

Josephine Moate (ed.)

# REIMAGINING CREATIVE DEMOCRACY

ReCreaDe the Book

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JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO  
UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

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UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 2022

ReCreaDe  
-Reimagining Creative Democracy-



The Blue Balloon front cover ©Ella Moate, 2022

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# FOREWORD: INTRODUCING RECREADE THE BOOK

*Josephine Moate and Holger Jahnke*

ReCreaDe (Reimagining Creative Democracy) is an Erasmus+ project (2018-2021) designed to address the current crisis of democracy through a shared European course in teacher education. Despite the disruption of the Covid pandemic, over a period of three years, researchers and teachers from eight European universities developed, organised, carried out and evaluated face-to-face and online interdisciplinary intensive programmes for student teachers from the partner institutions. The participants from universities in Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Hungary, Austria, Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom had different models and experiences of democracy both in society at large and within teacher education, yet a shared interest in the task of Reimagining Creative Democracy.

The ReCreaDe team is a group of teacher educators with a shared history of collaboration. As academics the ReCreaDe team members represent different fields and disciplines in and around education – history, geography, drama, language, education and culture – as well as a shared interest and years of experience in European teacher education. Through collaborations on Teacher Intercultural Awareness and Competence (TIAC), Inside out, outside in: Building Bridges in Teacher Education through Diversity in Education (InOut) and, most recently, Reimagining Creative Democracy (ReCreaDe), the team has re-viewed and re-formed different approaches and sessions to develop a more holistic experience for student teacher participants. Feedback from student participants has encouraged the ReCreaDe team to continue efforts to approach profound questions and issues in education from different standpoints through different, often creative and arts-

based, methodologies. Through these collaborations, ReCreaDe student and staff participants have had the opportunity to intensely live the theory and practice of education, opening up new and further spaces for intellectual, pedagogical and personal understanding. The aim of ReCreaDe the Book is to share these experiences and insights to encourage other educators to enter into this task. This introduction outlines the key outputs from the ReCreaDe project before introducing ReCreaDe the Book in more detail.

## **Key Outcomes From The Recreade Project**

### **Intensive Programmes**

Designing and running intensive programmes (IPs) on creative democracy for future teachers across Europe was planned as a key output of the ReCreaDe project. The initial plan was to provide 10-day face-to-face IPs at three universities – Budapest in spring 2019, Vienna in spring 2020 and Flensburg in spring 2021. Despite the Covid pandemic requiring a significant amount of re-organising (see final chapter), three intensive programmes were run by the ReCreaDe team with cognitive inputs from different disciplinary perspectives combined with arts-based and performative elements. The ReCreaDe project was not an attempt to define a new theory of (creative) democracy, but to promote through practice a relational, progressive and subjective concept of creative democracy. The IPs were designed so that participants individually develop and document their encounter with creative democratic practices during the IP. Through inputs from various disciplines, teachers and students explored the notion and boundaries of democracy in relation to other important concepts such as education, language, creativity, space and place, anarchism, justice and human rights.

During the IPs, participants were encouraged to try out different *practices* including experiential and cognitive learning, engaging their creativity and imagination, learning through action, interaction, performance, dialogue and discussion. Recognising that an important part of experiential learning is the interaction with the local environment, school visits with teaching observation and interaction with students and teachers, participation in local cultural activities as well as encounters with local stakeholders were included in the IPs. Moreover, to enrich the individual experience formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities were woven throughout the IP with the highly diverse groups of students and teachers. While this diversity can-

not be captured or shared 'as is', the ReCreaDe team anticipate that the experiences and insights shared in this publication will encourage other educators to work with, enjoy and benefit from the diversity of different communities and individuals enriching the imagination around creative democracy.



Figure 1: Scenes from ReCreaDe IPs © Rebekka Diestelkamp

### **Individual reflective sketchbooks**

An important feature of each IP was the use of reflective sketchbooks. Reflective sketchbooks provide a material space for participants to articulate individual and shared 'problematizations, questions, interests, assumptions, dreams, fears' as well as links between theory and practice (Pässilä, et al. 2019, p. 289). By providing material and temporal resources, the ReCreaDe project encouraged participants to document their individual learning experiences in a personal reflective sketchbook in formal, nonformal and informal settings. Although for some student participants this was the first time they had picked up a paintbrush since primary school, the blank material page of the reflective sketchbooks inspired creative and critical thinking as participants explored the new concepts and made connections with previous experiences and unfolding of understanding (Moate, et al. 2019).

In the online version of the IP, some students chose to create digital sketchbooks. During the IPs the reflective sketchbooks provide continuity across different sessions, themes and spaces. The sketchbooks can be rearranged and reframed, personalised, explored and interrogated. In the future, this creative, aesthetic approach to thinking can serve as a personal compass for nurturing democratic processes in schools, maintaining critical discussions on and creative realisations of democracy, as well as help participants to recognise what they are striving for and why they think creative democracy is worth striving for. An introduction to Reflective Sketchbooks is available here: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1229717053720136>



Figure 2: Screenshots of the introduction to reflective sketchbooks and warm-up exercises during the hybrid IP

## Evocative Reports

The evocative reports are multimodal ways of documenting and sharing experiences from participants' perspectives. As an aesthetic form of reportage, this creative format aims to foster democratic engagement by raising pertinent issues and questions for further exploration. For participants, evocative reports capture key moments from wider processes that can continue to live and inspire further reflection and action. For stakeholders and decision makers in the education systems of the participating European countries and beyond, evocative reports from the IPs provide greater insight than written reports and invite other educational stakeholders to engage with Reimagining Creative Democracy and all that can entail. The ReCreaDe evocative report is available here: <https://youtu.be/YmnEDbSVPXQ>

## NECT – Network Of Early Career Teachers

Former participants of the IPs have the opportunity to join the European network of Early Career Teachers founded as part of previous Erasmus programmes carried out by the ReCreaDe team. Through the creation of a trans-European network of teachers with similar experiences, ReCreaDe invests in the ongoing task of fostering the idea of European teaching.



## Reimagining creative democracy: ReCreaDe the Book

ReCreaDe the Book documents the IPs in the form of a handbook that aims to animate teachers across Europe to creatively engage in democratic education in their school. Each chapter includes clear, structured descriptions and background materials to support the uptake of these approaches by other educators. By presenting these practices in ReCreaDe the Book, it is hoped that other educators and teacher educators are encouraged to creatively adopt and imaginatively adapt these practices.

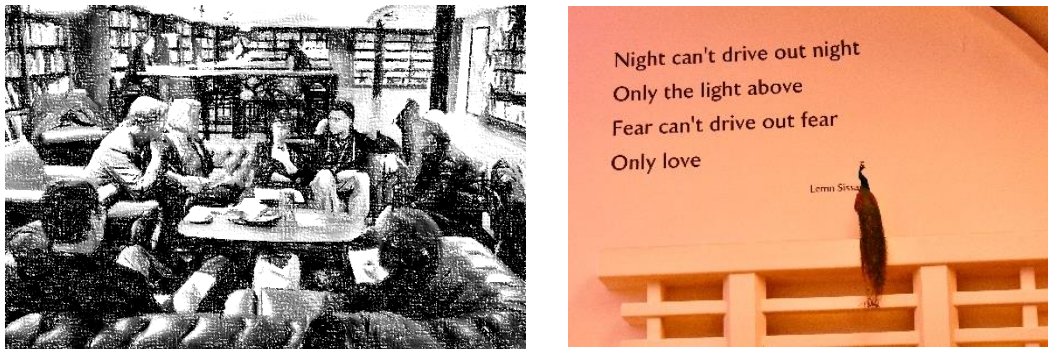


Figure 3: Planning ReCreaDe the Book © Rebekka Diestelkamp

The first official planning session for ReCreaDe the Book took place in the Storyhouse, a cultural centre that brings history and culture, art and creativity together as a living space in the heart of Chester, England. Having spent the previous day co-planning the first IP, a small group sat on sofas with cups of coffee surrounded by Lemn Sissay's poetry, thinking together about how to approach ReCreaDe the Book. Outside, the city and the surrounding Chester plain were beginning to flood, but in those moments before heading to our respective homes across Europe, our initial plan had taken shape. ReCreaDe the Book would be built around the IP sessions, but rather than strip out the personal, to provide a skeletal outline of each session we decided to provide a short prologue for each chapter explaining the inspiration for the session. These *personal reflections* are presented in a cursive font and follow a more narrative style. Each chapter closes with a pedagogical reflection by the author on the experience of implementing the session as part of an IP. We hope that by providing these more personal reflections in the opening and closing of each chapter, it is easier for readers to a) understand how the sessions have taken shape, and b) how they can use and re-form the sessions for a different setting.

## Envisaging ReCreaDe the Book

As the project name suggests, ReCreaDe is inspired by John Dewey's 1939 essay 'Creative Democracy – the Task Before Us', which provides the theoretical and practical starting point for the project, as explained in more detail in the conceptual framework chapter. The main body of ReCreaDe the Book has been organised around three key themes that have been central to the ReCreaDe Team when responding to Dewey's call. These three themes are 1) Democracy as **Lived Experience**, 2) Democracy as a **Pedagogic Act**, and 3) Democracy as an **Aesthetic Exploration**.

'Democracy as lived experience' acknowledges Dewey's (1966) call to recognise that it is in and through day-to-day relationships and experiences in different environments that democracy is sustained or lost. The four chapters in this section explore and illustrate different ways democracy and life intertwine and the profound implications this has for democracy as lived experience. Paul and Frances's opening chapter provides a stark introduction to the selectivity of modern democracy by sharing the experiences of homeless people living on the streets in Chester. Their chapter challenges us to consider whether we are prepared to consider *Recreating democracy altogether?* Rebekka and Holger's chapter *The democratic classroom* draws attention to the process of envisaging and enacting democracy within the physical space and relationships of education. Perttu's chapter *Democracy and responsibility* highlights the emotional and personal nature of living democratically. Josephine's chapter *A lesson on tyranny* draws attention to the different ways in which democracy can unthinkingly be given away, as well as recreated, through everyday actions within and beyond education.

'Democracy as a pedagogic act' acknowledges Dewey's (1966) observation that school is not 'preparation' for life, but is life. Recognising democracy as a pedagogic act draws attention to the crucial relationship between teacher and student(s), the cultural environment of education, and the choices educators make regarding the ways they carry out and share their duties and responsibilities. The four chapters in this section specifically focus on educational settings as sites for democratic action. Elviira explains how the IES Cartima Secondary School has pursued *Promoting a democratic culture at school*. Erika and Orsolya provide a lens for exploring *Democracy in learning spaces*, and Carmen illustrates how *Democracy in school textbooks* have been employed in the formation of identity in education with significant implications for democracy. The fourth chapter by Orsolya and Erika in

this section focuses on *Assessment, democracy and creativity*. Together, these four chapters draw attention to the institutional frames of education that can strengthen or undermine democracy as an informing feature of education and the choices that educators can make to strengthen democracy as part of educational institutions.

