique etc.	Encouraged children to read, role-play and stage plays. Also, created a unique children's newspaper.
3	**Curriculum**	Usefulness of education, which helps students to communicate their ideas, pose questions, conduct experiments, trust in their own skills, and recognise their individuality. Subjects includes: mother tongue, other Indian Languages and also some Foreign Languages, mathematics, natural sciences, health education, social-sciences, agriculture, technical subjects, some skill oriented subjects, art, music, dance, philosophy, psychology, religion, excursions, yoga etc.	Focused on Participation and self-governance of children in order to develop the best citizen's competencies. He believed that a separate educational system (special schools) has to be established for children with developmental dysfunctions (in current terminology –special care children), he suggested that educating them together with "fully abled" children would not yield good results.
4	**Curriculum transaction**	As a naturalist, Tagore stressed about that – subjects should be taught through the utilization of the various elements which are present in child's environment so that he or she would be able to understand the subject in effective manner. Education cannot be flourish appropriately in rigid classroom.	Korczak's innovative methods – the use of new media in order to make his ideas popular and to engage children in the life of society. He created a unique children's newspaper. He founded The Little Review, a weekly supplement to a journal for adults. He advocated early intervention and postulated the need for a multiplicity of various institutions dealing with the child, in other words: the "pedagogisation" of society.

S. No.	Parameters	Tagore[1]	Korczak
5	**Role of the teacher**	Tagore found it difficult to find the right teachers for his schools. He was looking for Gurus instead of Schoolmasters. The Sanskrit term guru means teacher, yet emphasizes spiritual knowledge and practices and is connected to the ancient tradition of brahmacary ashrams and tapovans. According to Tagore, gurus are "active in the efforts to achieve the fullness of humanity" and will give their whole selves to their students instead of merely sharing the material as prescribed by the curriculum. Good teachers, wrote Tagore, activate children's minds instead of helping them to assimilate and collect information, and inspire children through their own self-development. They encourage them to work on the teacher's own original projects and thereby travel together on their journey to more understanding.[2]	He believed that a teacher must dedicate his life, his aspirations and personality to the children, and so he did, always remaining involved in the lives of his charges. He was of the opinion that a teacher must know the secret of giving, of yielding and of dedication to the child. This attitude was neither false nor intended to please, it was an educational mindset aimed to help turn the children into strong and courageous adults.[3] Korczak's belief in the fact that children are best aware of their own needs, aspirations, and emotions – and thus should have the right to have their opinion respected by adults. All the above ideas till date are important for educator.
6	**Assessment:**	Holistic assessment of the children was the key idea.	Korczak stressed upon children's participation in a collective sense. He see children as advisors and reporters of their lives – who can take decisions.

Discussion

Tagore gave importance to the three basic pillars of education: freedom of the mind and spirit, self-realization, and coexistence in peace. Each learner is unique and contains certain unique abilities; via these unique attributes, one may overcome obstacles and succeed in life. (Rokanuzzaman, 2016). For children's education, Rabindranath Tagore understood that moral or spiritual understanding is a must.

[2] Real Education, pp. 44–50; Tagore, R. 'Indian Students and Western Teachers,' The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore, Volume 4, A Miscellany. Ed. Nityapriya Ghosh. Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2006 [1916]. 261–274; p. 508; [Hereafter: 'Indian Students and Western Teachers']; 'School Master,' p. 508.

[3] Janusz Korczak as perceived in education and art (Accessed on 19 April, 2023 https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13537121.2021.1968211)

"Most people believe the mind to be a mirror, more or less accurately reflecting the world outside them, not realizing on the contrary that the mind is itself the principal element of creation." – Rabindranath Tagore.

The goals of Korczak's educational method and its philosophical meaning: Children's well-being and positive sense of their self-hood and their moral development. (Silverman, 2017). Education may have both psychological and physical effects on people. But for any government, disseminating knowledge among the masses of all kinds is a significant challenge.

Tagore sought academic perfection that included the development of the spirit as well as the body and mind. Whereas the main idea of Korczak's educational concept relates to the problem of child's feelings.