'Democracy as aesthetic exploration' presents four examples of exploring the formative and provocative power of the arts to question, examine, explore and reflect on the relationship between democracy and education. The section begins with a drama-based session *Exploring teacher autonomy and motivation* with Allan K. and Katrin. Per-Olaf and his student co-author Julia demonstrate that *The outcome of teaching is seeing the unseen* and use student photographs and other movement-based activities to explore human rights and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In *Voices and songs from the past*, Brigitte employs the poetic and melodic affordances of music to explore stories of struggle, freedom, hope and pain as shared human experiences. The section concludes with *Critical creativity in The Blue Balloon Pretext*, a session developed by Allan O., having been inspired by Peter Altenberg's short story 'In the Amusement Park' introduced to the ReCreaDe team by Per. The dramatic pretext of this chapter poignantly captures how democracy is beholden to the choices and acts of individuals living life together.

Democracy as lived experience, a pedagogic act, and aesthetic exploration as themes are present throughout ReCreaDe the Book and reflect the way they were present across the different sessions of the IP. In ReCreaDe the Book we have tried to share the democratic spirit in which the individual sessions were developed in relation to the IPs, pressing issues in education today, individual areas of expertise, and the exceptional events of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Afterword shares staff reflections on what we learned as our original plans for face-to-face meetings had to change and we sought to develop digitally-mediated communities, and what was observed and learned from this experience. The appendices include examples of ReCreaDe IPs. These examples illustrate different ways in which the sessions can be arranged, as well as ways in which the original plan had to change from three face-to-face IPs, to one face-to-face programme, one intensive online programme, and a hybrid multiplier event which brought new and familiar participants together as a networked community.

The individual experiences gained from the IPs are the core 'outputs' of ReCreaDe. Although not directly measurable, the responses of the partic-

ipants indicate that these experiences will come into play in the participants' professional careers. As future teachers and educational professionals, the participating student teachers are ambassadors for creative democracy as well as multipliers for future generations. It is hoped that this ReCreaDe handbook, the evocative reports, and the European Network of Early Career Teachers (NECT) established after the InOut project and strengthened through ReCreaDe will ensure the societal impact of ReCreaDe in the diverse national education systems across Europe. Through these activities and outputs the ReCreaDe team aimed to promote constructive – imaginative, creative, democratic – responses to current crises within and across European countries leading to more sustainable and resilient pathways towards a living European democracy.

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# THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR REIMAGINING CREATIVE DEMOCRACY

*Holger Jahnke and Josephine Moate*

The ReCreaDe project focused on the crucial relationship between democracy and diversity in education. The premises underpinning ReCreaDe were that: i) diversity is fundamental for democracy, ii) the inability to positively engage with diversity is an inability to act democratically, and iii) education and educators play a key role in the ongoing development of democracy. For democracy to continue as a living ideal in Europe, Europeans need to develop new ways of positively engaging with the diverse cultural heritage of Europe, and educators need to be aware of how democracy is fostered, as well as undermined, in and through education. Involving student teachers in the project activities aimed to engage future educators in the task of reimagining creative democracy during a foundational stage in their pedagogical development. Through the use of creative, arts-based methodologies, cognitive inputs as well as formal, informal and nonformal learning experiences, ReCreaDe aimed to draw attention to democracy as part of education and to enrich ways of being, knowing, doing and relating for these future educators. With this approach, ReCreaDe sought to encourage future teachers to continue exploring and seeing education in different ways, to sustain thoughtful dialogues in education and to promote creative realisations of democracy. This chapter outlines the theoretical framework that inspired and informed the ReCreaDe project.

The inspiration for the ReCreaDe project is John Dewey's idea of 'creative democracy', which argues for democracy as a way of life, acknowledg-

ing the value of each individual as part of society (Dewey, 1939). Dewey's notion of democracy as a creative task is far removed from democracy as an established institution, unquestioned and unchanging. For Dewey, democracy – as well as education – are part of lived experience, fostered and sustained through individual participation and social relationships.

The interdisciplinary ReCreaDe team designed the IP to re-engage with Dewey's idea of creative democracy and to enable participating students to develop their individual understanding of democracy through shared experiences. ReCreaDe did not aim to create a homogeneous collective nor a competitive body, but to enable the building of functioning and beneficial human relationships. Through different activities, ReCreaDe encouraged participants to articulate and reason through different perspectives in order to create 'a freer and more humane experience in which all share and to which all contribute' (Dewey, 1939, p. 254).

## **Background – Addressing the current crisis of European democracies**

The ReCreaDe project recognised the contradictory history of democracy as involving significant advances in 'legal equality, human rights and universal welfare ... alongside extreme social marginalisation, repressive violence and displacement on a vast scale' (Daly, 2021, p. 12). Moreover, for more than two decades, symptoms of a fundamental democratic crisis seem to proliferate in many European countries: participation rates in elections decline, traditional parties disappear. Instead, voters turn to extreme right wing and nationalistic parties, political movements and populist leaders, rather than established parties and ideas. At the same time, the growing distrust in political parties and democratic institutions seems to lead to more protest both against and in favour of political decisions. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated these tensions with enforced shutdowns, mandatory vaccinations, disinformation campaigns and political figures that fail to abide by the requirements they impose on others. Although the full social, political and educational fallout from this pandemic is yet to be seen, at all times democracy needs to hold inherent tensions in balance – tensions between individuals and society, between trust and distrust, between rights and responsibilities. Arguably, it is these irreconcilable tensions and dilemmas that perpetuate the need to engage with democracy as a creative, ongoing task.

## **Déjà vu? Crises of democracy in the 20th century between self-destruction and excess**

The current crisis of democracy is not the first to destabilise European democracies. In the course of the 20th century at least two severe moments of crisis have been identified. The first evolved in the 1930s and led to the rise of fascism and the establishment of authoritarian regimes in many European countries. This democratic crisis of the 1930s eventually led to the complete destruction of democracies that were re-established only after World War II. The second crisis of democracy was proclaimed in 1975 in a report with the same title; on behalf of the Trilateral Commission, Michel Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington and Joji Watanuki analysed the supposed 'crisis of democracy' that grew out of the protest movements since the end of the 1960s in Western democracies. According to their analysis, the undermining of traditional authorities by students' and workers' movements led to a crisis characterised by an 'excess of democracy' that endangered the governability of democracies in the Western world.

### **Revisiting the current crisis of democracy**

In light of these two very different crises of democracy, the current crisis demonstrates elements of both: there is a strengthening of right-wing and authoritarian parties and ideas on the one hand, but also numerous signs of a living democracy, such as active political participation. Particularly young people across Europe and the world democratically engage against climate change, racism, poverty, injustice and inequality, although they often do so outside the institutions of representative democracies. The global 'Fridays for future' movement can be interpreted as proof that democratic values are very much alive. Young people are seeking audible, legitimate forms of expression, while others use social media tools to disrupt and confuse conventional forms of participation in democratic societies. As forms of participation change and people seek different means to engage with others, it is our concern that young people rarely have the opportunity to wrestle with different views and perspectives in constructive ways. Individualistic educational cultures have promoted looking out for number one without paying attention to what happens to numbers two, three and four, or recognising the profound ways in which lives are interconnected.

Educational cultures, however, do not have to promote individualistic, competitive or collectivist ways of being, doing, knowing and relating. Edu-

cational cultures can also engage in the task of reimagining creative democracy as teachers and students meet day in, day out in 'prepolitical spaces' in which 'habits of the heart [futures and societies] are formed or deformed' (Palmer, 2011 p. 162). Democratic educators can seek to open spaces for participating in different ways and can value difference and forge connections, despite the challenges and uncomfortable moments this brings. Democratic educators can encourage and model critical thinking that seeks to look from different perspectives, to use reason and avoid dogmatically insisting on single right answers that cannot be challenged or enriched. Yet, all too easily, educators can feel alone with this responsibility, overwhelmed by the demands of educational and political systems, and often lack opportunities and resources to imagine education as part of creative democracy.

## **The conceptual framework**

### **From the crisis of democratic institutions to creative democracy**

In ReCreaDe we use the democratic crises of the 1930s and 1970s as heuristic examples to distinguish between two different perspectives on democracy that have been promoted by the American philosopher John Dewey – democracy as a way of life in contrast to democracy as an institutionalised political setting. In his short essay '*Creative democracy – The task before us*' written in 1939, Dewey described this distinction in the light of fascism in Europe and at the dawn of World War II. Although democratic institutions are embedded in their historical and sociopolitical context when they are established, Dewey argued that over time these institutions tend to obscure the fundamental ideas of democracy as a way of life. Dewey's ideal of creative democracy refers to a revitalisation of democracy as a way of living together based on the value of 'amicable cooperation' that guides people with different goals and needs through conflicts and disputes.

For Dewey (e.g. 1937), the foundation of democracy is faith in the capacities of human nature, faith in human intelligence, and in the power of pooled and cooperative experience. While Dewey acknowledged the role of institutions as part of society and cultural development, it was democracy as a moral and ethical ideal embodied in everyday practices that was of paramount importance. As Dewey considered school as the locus for passing on cultural knowledge and establishing practices that inform present and future participation in society, he emphasised the crucial relationship between de-



mocracy and education and the importance of continually cultivating a democratic ethos as a living relationship (Bernstein 2000) as an ongoing task that is a significant part of education.

As an interdisciplinary team from a large variety of countries and backgrounds, we designed an intensive 10-day programme in response to Dewey's idea of creative democracy and to enable participating students to develop their individual understanding of creative democracy through shared engagement. The overall intention of the programme was to enhance democratic practices in schools and education systems through the experience of democratic processes in the programme. The project was thus a response to the current crisis of democracy in many European Countries.

### **Relational concept - creative democracy in an interdisciplinary perspective**

Referring to Dewey's notion of creative democracy, ReCreaDe did not analyse democracy theories from a political science perspective. Instead, we explored the values and ideas associated with democracy through different disciplinary approaches, such as education, cultural geography, social sciences, language education, drama education, arts, and history of education. The identity and boundaries of 'democracy' are individually explored in relation to other important concepts such as education, language, tyranny, creativity, space and place, anarchism, justice and human rights. The goal of the project was neither to finalise a new theory of creative democracy nor a precise definition of creative democracy as a way of living, but rather to offer resources and experiences, ideas and expressions that can enrich reflections on democracy and democratic practices as an ongoing task.



Figure 4: Defining creative democracy

### Creating democracy through practice

Creative democratic processes are driven by individual curiosity, imagination and reflection as well as shared knowledge, discussions, reflection, conflict and cooperation. During the IPs, teachers and participants tried out different *practices* including experiential and cognitive learning, engaging their creativity and imagination, learning through action, interaction, performance, dialogue and discussion. The IPs offer different teaching arrangements to enhance students' learning through:

**Experience:** we considered the entire course as a journey – enriched through different experiences of the five senses of the body (visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, taste) and the three dimensions of the mind (rational, aesthetic, spiritual);

**Cognition:** selected lectures offered disciplinary perspectives on democracy as a way of life, outlining different theories to approach, explore and enact democracy;

**Creation:** students were asked to visualise their individual learning process in reflective sketchbooks to capture their responses and insights as they begin to take shape and as a resource to return to and engage with in their reflections;

**(Inter)action:** the programme was characterised by constant interaction with the material, the social and the cultural environment where it takes place;

**Performance:** participants were introduced to drama education and encouraged to explore, negotiate and to perform their ideas, to take up a stance in relation to others;

**Imagination:** participants were encouraged to think beyond facts and habits of institutionalised education, and to dare to open up to utopian thinking and different perspectives, as well as to imaginatively recognise the pain and potential of utopian and dystopian realities;

**Dialogue and discussion:** students were in constant dialogue and discussion with student teachers and university teachers from different countries and disciplines – during, before, between and after the formal classes.

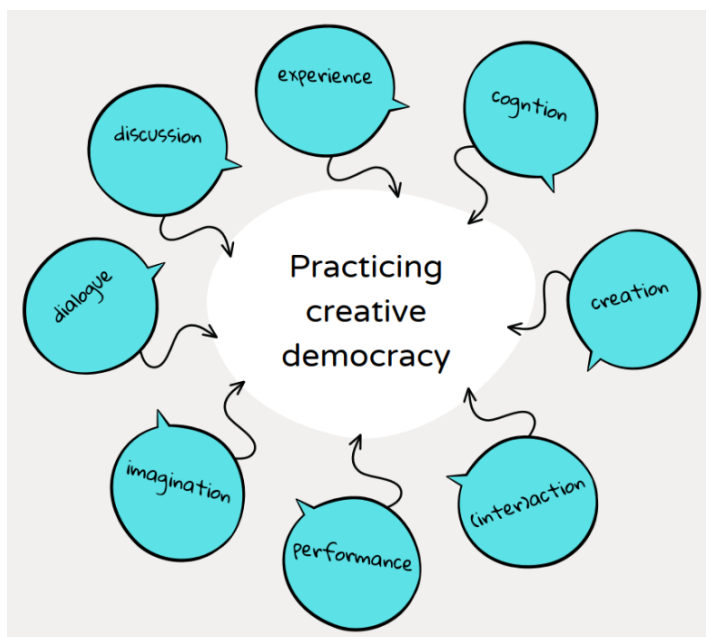


Figure 5: Practising creative democracy

## Creative democracy as a living concept

At the heart of the project lies the idea of 'creative democracy' as a relational, dynamic, progressive and subjective concept that each participant developed during the IP and which will continue to develop as part of their educational practice and experiences.

In the ReCreaDe project, creative democracy was understood as:

**A relational concept**, whose identity and boundaries are explored through the discussion of different themes, ideas and practices in relation to democracy, self and others.

**A dynamic concept**, which is not fixed as a theoretical construct, but constantly questioned and modified in response to inherent tensions that are part of democracy and sharing life together. Creative democracy can include practices from education, creativity, anarchism or spatial thinking.

**A progressive concept**, which constantly evolves through shared experiences, discussions and reflections throughout the project. Creative democracy is never understood as a finished concept, but rather a permanent work in progress.

**A subjective concept** based on individual learning and experiences, embedded in shared values and understandings. The concept of creative democracy will thus vary among teachers and participants.

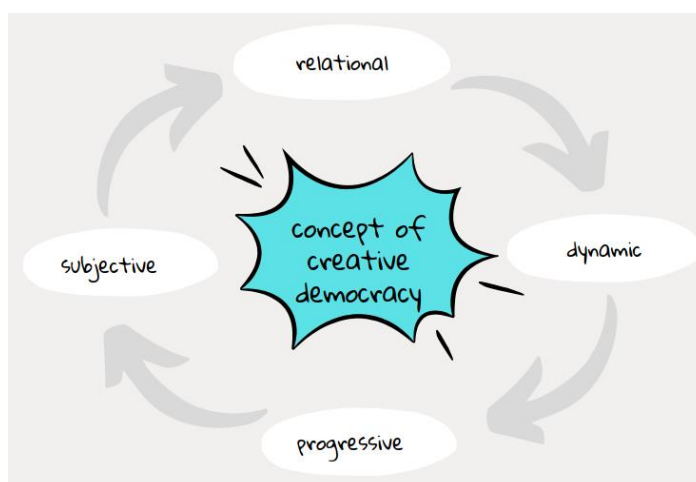


Figure 6: Creative democracy as a concept

In the course of the ReCreaDe-project, these conceptual ideas of democracy were constantly developed, discussed, reflected on and modified through the IPs and preparatory meetings as well as dialogue with stakeholders and invited experts. This definition challenged us as staff and student participants on the programme to critically reflect on our own habits and assumptions. Dewey (1933/1998) observed that although thinking is as natural as breathing, it is necessary to learn how to think well. ReCreaDe is a call to critically reflect on, imaginatively respond to, and constructively contribute to democracy. By learning how to critically reflect, daring to explore different perspectives through different means, and learning to take a stand, the space for understanding the relationship between democracy and education expands.

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## **PART 1: DEMOCRACY AS LIVED EXPERIENCE**



# 1 RECREATING DEMOCRACY ALTOGETHER?

**Paul Moran and Frances Atherton**

*'Education and democracy. Re-imagining education and democracy. It's an international project. I'd like you to be a part of this collaborative research. Given the events going on around us, there couldn't be a more appropriate time. I think that your work on marginalisation and homelessness would lend the project an important perspective'. That was what Allan told us. We were immensely flattered and embarrassed. We were embarrassed because we worried that what we thought would undermine the very premise of what the project represented. This is what we thought:*

*And the re- in re-imagining? Does it need doing again, because the first time round the imagining went wrong? Wasn't education imagined democratically enough? Didn't education, the first time round, understand that this was what it was meant to do? The education and democracy thing, put them together? Are they connected? Really? Or was it worse than that? On the first imagining, was education, somehow, actually undemocratic? We know that's what's happened, that's what education does, but were we meant to imagine more convincingly that education would be otherwise? So is the second imagining, the re-imagining, of democracy, an attempt to put the thing right? An attempt, if you like, to educate education? An attempt to redeem education's stubborn ignorance? Well, as always, good luck with that one. It's not, as Nietzsche was fond of noting, over and over and over again, like the educating education project hasn't ever been tried before. You could start with Socrates, if you wanted to, noting perhaps the beginning of a confused relationship between education and democracy, and work your way up through Rousseau and Dewey: fill in the gaps as you prefer. All of them big projects. But maybe this time. Who knows?*

*Then we actually said what we thought. We were even more embarrassed. Don't put us in a room with a lot of students from across Europe, along with a clutch*

*of academic educationalists, because we don't want to magnify the level of this embarrassment: we didn't want our embarrassment to become a pan-Europe thing. That's what we said. But Allan thought, for some reason, it would be a good thing, so he went ahead and did it. And now, in retrospect, we think Allan was right.*

*So, this is the truth about our involvement in this project. Rather than thinking about this truth as a solution, as an answer, as the resolution of a difficulty, this is a truth that indicates something otherwise.*

## **Recreating democracy altogether?**

To say that education – as it has been commonly globally construed for some time, with its emphasis on levels of attainment, efficiency and effectiveness, regimes of assessment, and particularly its gatekeeping function, which determines access to capital and social assurance – is not competitive is the same as saying I am serving you Biryani not rice. And what link does this construal of education have to democracy? Unfortunately, and this is bitterly disappointing to many educationalists, the answer is basically, none. If anything, education is a profoundly anti-democratic practice.

Education, in terms of carrying out its procedures to determine who has access and the means to engage with which forms of knowledge, and the educational outcomes that this practice produces, not only reflects the social and economic hierarchy of a society; education, in Bourdieu's terms, reproduces the divisions that make up this hierarchy, and reaffirms the inherent differences in power and advantage that are part of a society's structure. How do we know this, and how have we always known this? One of the most straightforward ways of gauging the effect that education has on the distribution of generalised capital (where generalised capital includes the economic capital, as well as other forms of capital that are realised through increased appropriation of leisure, health, and cultural opportunities and outcomes) is by looking at who has access to what forms of education, and how educational outcomes are distributed. This is revealing because, as already mentioned, education primarily functions as a gatekeeper in determining which people have access to what level of capital and social assurance. Internationally a very entrenched picture emerges: the more marginalised that you are, then the poorer your level of educational attainment will be; and consequently, the more minimal your acquisition of and ability to acquire capital will also be. The greater your capital, then the greater access to higher levels of educational attainment you have; and consequently, you



also have access to greater levels of capital than others who are less advantaged. There is no redistribution of levels of educational capital, just as there is no redistribution of generalised cultural capital (of which educational capital is a part). If anything, global inequalities are becoming more pronounced, in another round of the marginalised being relentlessly screwed over. None of this is a secret; and none of this knowledge is new. But as already mentioned, for many educationalists this is upsetting.

It's equally awkward to describe the second elephant in the room, but we've started now, and it's too late to stop. The second elephant in the room is: pedagogy. Pedagogy does a lot of things, it performs a lot of functions; and one of the functions that pedagogy performs is to make educationalists feel better about education and its inherently anti-democratic practices. Pedagogy helps some educationalists to forget about and overlook the upsetting knowledge that education is part of the process of relentlessly screwing over the marginalised. There's no doubt that some pedagogies are more decent than others, are more inclusive than others, are more epistemologically challenging than others, are more caring than others, are more supportive than others, are more appropriate in certain situations than others; but none of them have any impact on the redistribution of capital. When was it ever really plausible that group work in middle school classrooms was going to lead to economic opportunities for the poor? Wouldn't even asserting that there was such a link be more banal than tenuous? But this doesn't stop many educationalists from passionately imagining otherwise, despite empirical data perpetually evidencing that this is a dream. Dewey is such an example; indeed, a magnificent example of educationalists dreaming that education through pedagogy is other than it is; and that group work in middle school classrooms really will lead to economic opportunities for the poor; and more, that it will result in a democratic, inclusive, egalitarian society. Such a magnificent dream! Such an audacious disengagement from empirical experience! Because there are no examples testifying to the educational obliteration of the marginalised class, on account of how the marginalised class through an application of appropriate pedagogy have been lifted into middle class being, so that the marginalised class no longer exists. And really, and this is one of the outstanding reasons why Dewey is such an iconic educational dreamer, how could this ever be?