The important feature of Korczak's orphanages was the adjustment of entire life organization to the child's physical and mental development needs. In the course of holistic system formation, Korczak was mostly concerned with the problem of the way a child feels himself in a group of other children, and with the associated problem of how to establish a correct relationship between teachers and children. To implement this complicated holistic program the teachers were to:

- organize the children's labour,
- find the form of children's conflict settlement,
- establish a bright and happy way of life,
- organize the self-government,
- influence children through the opinion of the milieu,
- motivate children to strive for self-education,
- combine the principle of publicity with the principle of respect towards the child's inner world,
- do all their best for the gradual transition from control and assessment of children's groups to their self-control,
- use educational methods and means which were to be simple and clear for the children,
- act carefully and slowly, being sensitive to cooperation with children (Rogowska-Falska, 1959, p. 17).

Conclusion

Tagore and Korczak's educational philosophies and initiatives were groundbreaking in their emphasis on holistic education that extends beyond academic subjects. They championed the importance of moral character, empathy, and a sense of responsibility. However, in East or West, modern education systems face significant challenges in fostering a holistic mindset and establishing a comprehensive educational framework to enhance teaching and learning experiences. Despite increase in enrolment, countries continue to struggle with providing quality education. Quality education is multifaceted and defined in various ways, encompassing child-centred learning, quality early childhood education, infrastructure, assessment, teacher training, integration of technology integration, 21st-century skills, lifelong learning opportunities, and more.

Integrating Tagore and Korczak's ideas into educational practices can provide a solid foundation for addressing the challenges of quality education in modern times. Emphasizing naturalism, real-life situations, moral and spiritual development, and children's participation in a collective sense can contribute to creating a more equitable and effective education system. However, intensive efforts at the policy, institutional, and societal levels are necessary to overcome the implementation challenges.

References

Alexeyevna Valeeva, R., Dmitrievna Demakova, I. (n.d.). *Humanization of Education in the Context of Janusz Korczak Pedagogical Ideas*. Retrieved April 30, 2023, from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/71fd/73acec4259f83ec75c96bebb03727268cc96.pdf#:~:text=The%20main%20idea%20of%20Korczak%E2%80%99s%20educational%20concept%20is

Bose, A. (2016). Rabindranath Tagore's Philosophy of Education and Development in India. *Researchpaedia*, *3*(1). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346083693_Rabindranath_Tagore's_Philosophy_of_Education_and_Development_in_India

Białobrzeska, M. (2020). The pedagogical ideas of Janusz Korczak: Their theoretical basis

and practical implementation. *Pedagogical Research*, *5*(3), 1–13.

Korczak, J., Bye, S.G. (2017). *A child's right to respect*. Rzecznik Praw Dziecka.

Korczak, J. (1926). How to love a child. *The Child Welfare Magazine*, *5*(5), 124–127.

Korczak, J. (1929). The child's right to love. *The Child Welfare Magazine*, *8*(2), 41–44.

Markowska-Manista, U. (2020). What would Korczak do? Reflections on Education, Well-being and Children's Rights in the Times of the COVID-19 Pandemic (A. Odrowąż-Coates, Ed.; Foreword, Vols. 13–20, p. Urszula Markowska-Manista). The Maria Grzegorzewska University.

Markowska-Manista, U. (2023). Cultural Dimensions of Lesson in Dying – R. Tagore's drama "The Post Office" in Janusz Korczak's Orphans' Home in the Warsaw Ghetto (1942). Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 194–199.

O'Connell, K.M. (2003). Rabindranath Tagore on education – infed.org: Infed.org: Education, Community-Building and Change. https://infed.org/mobi/rabindranath-tagore-on-education/

Odrowąż-Coates, A. (2020). Janusz Korczak, Theatre and Performance in Education. *Journal of Teacher Training and Education Research*, *1*, 3–9.

Presentation on Janusz Korczak: Reformer of the World by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

Rokanuzzaman, M. (2016). *Reflection of Tagore's Philosophy of Education on Human Life*. International Conference on Rabindranather Shikkha Vabna At: Uttara, Dhaka. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312068736_Reflection_of_Tagore's_Philosophy_of_Education_on_Human_Life

Silverman, M. (2017). Korczak's Educational Theory and Its Reflection in His Pedagogy (pp. 129–183). Palgrave Macmillan US EBooks. doi: 10.1057/978-1-137-56068-1_4

Sonker, J. (2020). (PDF) *Philosophy of education according to Rabindranath Tagore*. ResearchGate.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341736830_Philosophy_of_education_according_to_Rabindranath_Tagore

UNESCO. (1961). Rabindranath Tagore: a universal voice. In UNESDOC Digital Library (Periodical Issue, Vol. 14, pp. 4–27). UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000064331