If the Covid-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it is that we rely on the least well paid and most exploited to carry out the basic jobs to keep society going. Jobs such as those undertaken by care workers, public

transport staff, cleaners, retail workers, and many of those working as front-line health professionals. The necessity that this historically low paid work takes place has not disappeared; this being historically and currently low paid work, that continues to be undertaken by those with the least generalised capital. Of course, there are incidents of individuals from communities and families who have been marginalised who do experience social mobility, within which the acquisition of educational capital has played a significant part. But this doesn't change the embarrassing fact that jobs that need to be undertaken by care workers, public transport staff, cleaners, retail workers, and many of those working as frontline health professionals, still exist. Those forms of employment are continuing to be precarious, underpaid, exploitative, and continue to be occupied by those with the least generalised capital and with the most generalised vulnerability. For Dewey to be more than an audacious, magnificent dreamer would mean, not that there were a number of individual instances where education had facilitated social mobility; but instead that pedagogy properly applied would have somehow redistributed the power, social prestige, and economic remuneration across society, so that care workers, public transport staff, cleaners, retail workers, and all of those working as frontline health professionals, were the recipients of the same levels of generalised capital as everyone else. Having someone whose parents were migrants working in poorly paid jobs in the hospitality and care industries, who then becomes, against all the odds, a quantity surveyor, or a lawyer, or a surgeon, is not an educational victory: it is the flimsiest of materials, that some educationalists require, in order to persist with Dewey's dream, and its disconnection from empirical experience.

And so that's basically it, the position in which we found ourselves. Indeed, there's almost nothing more, at least nothing more very useful, to be said about the subject. It would, of course, be possible to say more, but it's not going to change this basic pattern in relation to democracy and education's anti-democratic nature. So, instead, we chose to investigate the experience of the marginalised, the inevitable collateral damage of education's work, the leftovers, the *objet petit a* of education's dream. And the marginalised people that we have tended to focus on for much of our time are chronically homeless people. Because we have wanted to try to understand the experience of being marginalised, the bulk of the work that we have undertaken has been through ethnography. Ethnographic work organises itself around experience and the environments through which experience is generated. Unlike education, other than understanding and recording experi-

ence, ethnography is without goals, it doesn't claim to be transformative; but perhaps, unlike education, if ethnography does have a transformative dimension, it is in relation to those undertaking the ethnography, including those who read and in other ways engage with ethnographic studies, that any change might take place. This is the form of education that we would like to propose:

*Instruction seeps through the pavement cracks. Comprehensive; this savage schooling is a relentless doctrine, and mastery is hard-earned. A different kind of knowledge is bequeathed as educators acquaint this particular class with a certain kind of fact. No gentle guidance here, this apprenticeship is gruelling and the advancement, the valediction if you will, is miserable hardship and often, death.*

For five years, my colleague and I were involved in ethnographic research which sought to find out what it was like to be homeless. Gradually, we became part of the lives of a group of people who lived in Chester, a small city in the north of England, and what distinguished this group, and marked them out, was chronic homelessness. It is easy to describe work like this as finding out about the 'homeless', but in this categorisation, the person is lost, the individual is overlooked, more easily forgotten, and this de-humanising neglects what it is like to *be* homeless, for the person who *is* homeless. It somehow manages to make the bleak reality of living a homeless life more tolerable, if we don't in fact think about the souls who actually tolerate it.

Our work was about the people we slowly came to know; Kelly, Jamie, Big Clare, Ben, Dale and the others who, as we got to know them better, began to share with us some of the details of their lives. Their home was the street; shop doorways, car parks, subways, pavements and park benches were a source of refuge, if hostels, or other emergency, temporary accommodation were unavailable. Continuously homeless for three or more years, theirs was a life of grim predictably, as Addiction devised each day's happenings. The relentless compulsion to procure enough illegal drugs and alcohol to satisfy a voracious consumption, governed every living moment. Crime, sex work and begging were the common means to generate money to feed their habits, but in case you might be feeling a sense of compassion, Bourgois and Schonberg (2009) remind us of a common refrain heard in their work with homeless people they got to know in Edgewater, San Francisco: 'no one put a gun to my head and made me shoot heroin' (p. 19).

For Kelly and the others in Chester, what had brought them to a homeless life? What kind of instruction have they known? What sort of educator have they met? How have they been shaped to be the person they are now?

No one put a gun to their head and made them shoot heroin? But someone did. Who could have had such a monumental impact upon every scintilla of Kelly's life, of Jamie's life, of Dale's, of Big Clare's, of Ben's...that they found themselves with no alternative, no other way, but to live a life of poverty, addiction, adversity and homelessness? Sexual Abuse, Family Breakdown, Mental Illness, Fractured Relationships, Physical Cruelty, Exploitation, Debt, Truancy, Being in Care, Prison, Domestic Violence, Childhood Neglect and Crime. That's who. When we talked with Kelly and the others, they all, without exception, told us of their chaotic, violent, neglectful, abusive up-bringsings. Not in those words, though, as usually their harrowing recollections were told in a matter-of-fact, impassive, almost casual way. But chaos, violence, neglect and abuse, was what it was.

When we grew up, we might have been lucky enough to be able to depend upon people for guidance and support, those who were always there for us, whom we knew loved us and cared for us, were happy to spend time with us, wanted to help us do our best, didn't mind when we 'weren't ourselves', invested in us, in every possible way, to be the best person we could be...whether they be loving parents or dedicated teachers or devoted grandparents...isn't this how it's supposed to be? These people were absent in the lives of Kelly and the others. In its place, certain understandings were rammed home again and again; you're worthless, useless and corrupt.

*Profound suffering ennobles; it separates. One of the most subtle forms of disguise is Epicureanism and a certain ostentatious bravery of taste which takes suffering frivolously and arms itself against everything sorrowful and profound.*  
(Nietzsche, 1966, p. 209)

Kelly, Jamie, Dale, Big Clare, Ben and the others, learnt about their inadequacy so assuredly and came to comprehend their pointlessness with such certainty, it would have made their teachers proud. Such embedded understandings drawn from the people they met and continue to meet, and the experiences they had and continue to have, are so well indoctrinated, that they have had to learn new kinds of proficiencies which they have been forced to cultivate for themselves, and which enable them now to survive, in the circumstances they find themselves. Their parents, too, had often been required to perfect such competences, where a legacy of abuse was all they could find in themselves to bestow.

Recalling Bourgois and Schonberg, they too found that the pain in the intimate lives of the Edgewater homeless is exacerbated by the dissonance

between their valuation of traditional kinship roles and the reality of their lives. The nuclear family ideal has never been an option for most of the Edgewater homeless. The family as an institution is a crucial network for resources and for the reproduction of cultural and ideological values, but it is also often a crucible for violence (p. 208).

Although Chester has in place an impressive range of support for homeless people, with civic interventions, support from third sector organisations like self-help groups and community groups, and a long-established charity that operates a day centre, offers medical services and supported accommodation, 'a safety net to those in crisis', CATH (Chester Aid to the Homeless), inevitably, there are failings. Despite the number of workers involved, both paid and voluntary, dedicated to the welfare of homeless people, there are occasions when what is needed is not possible, or available, or the inflexibility of the bureaucratic structures and administrative requirements that govern services obstruct access when it is most needed.

As Rachel and Jimmy (a homeless couple we met on the streets) told us:

*When it's freezing, they (the SWEPE Team, Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) say, we shall take your tent away and put you into a warm church overnight, but then it means us leaving our tent, and our sleeping bags, and each other, so we'd rather stay in the tent, because at least we've got that tent, and those sleeping bags the day after. One time we had icicles in the corners of the tent and we couldn't pick it up. You know when you get the warmth inside the tent, you get all condensation inside the actual tent, it makes icicles on every corner of the friggin' tent, oh it's so cold.*

Instruction seeps through the pavement cracks. If you live on the streets, you learn about contempt, revulsion and exile, loneliness, monotony and desperation. The pavement is a harsh schooling and its educators are many. Under such experience, the Epicureanism of Kelly and the others, which Nietzsche speaks of with such flamboyant disregard for circumstance, is intensified.

*We walk past  
uncomfortable, unmoved?  
Busily, we go on our way  
avoiding their beseeching gaze, their resigned stare  
Any spare change?  
Hour after hour, until there's enough  
sleeping bags, a scant relief from the cold.  
Hard pavements, sodden with rain,  
sitting quietly.  
Hour after hour  
How long to make £10? The cost of a rock of crack these days.*

*The odd pound bumps up the haul  
notes, infrequent surprises.  
Hour after hour  
Not enough yet, so wait.  
Wait  
Every day the same.*

Never likely to be free from the imperious power that Addiction commands, Democracy steps forward, unabashed. Someone new? This resourceful, self-reliant, cunning, brave character, stands alongside Nietzsche's Übermensch, his self-overcoming individual, 'reduced to his own law-giving, to his own arts and stratagems for self-preservation, self-enhancement, self-redemption' (1966, p. 201). Despite the bleak reality of their everyday lives, Kelly, Jamie, Dale, Big Clare, Ben and the others, have long embraced the qualities that both Nietzsche's Übermensch and Democracy embody. This fortitude that Kelly and the others display affords them a certain freedom within obvious limits. It allows these courageous few to summon the strength to survive experiences few could endure, for as Kelly told us, 'I've seen people [newly homeless on the street] ... their head's gone in two days'.

To be homeless is a marginalised existence, lived outside accepted social and political conventions and, as such, the particular rights and privileges to which citizens of the State should be entitled appear to be largely withheld from these particular members. A part of the common people, yet apart from the common people, the very essence of democracy seems lost. As we drift past pretending not to notice, homeless people are disregarded. We remind them, in this way, that they are not worth noticing, not worth our attention or concern. Beyond the embrace of Rights; at the brink of our consciousness; a kind of small democracy seems fitting?

Perhaps a momentary respite...

*She was sitting on the pavement with a sleeping bag pulled up to her waist. Crouching down, I gave her a pound, "Do you need anything?" "Thanks, can I have a hot chocolate?" Returning with the drink, I sat on the pavement next to her and held out my hand, "I'm Frances, what's your name?" Rhiannon held my hand and began to tell me about her escape from domestic violence in Wales, that she'd come up to Chester a few nights before, and had been raped the night she arrived. I just listened. "Can I get you anything?" She said that she had got no clothes and that was why the sleeping bag was pulled up around her. "Can I get you some things, what would you like?" She pointed to my leggings "Some of those please?" Getting up, I asked her what size she was and said I'd be back later that day with the things. I rushed back to work. Leggings, vests, knickers, a jumper, socks... Primark did me proud and clutching the bulging bag, I headed off to find Rhiannon. At least she may be a bit more comfortable, a bit warmer I thought. Paul and I never saw her again. We searched for her around Chester for days but couldn't find her. All we hope is that she is safe and off the streets.*

## Meeting Rachel and Jimmy...

*I leant down and put two pounds in front of her on the sleeping bag, "Can I get you anything?" "A big Mac please", then, struggling to her feet she said, "Mind me stuff" and hobbled off down the street. "Where's Rachel?" a chap said as he came around the corner. I told him that she'd gone off "down there", pointing. "Mind the stuff while I go and get her, she's my fiancé". I stood there minding everything they had. Which wasn't much. On top of the two unzipped sleeping bags which were spread out on the pavement, a plastic bag with cans in, empty sandwich wrappers, drained lager cans lying on their side, brown paper bags screwed up and empty plastic drinks bottles, were strewn around.*

*I could see them coming back. Jimmy, as I later came to know, was helping Rachel as she limped along awkwardly. "I'll get your McDonald's now". When I got back, handing over the Big Macs, I asked could I sit with them, and as she ate, Rachel began to tell me about her "fleeing domestic violence", her feeling safe on the streets here, about being able to shout to anyone around for help, "Hello" she cried, as if to show me, about icicles in the tent because of the condensation, and spooning together in the tent to keep warm. Presently, it was time to go, and getting up, I asked could I come and talk with them again. "Yes" Rachel said, and smiled as I left.*

Reaching out, a genuine concern, a tentative connection, a sensitive inquiry, however fleeting these may be, in some small way, may awaken perhaps long forgotten – if ever known – memories of tenderness, sympathy and acceptance? A spirit of democracy, it could be said, and all this may evoke, remembers that 'homelessness' is about human misery and is not a faceless dilemma. Deserving of adversity? Theirs is a life of brokenness and damage, ravaged by abuse and addiction, and where our small democratic acts always have their place, especially when all else fails.

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## 2 THE DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM

**Rebekka Diestelkamp and Holger Jahnke**

*The last semester of Rebekka's Master's programme was shaped mostly by frantic planning of the student conference she had to organise with her classmates as part of an exam. The instructions were as clear as they were irritatingly open: all students of the year were to organise a conference with some form of individual, academic contribution.*

*The first plenary session with the 21 students of that year was one of the most frustrating events Rebekka had ever attended. It consisted mostly of long discussions: how do we speak with each other? How do we make decisions? And how do we want to organise ourselves? The weekly plenary sessions got hardly any less exhausting and, in addition to the meetings in smaller groups for specific topics, each week was quickly filled to the brim with endless meetings, discussions and planning.*

*It is hard to say when the group reached the point where it managed to actually talk about **content** – in a way the discussions around the **how** never went away, even as the **what** became more dominant. A consensus-based decision-making process had quickly established itself, but all the way until the actual conference the group asked itself, how do we make sure everybody gets heard? How do we accommodate different needs, different wishes, ideas, suggestions? How do we disagree? How do we deal with conflict? When the conference finally did happen, Rebekka could not shake the feeling that all of that had not actually been about the conference at all, but it was all just a big social experiment. Perhaps it was.*

*A few months later, when the authors travelled to Budapest by train together for the first ReCreaDe meeting, Holger raised the question about the meaning of democracy. Referring to Gunnar Olsson's writings – as always – he playfully initiated an epistemological journey towards the profound meaning of democracy starting from life-world experience. Rebekka's first-hand frustrating as well as fruitful experience*



served as an anchor point: spending an entire semester working in a group that had to establish *how* to work together, while knowing that the final grade was exclusively based on *what* is the outcome.

During the 12-hour train ride, the topic bounced back and forth between epistemological and experiences, slowly boiling down to the distinction between *process* and *outcome*. Eventually, the crucial question arose: *Is democracy a means or an end?* To address this distinction in the ReCreaDe course, the authors later developed an activity that focuses on reflection on the democratic process while ‘pretending’ to target a ‘concrete result’.

## The democratic classroom

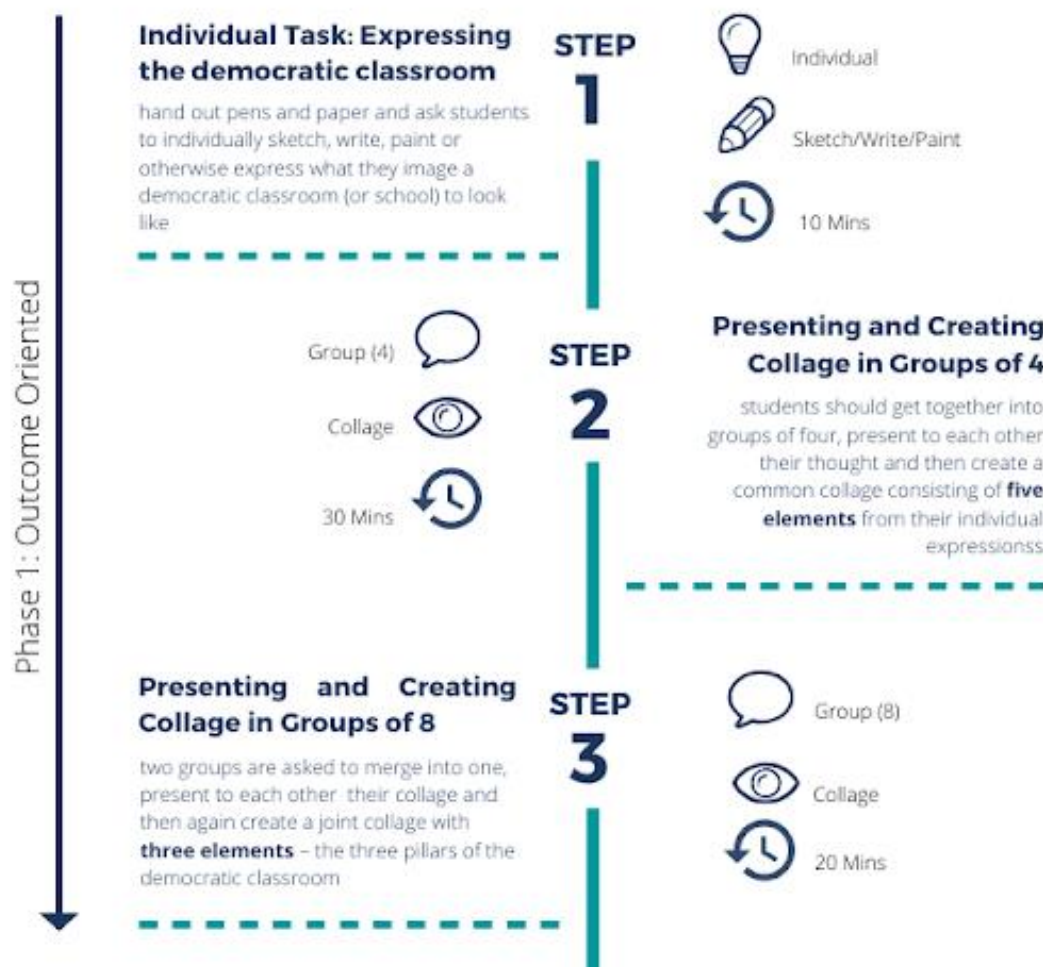
*The democratic classroom* is a group exercise that on a first level animates students to imagine and express their ideas of a democratic classroom or school. Throughout the activity, the students have to negotiate and compromise on their ideas in order to bring them together as one. On a second level, once the group results are achieved, the students’ attention is guided towards reflection on the negotiation process and the individual role within this, rather than the result of this activity. The general aim is thus two-fold: 1. to creatively engage in imagining the materiality and practices of a democratic school, and 2. to reflect on a democratic group process. In total, the activity takes around two hours and has been conceptualised for a group of around 32 students. Should this number vary, the small group sizes should be changed accordingly. The different group sizes throughout the exercise serve to encourage a process of negotiation and compromise. Except for pens and paper, no further material is needed, although further crafting tools (such as scissors, colouring pencils, glue, etc. can be supplied if available).

The activity follows three phases. **Phase one**, made up of three steps, focuses on the development and creative expression of ideas on the connection between democracy and education. It is in this phase that students further their understanding of what democracy in the classroom means to them. This phase is primarily output-oriented. The **second phase** of the exercise is the reflection phase, in which assumptions about the meaning of the activity are turned around. Instead of taking a closer look at their results, this phase encourages students to turn towards the process of the previous phase. **Phase three** ties phase one and two back together in connecting their results and their reflections in a plenary discussion. This phase targets spe-

cifically at re-transferring the ideas and experiences into the concrete learning environment.

Following Figure 7, a more detailed explanation is provided for each step of phases 1-3. The chapter concludes with the pedagogical reflection on the value of this activity, what we have learned putting this activity into practice, and suggestions for further development.