Scattered Identities to intersect: Exploring the possibilities of a collaboration between a 16-year-old musician/student and a 34-year-old writer/researcher

Seran Demiral, Duru Çiçek
Istanbul Arel University, Boğaziçi University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0001-9618-8295

Introduction

This chapter intends to address two essential questions in the research environment, particularly for childhood researchers but also applicable to social scientists in general. The first question pertains to establishing guidelines for the duration of fieldwork, including specific start and end dates for the research, as well as building relationships with participants. Due to ethical conflicts in research settings, these questions warrant further discussion from various angles. The second question concerns how to maximize efficiency and impact at the conclusion of the research, not only in scientific terms but also in societal contexts. This is important even when the research is limited to one person's social network, considering the evolving roles and fragmented identities during and after our interactions.

In this chapter, I will focus on a specific case, detailing my relationship with a young person, Duru Çiçek, from Ankara, the capital of Turkey, by mentioning three different research projects: one in which I collaborated as a researcher and she was one of the participants; the second in which we attempted to collaborate but were unable to conduct our research; and the latest, an ongoing project in which we have begun working with another 15-year-old child from Istanbul, Turkey. To explain why I decided to write this chapter informally for an academic book, with the aim of sharing our insights and experiences rather than detailing our research preparation, I need to recount how we first met.

As a children's literature writer in addition to being a childhood scholar, I have received emails and social media messages from people, especially young individuals. Duru has been one of my readers, and after reading one of my novels a couple of years ago, she sent me an email to express her appreciation. That's how we first connected when she was 13 years old in 2020. Later, she attended one of my online speeches. It was

shortly after the pandemic, or even during some ongoing restrictions. I was in Ayvalık, an Aegean city, and I was invited to a meeting with local residents and environmental activists to discuss children and young people's involvement in climate activism. Duru attended online and asked questions. She was the only child there, and it was a significant moment because it highlighted the absence of children in such discussions. Regrettably, in academia, conferences or lectures usually gather adults who work with children or are educators, and children rarely attend such meetings due to organizational reasons or ethical concerns stemming from their lack of recognition as legal persons. That's why it was important to have her participate. It was online, during the summer, so she could attend the meeting and contribute to our discussions during the question and answer section, indicating her age and restricted social position.

This demonstrated two things about her to me: first, her interest in climate issues, and second, her critical perspective on children's lack of agency in social movements. Later on, I invited her to participate in a research project, and after part of its results were made public in an open-access article, I wanted to share it with her. In the meantime, we have initiated efforts to collaborate on another study, so our communication was still fresh. Moreover, I have been contemplating the ethical conflicts in research ethics. For instance, I felt that I was using children's statements in the title of my article/thesis/paper without addressing their names. As academics, we should mention names in references, but we typically conceal the identities of study contributors to protect their privacy. Certainly, it depends on the content of the research as well as the needs and desires of individuals. Nevertheless, generally, we do not even question whether we indicate their real names in the paper or not. While I was in such consideration, Duru recognized herself in this paper when I shared it with her and asked me why I changed her name. Hence, we started to discuss research ethics regarding anonymity and confidentiality while also exploring ways to collaborate.

On the other hand, she was also aware that unless I shared the paper and she was satisfied with it, she couldn't even know that something had been released in which she had contributed. Consequently, that raised a question for me: Is there any specific time when we can be sure that the research is completed? When it is completed, what happens next? Should we inform them about the results? And, more importantly, related to both: when we continue our relationship after the research, should there be any boundaries? Are we allowed to change our relationship into a friendship? Didn't we treat each other as friends during the field study to gain trust? In light of these questions, I will share the individual characteristics of this person: my reader, one contributor to a study, a potential partner, and finally, a potential co-researcher/workshop leader for a new study, along with being a guitarist whom I follow.

This chapter consists of three distinct parts. The first part involves our attempts to collaborate as the project manager and researcher. As I delve into this subject, I will introduce Duru to you as a student and a musician with a potential in activism practices. In the second part, I will shift the focus towards her actual collaborations with musicians and her identity beyond the school and on social media, presenting her as a one-person case study. With this, I aim to initiate a broader discussion: Do such narratives, life stories, or field experiences possess the potential for scientific value and the ability to impact society?