## The Democratic Classroom



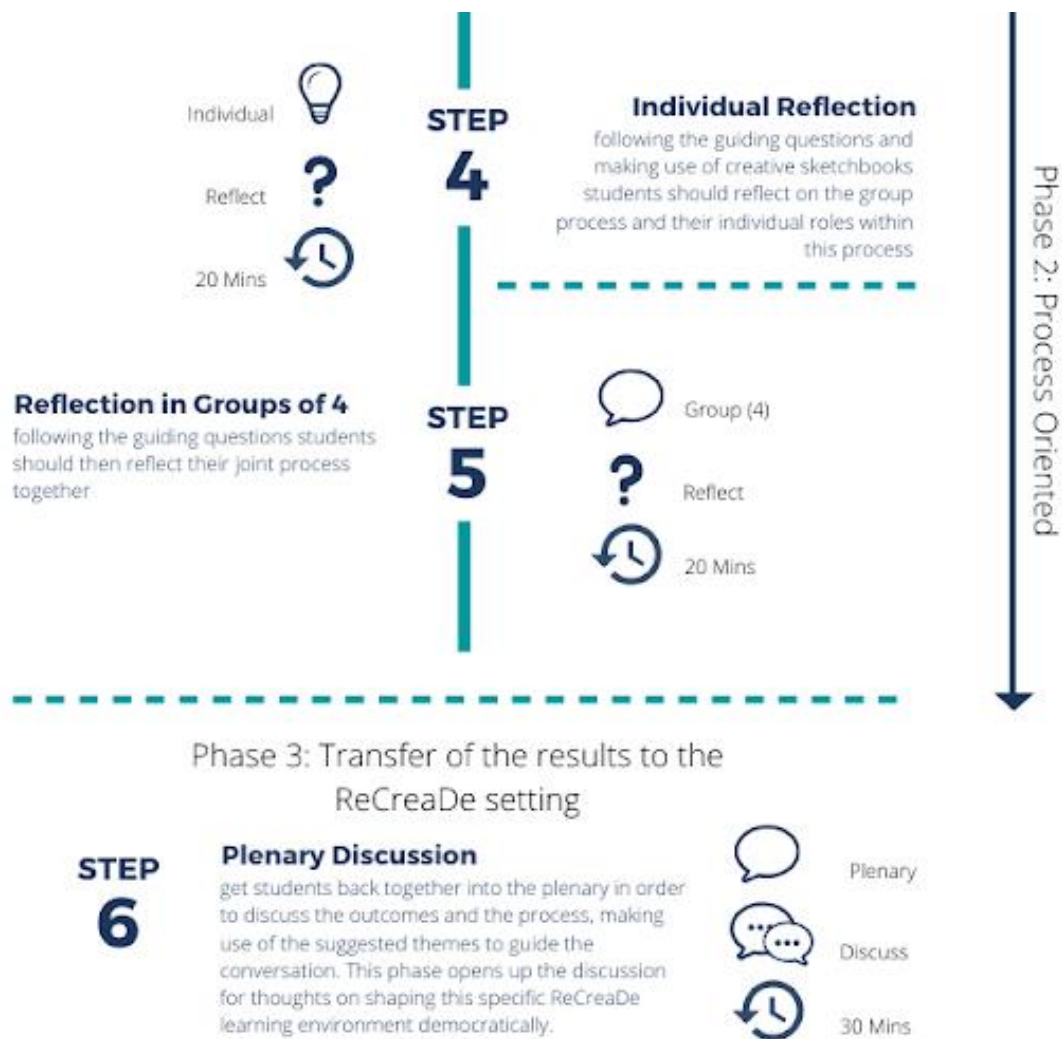


Figure 7: Phases of the democratic classroom

## Phase 1: Outcome-oriented

The first phase of the exercise serves to encourage students to conceptualise an ideal democratic classroom, drawing first on their individual experiences and then negotiating their ideas in different group settings.

### Step 1: Individual Task – Expressing the democratic classroom (10 minutes)

The session begins by handing out paper and asking students to individually sketch, write, paint or otherwise express what they imagine a democratic classroom (or school) to look like. The goal of this first step is to open up a space for creative imagination without any restrictions. Students can draw

on their individual school experiences and/or theoretical ideas of how schools should be in order to develop their own vision. The format allows various ways of expression and the imagination to roam freely. Input from the facilitator at this stage should be limited to avoid setting boundaries for the students. Ideally, at the end of this step, there will be as many different visions and creations on paper as there are students in the room.

### **Step 2: Presenting and creating a collage in groups of four (30 minutes)**

In step two, students are asked to get together in groups of four, present to each other their ideas, and then jointly create a collage of their individual thoughts. The collage should consist of five elements only – five elements that make up their common idea of a democratic classroom. A time limit should be set for this activity, allowing the groups around 30 minutes in total to complete their collage. The aim of this step is to engage with their respective ideas and notions of democracy in the classroom and to move from an individual to a collective output. The restrictions on elements and time serve to focalise the discussion and drive a negotiation process, confronting students with the need to make decisions under pressure as a group. While the output is thus a more coherent idea of a democratic classroom, students simultaneously experience and shape a typical democratic process without pre-reflection.

### **Step 3: Presenting and creating a collage in groups of eight (20 minutes)**

In Step 3, two groups are asked to merge into one, creating groups of eight students. The two groups will again present their collage to each other and, mirroring the previous process, create one joint collage this time selecting only three elements – the three pillars of the democratic classroom. Again, students should be limited to around 20 minutes to find a common solution. This step aims at similar results to Step 2; however, the students now identify with and defend their collective product as opposed to an individual one. This further selection allows new dynamics to emerge between the two groups and between the individual group members.

## **Phase 2: Process-oriented**

The second phase serves to reflect on the individual role in the negotiation processes as well as the collective group dynamics as a democratic process.

### **Step 4: Individual reflection (20 minutes)**

Now that the student groups have identified three pillars of the democratic classroom by sharing and negotiating their ideas, in Step 4 students are encouraged to reflect on the group process and their individual role in this process that just happened, rather than the end result. This step aims to navigate the transition from output-oriented working towards self-reflection; questioning individual democratic behaviour and group dynamics. The reflective sketchbooks can help students to document their thoughts and reflections individually for this step and the following questions help to focus on pre-reflective, partly automated behaviour in decision-making processes:

- How was the process for you?
- Did any of your ideas end up on the final collage?
- Whose ideas made it to the very end? Whose didn't?
- How did you make group decisions about what to put in the collage?
- In the decision-making process – who spoke? Who didn't? Did you feel that everybody got heard?
- If you were to do this process again, would you do anything differently?

### **Step 5: Reflection in groups of four (20 minutes)**

In Step 5 the students return to their original groups of four (See Step 2) and are again asked to reflect on the process together. The goal of this step is to share their individual experiences of the common process and potentially also discuss different perspectives on this process. Conforming or conflicting views might then help to discuss the difficulties of democratic processes in general. To guide their discussion, the following questions might be of use to the students:

- How was this process as a group? Did you experience it differently to each other, or not?

- Do you feel like you collectively acted democratically in this exercise?
- What does it mean to act democratically?
- What is the democratic classroom here, in this learning setting?

### **Phase 3: Transferring the results to the ReCreaDe setting**

This last phase serves to transfer the results and the reflections on the processes into the actual learning environment the group is working in. The focus in this phase is on how we want to organise our own 'democratic classroom' in material and social terms.

#### **Step 6: Plenary discussion**

In this final step, the students come back together in the plenary to share their individual thoughts and group discussions. At the same time, this step aims to bring the results of their 'democratic classrooms' back into play as well as their thoughts on the process so as to bring the two together. At a meta level, the plenary can be used as a space to discuss the democratic learning possibilities of this specific learning experience during the intensive programme. In terms of the outcomes of the group exercise, it can be asked how what has been learnt can be transferred to this setting. What materiality do we want to create that would support a democratic learning process? In terms of their thoughts on the process of this activity it can similarly be asked on a bigger scale what meanings, communication styles and practices do we want to live out during these ten days. How do we want to organise our decision-making processes? How do we want to deal with conflict? How do we make sure everybody gets heard?

#### **Pedagogical reflection**

This session is shaped by two parallel lines – engaging creatively with thoughts on the democratic classroom or school in its material and social dimension as well as then contemplating and discussing pre-reflective democratic processes and group dynamics. Phase 1 focuses primarily on the first, whereas Phase 2 leads over to the latter.

The guiding questions encourage students to reflect on their own actions and processes and ask whether they could be experienced as (un)democratic. Through these reflections they might uncover dynamics of unintended power relations. From our observations, it might turn out that there are self-appointed spokespeople in some groups who tend to lead the discussion and/or presentation. This can be perceived either as a positive driving force or as negatively taking space from other people. The other participants might feel dominated, or they might be perfectly comfortable in the passive role of simply observing others being more active. In the discussion, for example, it turned out that the level of English language competence seemed to have a strong influence on the role a student would take in the group discussions.

How decisions are made, particularly under time pressure, might similarly end up being top-down, or might follow a typical voting system – maybe some groups even followed a consensus-based approach. Phase two should allow for reflection on these topics, giving space to reconsider both the *what* of the result as well as the *how* of the process leading to the result. The visions of a democratic classroom – as generated in Phase 1 of the exercise (output oriented) – usually focussed on giving more voice to students in school. The mechanisms were often oriented towards the conventional idea of institutionalised representative democracy organising majority votes and creating representative positions. This seemed to be a way to take away decision-making power from parents, teachers and head teachers. Sometimes, unanimous votes were introduced as a mechanism to respect single needs and desires.

In Phase 3, all of these thoughts and visions can be applied directly to the IP itself. Here, the focus was the question of how to organise discussions and debates and deal with conflicts, and how to encourage marginalised or timid people to express their ideas and needs. How can we create an atmosphere that encourages everybody to speak up? How can we prevent language competence from determining the roles in the group process? How can we make everybody's voice be heard in the multilingual environment that many classrooms in Europe now embody?

Unfortunately, we did not have time to give this discussion enough room at the end of this session. It would have been a great point to consider how to implement creative democracy in education together: how can we, as a group of student teachers and lecturers from very different backgrounds make this a democratic place together? How do we want to make

decisions? How do we want to talk to each other? How do we cater for frustrations, dissensus and feelings of not being heard? How can we make sure to include everybody's voice in the decision-making process? In the short time that we did manage to start considering this all together, it was interesting to hear that some students also expressed the wish *not* to have to speak, but simply to listen attentively and not necessarily participate in all discussions. It would have been particularly fruitful to consider this as an open question: does not speaking mean not participating? How do we ensure everyone gets heard without forcing anyone to speak? In our experience of the first ReCreaDe IP with full timetables and limited flexibility, it seems too easy for these important discussions to get sidelined. In retrospect, it would have been important to make time in our programme to directly return to these questions.

Some of those questions have come up again and again in team meetings: How can we make this IP more democratic? How do we make sure the students feel like everything we talk about does not just remain as an abstract theory, but is applied right here and now? What about our own positionalities towards democracy in the classroom? Where are our own individual limits on democratic participation? It would be interesting to reflect on this further at a later point in the programme in order to make these experiences beneficial for the IP itself.

## **Conclusion: the democratic classroom and creative democracy**

The proposed session should be held at the beginning of a course on democracy as it explores the two Deweyan dimensions of democracy. Based on previous experiences in the context of education and beyond, participants are asked to imagine and develop an institutional setting (the democratic classroom) on the one hand and reflect on their individual experiences of democratic practices on the other. The later introduction of Dewey's dichotomous model could draw on these first creative explorations of democracy in education.

In the discussions, links to other themes of the conceptual framework were already evoked: besides school and education as given categories in the democratic classroom, the role of power, language, and material space for democratic processes come into the discussion. The evolution of the discussions can, of course, change in subsequent IPs as the themes greatly



depend on what the students bring into play. However, it is very likely that any discussion in this activity will generate debates on topics that come up later on in the course.

Drawing on existing knowledge and previous experiences of democracy in educational contexts, this session serves to generate and reflect new and shared experiences of democratic processes. This group process serves as an anchor point in the group building process, but also as a common thematic point of departure for the imagination of creative democracy. Besides experience, the activity also engages a variety of relevant competences, such as imagination and creation, dialogue and discussion, as well as social interaction between the participants. Being at the beginning of the programme, the generated visions of a democratic classroom can be rather conventional and neither utopian nor excessively creative. Creativity relies very much on self-confidence and trust in others, so it could be interesting to have the same students create a democratic classroom at the end of the IP.