Finally and most importantly, the last part of this paper comprises Duru's reflections. I will leave the floor to her after presenting our experiences from my perspective. In fact, the entire paper has evolved through our interactions; it has been a collective effort from the outset, heavily influenced by her insights, as evidenced in the following sections. Nonetheless, I deem it crucial to incorporate her own sentences to share her remarks.

Scattered Identities: Young People Tend (not) to…

It was the beginning of 2023 when we intended to conduct research together, and the abstract I submitted for the ESA conference RN10 in 2023 was related to this research that we were preparing together. There would be two consequences: a dataset about the challenges faced by youth in traditional education settings and an outline for materials for a youth theater play. We had only gathered information through Duru's experiences as a young person in the midst of educational and societal anxiety, and as a changemaker activist beyond her 'expected' environment, both at home and at school during her childhood. Even during this preparation stage and our meetings, we gained expanded insights into the everyday life experiences of young people in Turkey, which had a great potential to evolve into research projects.

Initially, our plan was to conduct a study in a more structured manner with an identified sample and clear methods: I would work on the theoretical framework, and she would conduct the field study. However, she later informed me that she wouldn't be able to proceed because her friends, who were potential participants in our study, had changed their minds about cooperating with us. There were a couple of reasons for this change: one was related to the challenges posed by the educational system, which made them feel powerless to effect any change; the other was their lack of time due to the intense focus on exam preparation, a reflection of the exam-based competitive education system. Additionally, I discovered something significant about children's perceptions of academic research. They often did not see the point of participating in such field studies because they did not believe that these studies would lead to any meaningful change. They would voice their concerns and interests, but what would happen next?

These questions, which explained the reasons behind the declining enthusiasm of young people to participate in academic studies, led me to reconsider how we disseminate our research findings. Unless we reach the public outside of academia, why should children contribute to our studies? My partner also wanted to answer these questions by preparing inquiries to explore the points of view of her friends about activism and political participation, then trying to understand their unwillingness to participate later on. She was surprised when her friends said, "We need to study for exams; we cannot spare our time for these." Because her closest four friends are one year ahead of her, she understood their anxiety about the common national exam at the end of the semester. But the surprising thing was their initial enthusiasm to talk to Duru. In her words:

> *I had excitedly gone to tell my friends about it. They all said, "Include me, I want to participate too." Then I prepared the questions. The exams were over, so it was a relaxed time. I was going to tailor the questions according to the person in front of me.*

She naturally intended to conduct semi-structured interviews, beginning with 8–10 questions and adjusting additional questions based on the answers she received. While we were discussing why we couldn't carry out the field process, she expressed her frustration by showing me the black-covered notebook where she had taken notes about the fieldwork, saying, "I was well-prepared for this; I even bought a notebook just for it. This black cover makes me feel cool."

I prepared the informed consent forms for the participants while she decided what to focus on to investigate youth practices. After the main idea I proposed, "how do you develop tactics to address the challenges you face," she decided to initially explore her friends' perceptions of activism. The first common question she intended to ask was, "Do you know what activism means?" which she described as follows:

> *I think activism is trying to change things. Because it might come from being active, speaking up for something, trying to change things. I do not mean how The Turkish Language Association (TDK) dictionary describes the word...*

Duru was aware of their lack of agency in school settings, hence she intended to conduct research on activism, emphasizing the concerns of her peers and friends in politics. When I wondered what she would change, we again changed our roles from partners to interviewer-interviewee, then she responded:

> *[I would change] things that need to change. The Turkish education system. Because sometimes when I'm studying for exams, I think, if the education system were different, I might be playing the guitar and performing music right now. I'm studying something I have no interest in.*

In our prior discussions, she also suggested taking advantage of a debate organized by her school as part of our study framework. She believed that since everyone would be discussing various educational approaches during the event, it would be beneficial for us to gather information about criticisms of the education system and hear some suggestions for improving the educational environment from the participants. Leading up to it, she was excited and diligently prepared with her classmates. However, after the debate had taken place and concluded, she expressed some disappointment that we hadn't delved deeper into our potential collaboration.

There are three distinct approaches that students chose to research and defend during the debate. For instance, the *dynamic education* approach represents an ideal scenario according to Duru. She explained it with the statement: "What should be and what developed countries like Finland use. Everyone has capacity and ability. Approaching everyone individually, not treating students like a herd. If a student is interested in music, they should be encouraged according to their capability."