### 3 THE ROLE OF RESPONSIBILITY IN DEMOCRACY EDUCATION

**Perttu Matias Männistö**

*Josephine (Moate) once said to me that my perspective towards education and being human is based on relationality, and I do agree with her. I do, indeed, perceive being human, and following from that, education, as something where we act in relation to each other. As Arendt (2013) stated:*

*The assumption that individuals behave in isolation and do not act with respect to each other is the conformism that lies at the root of the modern science of economics, whose birth coincided with the rise of society and which, together with its chief technical tool, statistics, became the social science par excellence (Arendt, 2013, pp. 40-41).*

*I have often explained my ideas, in contrast, in a manner that we are like objects that can move in different directions only inasmuch as there is space to move, hence the relationality. It does not matter how much we have potential or great ideas about how to act if others do not act in relation to us/with us. In other words, if other people are not moved by our actions, nothing happens. This is also where responsibility, as one of our most important inner traits, comes into being. As we act in the world, which is inhabited by other humans and beings both living and non-living, if we do not care about our personal responsibility and consider 'how do my actions matter in the bigger picture?' we as a whole will fail. This is because the totality of humanity consists of individuals, each of whom has personal responsibility towards themselves, others, and the shared world. Should we as educators forget or dismiss this, we will, I think, fail in education (see Dewey, 1927).*

*As democracy is based on respect for diversity, and as I think respect and responsibility are strongly interrelated, responsibility has a major role to play in education that aims to strengthen the democratic thinking and acting of distinct individuals. As our world of today shows, often in the worst of ways, if we act only on behalf of our egoistic desires, usually guided by the pre-reflexive side of our being (e.g. Mälkki & Green, 2014), without ever thinking about our responsibility towards others, problems will follow. Pre-reflexive, literally meaning 'before reflection' (see for more Merleau-Ponty, 2005), refers to all of the habits and modes of being, acting, doing and thinking that we have internalised. In consequence, if we have internalised a weak sense of responsibility, our actions are most likely to be guided by selfish desires.*

## **Responsibility brings ethics into action**

My main idea concerning responsibility (in education) comes from Emmanuel Levinas. He explicates in his book (2008) that none of us are interchangeable in our responsibility towards others (see Biesta, 2006, p. 56). I understand Levinas to mean that however I act, it is me acting. If a student punches another student, the teacher cannot apologise to the student who was punched; the one who did the punching also has to be the one who apologises. In contrast Biesta (2006, p. 56) argues that our modern educational systems tend to create the opposite experience, i.e., socialising us to think that we *are*, in fact, interchangeable (also Männistö, 2020). The notion of people as interchangeable can be largely traced back to the ideals of industrial society, where one person could be replaced with another when the goal is purely to meet a labour quota. Or, at least, that was the argument. However, on closer examination, this idea is heavily problematic. Surely, because we are unique, singular beings, nobody can replace us as individuals. Even in the factory, it is you, specifically, who is pushing the button and being a co-worker to others. If something out of the ordinary happens during your shift, the supervisor couldn't ask just 'anyone' what happened – they would have to ask you. What's more, your own, specific account of what happened during your shift will differ to some degree from anyone else's. Our ways of being in the world are all different; hence, we observe and interpret things distinctly. Following this, if you are replaced by another person, everything changes – then it is someone else pushing the button and hanging around in the breakroom.

We can easily perceive in our current times that taking responsibility for our actions is often not the norm. Donald Trump is a perfect example of

a person who has a huge amount of power as well as public visibility, and who lies and deceives repeatedly, rarely taking any responsibility for his words and actions. With the exposure that Trump has, his actions are bound to have an immense influence on many people and their actions. Moreover, our times have become more precarious – everything that we do seems to have an end date – no matter whether it is a human relationship or a new workplace. This again makes it ‘easier’ not to take responsibility over one’s actions, as it raises the question: What does it matter what I say or do if I’m leaving soon anyway? Indeed, for instance, in universities temporary projects have become the new norm, and Tinder has made it possible to be constantly on the lookout for new relationships. On Tinder, ‘ghosting’ is a term used to describe people who vanish without a word; isn’t this the same phenomenon – the inability to recognise one’s responsibility towards other unique beings? As I noted above – if I do not have a strong sense of responsibility towards others, but I rather act on behalf of my egoistic desires, how can I respect others? I argue that whenever we dismiss other people’s personal needs, wants and emotions, we are either unaware of or indifferent towards the need to be responsible human beings in relation to other beings. In contrast, people who have internalised their responsibility towards others are much less likely to lie and deceive others or to be indifferent towards the fact that others are real people with their own personal traits, emotions, wants, needs and backgrounds. As Merleau-Ponty (1964, p. 16) puts it, ‘Prior to all reflection, in conversation and the practices of life, we maintain a “personalist attitude” that [scientific] naturalism cannot account for’.

## **Dialogue and responsibility**

Levinas (2008) takes as his standing point concerning the (dialogic) meeting with others the ideas of Martin Buber, especially his work ‘I and Thou’. Buber points out that the I-Thou relationship is a reciprocal relationship, where individuals enter into a process of dialogue, creating a ‘shared space’ (also Arendt 2013). As individuals walk away from the dialogue, this space dissolves and the subjects may or may not be affected by the meeting. Levinas also brings forth the idea of Gabriel Marcel concerning what Marcel calls ‘an ontological mystery’. To Marcel, ontological mystery means that subjects cannot ever completely know themselves or each other. To Levinas, the

(dialogic) meeting is defined by this ontological mystery, where the Other<sup>1</sup> is always unknown to us. Thus, the shared I-Thou space does not create a chance to categorise others, but rather to learn about and with others in dialogue. Furthermore, these meetings define us. For example, if someone can make others laugh, they learn to perceive themselves as funny without ever necessarily being able to thematise the ontological dimension of being funny. In other words, the ontological dimension of funny is grasped in reality through meetings with others.

To Levinas, meeting others in dialogue is based on reciprocal responsibility:

*'Responsibility is elicited, brought about by the face of the other person, described as the breaking of the plastic forms of the phenomenality of appearance – straightforwardness of the exposure to death, and an order issued to me not to abandon the other [...] I not leaving its first person, which signifies the unlimited nature of that responsibility for the neighbour – I am never absolved with respect to others' (Levinas 2008, p. 33).*

Thus, to Levinas, our ethical responsibility towards others defines our existence – we are responsible beings whose responsibility is never absolved. Levinas refers to Heidegger's *Dasein* (being-there), where the Da (there) is an ethical dimension. This gives dialogue an inherent requirement of reciprocal responsibility not to impose or force anything onto others. Moreover, I cannot replace my responsibility with someone else, because 'I' is always at the forefront of my responsibility; I am not interchangeable, neither is anybody else.

When considering the element of responsibility in the way Levinas describes it, we can understand being a teacher as a vocation where the moment of meeting with others is embedded in the structure of the work. Teachers come into dialogue with students constantly, and often without asking any permission from them. Following this, teachers should be constantly sensitive to the fact that they have and use power to interrupt students and define their being. This is especially important when we consider the tradition of teachers. As teachers are servants of the state and often of the current status quo, there is a high likelihood that teachers will come to impose their (traditional) views about the world onto students through force. This, again, neglects the idea of democracy education, where also the student-subjects are allowed to bring forth their ideas as unique individuals

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<sup>1</sup> 'Other' (capitalised) refers to 'real, concrete Others' and 'other' to abstract others.

without always being evaluated from 'an outside reference point' (see Mälki & Green 2014). Moreover, if the dialogic process is understood as entailing reciprocal responsibility, where different subjects are expected to be ethically responsible towards each other, a radical redefining of relationships in education is required.

## **Session on emotions, dialogue and pluralism**

*But only man can express this distinction and distinguish himself, and only he can communicate himself and not merely something – thirst or hunger, affection, or hostility or fear. In man, otherness, which he shares with everything that is, and distinctness, which he shares with everything alive, become uniqueness, and human plurality is the paradoxical plurality of unique beings. (Arendt 2013, p. 176)*

As the corona virus pandemic restrictions have prevented me from trying out my ideas as I would have hoped during the IPs, I focus here instead on the session on emotions, dialogue and pluralism that I held during the first ReCreaDe IP 2019. I will, however, present my lesson only loosely, introducing the ideas I used during the session to develop dialogue around the dilemma of how to educate people to take more responsibility. I think this way of loosely introducing one's ideas gives more room for the reader to interpret and apply the ideas in a manner more appropriate for them.

My goal for the session was to cultivate as authentic and personal discussions as possible to allow the student teachers to bring forth their individual thoughts. The session was structured with the simple aim of enabling the participants to discuss different phenomena calmly, respectfully and peacefully from their own distinct perspectives with the following steps:

1. Write down three things that are meaningful to you. In a few sentences, describe why and how these things are important to you and/or how they have become meaningful to you.
2. Choose a partner. Adopt a comfortable posture, look your partner in the eye, and focus on the present. Tell (only tell, do not discuss) your partner about what you wrote.
3. Next, discuss the things that are meaningful to you with your partner. Create a dialogue, sharing each of your distinct viewpoints on the phenomena. Do not shy away from telling how you really feel and think.

4. Next, form a group of four and briefly discuss your chosen phenomena. Then, as a group, choose one phenomenon to discuss further, including a critical discussion about the different viewpoints raised: Why and how can the phenomenon be perceived from distinct perspectives? Do not try to win others to your side, just have a multi-perspective discussion.
5. Finally, discuss diversity. What 'makes' people different? How do people end up with different perceptions of the world and of different phenomena? (Note that people's opinions are often not as dissimilar as they may seem at first – because people communicate in different ways, we often confuse differences in communication with differences of opinion.)

When discussing any phenomena, the challenge, I argue, is to make room for distinct perspectives to come out into the public, as we easily dismiss our personal thoughts and ideas and defer to normative stances. Many of us hold back from sharing our deepest, innermost thoughts, especially if they are in contradiction with normative views. This happens because of fear of being challenged, excluded or insulted, and this is where emotions come into play. Furthermore, we might feel the need to 'defend our perceptions', which might lead to persuading or manipulating others. However, in dialogue there is no need to win or prove that you are right, but merely to have a reciprocal meeting with others. Understanding and respecting differing worldviews and ideas of how to lead one's life make room for plurality and democracy (Biesta, 2006; Männistö, 2020).

In the session, I wanted to teach the upcoming teachers to also work with their emotions so that they would learn to take responsibility for themselves and others in the face of diversity as well as adversity. An inability to manage personal emotions in a constructive way when interacting with others can lead to taking a defensive stance, which distorts or prevents mutual understanding and respect. Feelings of vulnerability, stemming from the fact that we are imperfect beings revealing our innermost thoughts, can, if inappropriately understood or handled, cause the interlocutor to withdraw, take flight, or act disrespectfully towards others (see Brown, 2015). Therefore, we need to allow more time and space for 'simple' tasks and moments, so people can learn to engage in free and dynamic dialogue.