Another approach, *social education*, has a closer understanding: it leverages social settings among students, such as music or sports groups. This approach takes into account students' varying capacities while promoting collaboration within group activities.

The third approach, *academic education*, is described as "like in Turkey. Based on exams and lessons. They treat every student the same and put them through the same exams" in her expression. Since this approach treats all students uniformly and subjects them to the same examination processes, she was mostly against it and expressed

a willingness to change the school teachers' perspective by the end of the debate. She not only had hope for our research but also aimed to bring about a change in the educational approach followed by their school.

Duru belonged to the group advocating for a "dynamic" education, considering it the most rational approach for everyone's learning. However, the students were introduced to these three approaches by their teachers, yet they independently explored and prepared their commentaries for each. Furthermore, their motivation and belief in the potential to bring about change existed. This became frustrating for them at the end of the debate because the teachers voted on the presentations and selected one group as the champion. Not only did this go against the spirit of a debate, but it also felt like a teacher-led and oriented action, leaving the students feeling incapable of making any difference. The teachers, in a way, reinforced their approach to education by "dictating" to the students what was best for them.

After students discussed and teachers made the decision for them, students objected to the results but the only response they received from the teachers was "Don't interfere with those matters, the jury has made its decision." Duru explained:

> *We did so much research; we were even going to connect the successful ones with other schools for a nationwide impact. But it didn't work out. If we had won the dynamic vs. social debate... since we believe we are right and that the topic we defended is good, we could have reflected this on the school's education system. We don't get much productivity from the academic education system here. For example, at this school, most of the time, they focus on lesson-related things, and there is no individual approach. I think the school's reputation could be good – because when we said this, it was more likely to be accepted as an advertisement. Both the school's reputation would improve, and the students could go to good places, we would say. When we mentioned it as an advertisement, some of our principals were convinced.*

Firstly, the school administration did not fulfill their promises to take this debate to a national stage, causing students to lose motivation after having expectations of a grand platform for encountering students from other schools. Secondly, the teachers transformed the concept of the debate into a competition among the children, following the pattern of the existing educational system, and ultimately declared a winner. In doing so, according to the students advocating for social or dynamic education, they evaluated students' performances based on their language skills (since the debates were conducted in English), and their accents rather than focusing on the content of their arguments or the educational approaches they defended. Lastly, as seen from the emphasis in the last sentence above, children are also aware and sometimes critical of being students in a private school, where they may find themselves used as promotional materials. Cleverly, they are eager to leverage this situation for their benefit when necessary.

That was just one example highlighting children's lack of agency in the school environment. Even though it may appear to be something beyond traditional lessons or requirements, such as this debate, the teachers actually use the opportunity primarily for English practice, and they tend not to consider the students' perspectives. Meanwhile, the students themselves are inclined to initiate change within their school, believing in the possibilities and hoping for improvement. For instance, when I asked my partner

about the potential benefits of such a change, whether she believed that dynamic education, where students have more freedom to learn according to their interests and tendencies, could be implemented in their school as a better approach, she offered another illustration of how things were heading in the opposite direction, contrary to their expectations and imaginaries.

> *We are a private school, not directly under the influence of the Ministry of Education (MEB), so there might be some flexibility. We might have thought that we could make changes. Our school has constantly been changing since its opening in 2017, even changed its name twice and experienced changes in ownership. It's getting worse every time. The initial setup was the best; students used to go on many trips, there were presentations and projects for students to participate in. When we changed into the next one, there was nothing like those. We only had one trip to a technology museum, and it was more like an internet cafe than anything related to technology.*

While it is true that private schools in Turkey enjoy a degree of autonomy in comparison to state schools, this is a significant factor that motivates students to contemplate opportunities for initiating reforms. However, the constant precarity and uncertainty they face hinder them from sustaining the initiatives they initially undertake, as indicated in her statement. The persistent theme of "constant change" and "worsening" is a prevailing issue among various challenges in the country. Consequently, Duru and her friends find themselves drawing parallels between the country's leaders and their school administrators. This ongoing uncertainty, characterized by rapid, unexpected changes, is emblematic of the era in which they have spent their childhood. Nevertheless, the belief that these changes invariably deteriorated their situation aligns with the idea of acting "for the sake of appearances." This notion applies not only to the school administration but also to the government. Much like citizens' lack of trust in Turkish politicians, the students don't trust their teachers.

> *I'm not sure about the current situation because as soon as the principal changed, all the teachers we liked left. They were fired. Instead of sending away the teachers who needed to be replaced, they sent away the good ones...*

For them, there exists a clear separation between 'good' and 'bad' teachers. My partner's statements evoke memories of my own secondary and high school years when we shared similar sentiments. In order to grasp the subjectivity of this "good teacher" definition, I asked her to clarify. She emphasized that 'good teachers,' or the teachers they like, are those who inspire children to learn rather than merely instructing them in a didactic manner. While it is fundamental to transition from a one-way knowledge transfer approach to a more reciprocal learning style, it appears that the situation remains largely the same. Instead of feeling supported as they need to be, students often encounter obstacles imposed by teachers or the school system, as exemplified in this debate and other cultural activities that the school uses for promotional purposes rather than enhancing the educational environment.

> *They also got rid of the supportive teachers. And they charge us extra fees for school registration and expenses. They said it would be spent on student projects and activities, but for every school activity, they ask us for money again. Where did that money go... for the school's electricity bill...*

These complaints derive from various sources related to economic, political, and social aspects. Educational policies and the social hierarchy within school environments appear to be more traditional than what young people expect. In economic terms, the awareness and concerns of students indicate that they feel exploited, particularly in terms of their labor.

For example, I believed that there should be independent student clubs, especially in areas like music, theatre, and literature, given that private schools often provide more opportunities for such activities at the primary and secondary education levels. When I asked if she had participated in any of these groups, particularly music, which she had an interest in, her response surprised me:

> *I'm not in any clubs at school right now because they abolished them. I was in the drama club for 3 years before. I didn't choose music because I didn't like my music teacher, he only did rhythmic activities, and I found it boring. Drama contributed to me; our teacher was very good. Not just theater education but how to speak more convincingly in our daily lives, taught us about breathing, added a lot to me. Now, I don't know why, but they abolished it.*

Once again, she emphasizes the importance of teachers' agency in this statement. Even though "good and supportive teachers" exist, the discouragement of art-related activities is one of the main issues in education in general sense. Not only do students lack the space to improve their creativity and discover their skills and interests, but also whenever they try on their own, they encounter obstacles or, even worse, their interests are not taken seriously, as Duru herself indicates with a specific case about her band:

> *Regarding music, my band and I always say this: "We're not musicians, we're coolies." We even thought of naming our band "Amele" [Coolie/unskilled worker]. They treat us like this, "Yes, they are a group, but your name doesn't matter; you will represent the name of the school." Anyway, okay, you've promoted your name, help us too; but no, for example, there were no sockets, so my friend brought a triple socket from home so that we could plug in the amps. We didn't have enough amps, it's not a big deal, they gave us broken speakers. We needed to practice, they said, "Your job is easy; we will focus more on gymnastics; your job is easy; you'll just sing". And they only allowed us to rehearse for the last 2 days. "Okay, you're singing; that's enough." Even though they didn't let us rehearse, we constantly carried guitar amps, and our guitars got damaged, but they didn't care; they said whatever the kids say. "Oh, this is scratched, broken." Something always happens. "Okay, you don't have a job; let's carry these."*

"Art Can Change", We Can Too!

In understanding Duru's character and her outlook on life, her motivation to participate in research like this stems from her belief that 'she can change things.' Regarding her activist practices, she acknowledges, "I can't say I'm an activist who can definitively change things, but I'm trying". She often cites examples related to environmental concerns, emphasizing her efforts to change her habits.

When I catch my inconsistency, I try to change myself. Regarding water... If I spend a little more than 15 minutes in the shower, I scold myself. Or it's been a few years now; I think for the past 6 years, when I'm going to buy clothes, I try to go for second-hand items for sustainability reasons. When I'm about to buy denim shorts for myself, I ask, "Do you need it, do you really need it?" Every time, the activist side wins.

As previously mentioned in our discussion of our collaboration attempt, I noted that Duru was open to exploring her friends' perceptions of activism because the '-ism' part often sounds daunting or overly serious to them. Duru attributes this to a lack of knowledge, describing their tone as prejudiced.

I don't have such a prejudice. However, I notice this in people; when they hear about an "ism," they react like, "Oh no, something's going wrong now." For example, when someone mentions feminism, I ask, "Aren't you a human being? What are you, a bigot?" Because they think that feminism means women are superior and men are bad, which is actually anti-feminism. But when it comes to any other "ism," they look at it the same way, how ridiculous…

She touches upon something essential, not only concerning the attitudes of the youth but also the complexities in conceptualizing these issues. For instance, the term 'childism' has two different, even opposite, usages. One is akin to feminism, where the '-ism' part signifies one's position from a child's standpoint, while the other usage, like 'ageism' or 'sexism,' is staunchly against children, serving as a tool to criticize hatred and bias directed at them but using language in the opposite manner. This was a subject I were eager to explore further upon their conversations on -ism issues. Moreover, beyond her exploration and understanding of her peers' biases regarding activism, feminism, or other 'ism's, Duru also contemplated the potential for discussing teenage feminism. This generation is more attuned to topics related to sexual identity and orientation. They declare themselves in a process of self-discovery, and gender, specifically sexual orientation, is a significant part of it. The concept of identity as a fluid concept was clear and concrete in her mind.

While shifting perceptions, identities, and ideas all the time in the middle of changing circumstances, school settings remain the same. The previous examples demonstrate that young people in Turkey are not encouraged to explore their capabilities and interests. Due to the lack of cultural and artistic expression in their education, they must find their own strategies and tactics by using social media and engaging in different communities, much like I did during my own childhood. I wasn't even willing to attend literature classes, for instance, for the same reason Duru has now: being discouraged by teachers. On another note, this also indicates how crucial teachers' influence is. I had to figure out my writing tendencies myself, again with the help of the potentials in the online world, and I even had the chance to publish my works at the age of 16. And now, Duru has chances to share her music with the world.

I thought about it; I'm progressing in this business and turning this into a paid job. When I started, there were only 3 people, my guitar teacher, mom and my closest friend, and I was playing for 3 people. Now, for example, I have a video that 48,000 people have seen. So, you can reach people like this.

While she is a non-agent student in school, she is an agent in her life, in fact. In today's understanding, she can even be defined as an influencer on social media (not in the "proffesional" sense, but in a literal sense – she influences people who follow her music), she reaches larger audiences. She is not the only example. Considering passive, non-agent students as children, they build their identities through social media or on digital platforms in the way they would like, in contrast to their visible student persona at school or their roles as children at home. In her case, a particular indicator is her desire to "change" things. Therefore, the topic of our research, which we couldn't realize, was actually "how can art be a tool for resilience?" while she was asking, "how can we influence people on a particular topic through art?" considering her music and advocating the idea that "Art can change things."

When we were discussing our failure to work together and potential future collaboration opportunities, she once again declared that art can change things, giving a specific example involving a rap song. This song was highly critical of political issues and made a significant impact when it was released.

> *The song "Susamam" [I can't stay silent] for example. I still listen to it and get fired up. Yeah, for instance, it reached many people and made an impact. In the* Queen *movie, they said "no one would listen to a 6-minute song", but it became a big hit. Like a 14-minute rap song... they probably thought, "Who's going to listen to that?" But it reached so many people and became number one from day one, even though the artist got arrested. If there's an arrest, it means they made an influence. So, they rapped for 14 minutes, covering a lot of topics. I still remember some parts by heart, so if it affected me, it must have reached many people too. They said, "We believe that music can change things."*

Regarding her music, she also mentioned another topic that indicates her digital competency in trusting people or using social media for her social network. This is now turning into a research project, and she will hopefully become one of the co-leaders. It focuses on children's cultural, social, and political engagements in digital environments and child participation in digital worlds. Currently, we are in the preparation stage with another child partner of mine from Istanbul, as mentioned earlier in this paper. As an illustration, I've learned from these children that they build their own networks on social media, which we know and have also experienced. However, they may access certain opportunities. Our initial encounter also occurred on the internet; we came together through online meetings. Furthermore, she has expanded her musical presence by participating in recordings and being featured on popular music channels for young people on platforms like YouTube and Instagram.

She was first invited to play and record in a studio, and through this account, she reached a larger audience. She connected with another guitar player and recently played with her. Finally, her band has the chance to include a drummer, thanks to social media. They had been struggling to find a drummer for their band for a while, but they started receiving messages from other young musicians saying, "If you don't have a drummer, I can join." Young people use digital tools for various aspects of their lives. As passive individuals with different limitations related to political, economic, and educational challenges, they may develop tools to empower themselves and make a positive change according to their interests and desires.

> *My motivation and my goal have always been that since I was a child, I won't leave this world without being known for something I love doing. Money doesn't matter to me. When the idea of playing the guitar professionally in front of people came up, I will do it in the future, even if I don't make any money and end up sleeping on the streets. People may say that I'm just lying on the streets, but at least... let them say, "She's sleeping on the streets," but at least... I'll just say, "Just introduce my music, that's enough for me."*

Duru is only one teenager, but she serves as a compelling example of someone who possesses critical perspectives on local and global problems and has built resilience in the face of challenges. Even the study we intended but couldn't undertake has now become a project for us to work on. The questions I mentioned in the introduction, regarding the duration of research and its societal and scientific impacts, emerged from our discussions and conversations during our interactions. Our relationship has transformed from reader-writer to participant-researcher and, finally, to a partner-friend dynamic. Even the concept of "participating" in research and involving children in research has become central to my thinking. I can confidently say that she has already influenced the possibilities of collaboration between us. Likewise, the way she describes music as an activist practice for herself is noteworthy.

> *It doesn't have to be serious; it can be melodic. And it can stick in people's minds, like an advertisement. If it lingers in their minds, it will reach many people, with a subliminal message. As it comes to mind, "Oh yes, I can change this."*

Her resilient and reformer identity signifies youthfulness, and she is a representative of teenagers from Turkey, given her socio-economic background, interests, and the cultural environment she has experienced. Therefore, while her short life story and the narratives included in this piece may not possess scientific value in the conventional sense, they are certainly a subject for debate when considering anthropological perspectives and narrative as a research method. I would like to emphasize that the impact of our search for collaborative ways and the progress we have shared and discussed over the past three years since we first met is significant. Stories and real-life experiences have the power to bring about change, and that is what both of us aspire to achieve, as our paths intersect.

Reflections from the Young Person

First of all, I would like to thank Seran very much. I am grateful to her for including me in such a beautiful project. Before I start with the things I want to talk about, I would like to introduce myself a little from my own perspective:

I am 16 years old, I am a student in the 11th grade. As Seran said, I am also interested in music, I play guitar and sing. I love artistic activities and want to spend as much time as possible. But since I have a university exam to take, I cannot spend as much time as I want artistically, because going to school and studying limit my time.

Aside from these issues, I would also like to talk about when I started activist work: In fact, it can be said that I have been sensitive to nature and humanity since my childhood.

But I was in 8th grade when I put this into action. I was obsessed with documentaries and was constantly watching documentaries about social issues.

And the few documentaries I watched had a great impact on me. I realized that people are not looking for solutions to social problems, they don't ask themselves "what can I do?". That's why I made a presentation to my friends at school, thinking that maybe I could guide someone. This presentation I made covered everything from exclusion of people due to their race, religious views, sexual orientation, etc. to unconscious use of natural resources.

After my presentation was over, I was a little worried because I knew that not everyone shared the same views as me. But I was still applauded and that made me happy. I realized that my presentation had an impact on the behaviour of some of my friends. Realizing this made me really happy, and in a way, I was proud of myself. Because I realized that we can change someone's behaviour if we really want to. After seeing this, I said to myself, "If I can influence someone even with a simple presentation, I can have a greater impact in different ways."

For example, with my music.

During our discussions for this study, I have become more aware of many things. It was an honor to represent my peers in projects. Furthermore, I came to the realization that, as young people, we are sometimes not understood sufficiently. That's why I believe that it is a great thing to open a space for me (as a teenager) to have a voice in this project.

Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej im. Marii Grzegorzewskiej
Wydanie pierwsze
Arkuszy drukarskich 8,25
Skład i łamanie: AnnGraf Anna Szeląg
Druk ukończono w grudniu 2023
Druk i oprawa: Sowa sp. z o.o.

UNESCO Janusz Korczak Chair International Summer School

Researching Social Inclusion, Political Discourse, Policy and Education

Warsaw
11-22.09
2023

This event was under the honorary patronage of the Polish National Commission for UNESCO

Event was co-funded by the European Commission under EMPATHY: Challenging discourse about Islam and Muslims in Poland, EU funded project: 101049389 CERV-2021-EQUAL

INSTITUTE OF POLITICAL STUDIES
POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

The Maria Grzegorzewska UNIVERSITY established 1922

unesco Polish National Commission

unesco Chair

Empathy

ISBN 978-83-67721-25-7