Too often, at least in Finland, dialogue during (formal) education is heavily planned and structured. When the flow of the educational situation is excessively structured and directed by strict tasks or goals that have to be

achieved, students are prevented from contributing their individual perspectives, because normativity is promoted over plurality. Again, promoting plurality over normativity requires allowing sufficient time and space, which formal education rarely offers. Nevertheless, even though my aim was to create, as one student expressed, 'a homely feeling', there is always the risk that such an approach can be evaluated by some as 'boring' or 'ineffective'.

If participants adopt a negative stance, even if I try not to give too much heed to these negative responses, sometimes it can be hard not to. As educators, we need to be able to face different emotions and dialogue with others so that, through our example, the students can also learn to do so. Indeed, as everyone we meet is different from us, the ability to engage in dialogue and understand otherness can be argued to be one of the most important abilities we need to live in peace and harmony with others. Moreover, as I have argued, based on the thoughts of Levinas, we cannot achieve this without first having the ability to be responsible both towards others and ourselves. Therefore, if we consider encounters with others to be boring or merely dismiss them, we miss out on life, and, more so, we fail to learn to understand ourselves and our emotions and to take responsibility for the common world (see Arendt, 2017; Männistö, 2020).

## **Pedagogical reflection**

Only through re-shaping our everyday actions can we transform our ways of thinking, doing and acting. If I have a tendency not to reveal my innermost thoughts to others, I can change this only by starting to do it. Of course, one starts slowly at first, adding more layers and depth as one progresses. However, the important lesson is to understand that we cannot transform ourselves by mere introspection, imagining how things could pan out or by reflecting on our past actions; we have to connect reflection with real-life action. Therefore, through my session I tried to help the students engage in dialogic interaction with others, even though this might at first have felt awkward or uncomfortable, in order to teach them about living in plurality. Undeniably, living in plurality can be challenging as every one of us has our distinct ways of being and acting in the world, which means that other people's actions will from time to time strike us as odd. However, as I have shown, we should not run away or become defensive at the first sight of difference, because meetings with others are ways to learn about ourselves.



We should remember that I am the other to the one meeting me, as much as they are the other to me.

In principle, any educator can plan and realise the kind of session I have introduced here, and the same challenges apply to everyone engaging in the dialogue, no matter what their position in the situation might be. For this reason, both educators and students have to be able to understand their emotions and ways of being with others. Educators might feel the need to offer students a spectacle, or that they should pack the lesson full of different activities and bits of information to make the session meaningful. However, to make room for dialogue in which we can truly meet others requires time and space, as well as the ability to handle silence, as it often takes time for our innermost thoughts to surface. Moreover, we need to be aware that when the thoughts do emerge, feelings of inability or abnormality – ‘Are these thoughts stupid or weird?’ – might surface along with them. Nevertheless, with practice we can learn to respect and make room for our and others’ innermost thoughts and, through this, we learn that we have a personal responsibility to be there for others, to enable them to bring their thoughts out into the open. As Arendt (2013) argues, only by acting with and towards others can we reveal who we truly are. Consequently, in our current times we should allow more space and time for people to share their thoughts with others in public, so that everyone can learn that they matter and that each and every one of us has a responsibility, which is not interchangeable with anyone else, towards others and the common world.

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## 4 A LESSON ON TYRANNY

**Josephine Moate**

*I received Timothy Snyder's book 'Lessons on Tyranny' as a birthday present from my brother-in-law a couple of years ago. At first, I thought it was a not-too-subtle comment about me as a wife. But once I started to read the book, I was fascinated. As an historian, Snyder takes telling examples from history to explore how tyrannical leaders can begin to take control of societies, and how societies built on democratic values can give up their values and allow more sinister ways of being to develop, just through carelessness or thoughtlessness.*

*One example that comes to mind is 'obeying before it is asked'. The example Snyder uses is from 1930s Germany, when people willingly gave up ... somehow anticipating that this is what the government would appreciate. By carrying out these actions, the people created a new ambition, a new possibility, and showed how much power the leader could yield. I found this to be a chilling example and a wake-up call for me on how easily people can give in to contrary values without really thinking through the full ramifications of their actions, and how small acts of kindness can counter tyranny in the many different forms it takes.*

*As a foreigner living abroad, I have few political rights. My voting rights are limited in my country of residence, although I have lived here for over 20 years, and I cannot vote in my country of origin, although I am still a British citizen. Now, due to Brexit, I cannot vote in European elections either, but I can participate in politics with a small 'p'. I can participate in daily life with an awareness that my actions have consequences for better or worse. I can choose to acknowledge the people around me or ignore them. I can welcome students into my classroom and give them space to share their stories, or I can silence them. I can be aware that societal discussions, on- and off-line, have a formative power that I can choose to respond to or ignore. For me as an educator and an individu-*

*al, Snyder's Lessons on Tyranny helped to bring this realisation into sharper focus and it is this that I hope to share in my contribution to ReCreaDe.*

## **A lesson on tyranny**

The aim of this session is to challenge the participants to turn from ethical and abstract conceptualisations of democracy and to consider how to live and relate democratically as educators in educational institutions. This session can easily fill two hours and works with even large groups of 30+ participants. It is important though that the participants can easily form pairs and small groups for discussion, as well as engage with the formal presentation and whole group reflection process. Blank pieces of paper, perhaps from nearby recycling bins, and pencils are needed. It is also useful if participants have digital access to online 'walls' for making shared notes.

### **Phase 1: Different ways in**

Phase 1 is the orientation, which divides into three steps. This phase uses different modalities and languages to enter into the session and to focus the attention of the participants, preparing them to dig deeper, that is, to encounter new ideas and information and to think through their own responses and understanding.

#### **Step 1: An Ode to Democracy (5 minutes)**

As the participants are already familiar with Dewey's text, at least to some degree, this poem is an opportunity to revisit key ideas in the text. Reading the text aloud fills the space and draws attention to the task of democracy. This poem is based on my reading of the Deweyan text. It was made by taking and placing key phrases one after the other. Rather than using a prose text format that requires each line to follow on from the other, the poem format gives space for each line, before moving on to the next. Participants could at a later stage make their own 'poems' based on Dewey's text to help them identify what is most significant for them.

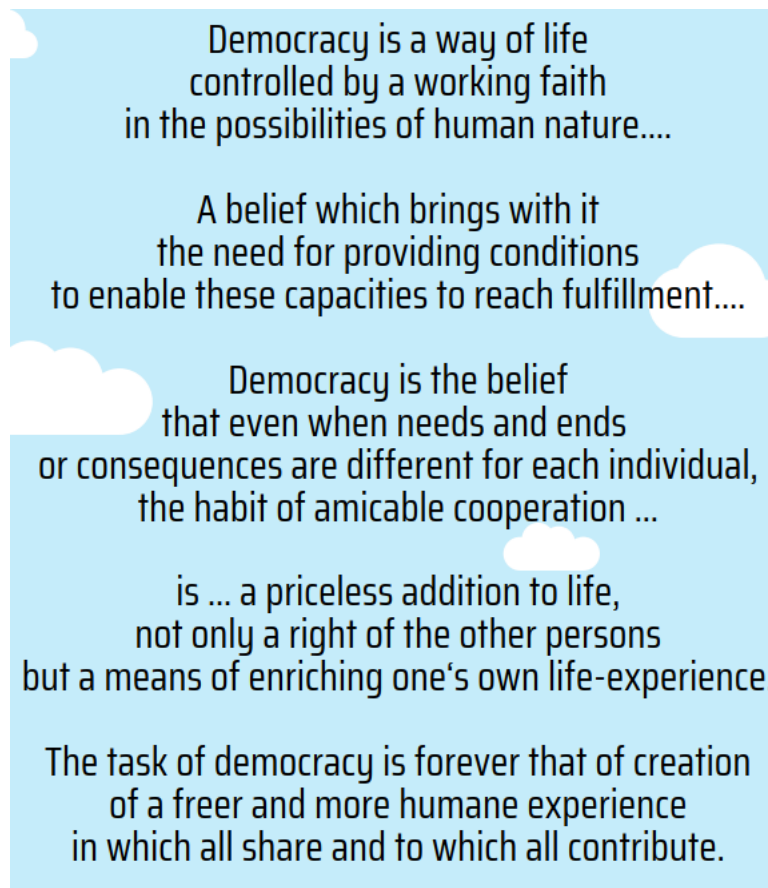


Figure 8: Extracts from Dewey's Creative Democracy – the Task before us

### **Step 2: A silent negotiation (10 minutes)**

Step 1 focuses the participants on listening to a single voice and looking to the front of the classroom, whereas Step 2 tries to democratise the session by actively involving the participants. The participants should form pairs, place a blank paper on the table near to them and both hold the pencil. These simple, but somewhat unconventional instructions can create an air of amused anticipation. As no talking is allowed, the pairs now face the challenge of drawing a car on the paper<sup>2</sup>. **The goal of step 2 is to become aware of how we work with others.** As no talking is allowed, the first challenge facing the participants is how to start the drawing. They do not know which side of the paper is the top or the bottom, they have had no time to strategise regarding who will lead the activity or what kind of car will be drawn. The participants have to silently negotiate the different answers to these questions and the only way to resolve them is by working together, sensing

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<sup>2</sup> I first came across this task from the Finnish NGO which promotes positive intercultural engagement in schools <http://www.walter.fi/walter-in-english/>

what the other is doing, responding or resisting. In this instance, democracy is a choice but not an agreement.

The participants do not need much time to see the result of their labour. This is not the time for too much reflection though, as the pairs have to quickly change. This time they know the nature of the task, but they have to draw a house. The same questions are relevant – where and how to begin, how to share ideas and negotiate different visions. No talking is allowed, but now the participants have the earlier experience to draw on. In other words, their earlier experience is now a resource to help them with this next negotiation. Again, not much time is needed to complete the task and it can be quite amusing to compare the works of ‘art’ that have just been created, but more importantly, what have the students learnt through this process? How did the participants use the first experience to help them with the second drawing task? These initial reflections should help participants to make sense of Dewey’s philosophical ideas that are revisited later in the session.

### **Step 3: Forming a bridge (10 minutes)**

Step 3 is intended to help international groups of students to prepare for using English to explore ‘big’ ideas. Step 3 uses a few moments to make sure that the key words for the session are understood by everyone. The key words are: democracy, entitlement, individual, political friendship, tyranny, society, rights, good life. It might be possible to translate these terms into equivalents in different languages, but as the participants seek the terms in different languages hopefully they will start to reflect on what these words really mean. Even for students used to working through English, checking their understanding of these terms can help the participants begin to recognise the extensive implications of these terms and to rethink what they mean.

## **Phase 2: Education – democratic or tyrannic?**

Phase 2 divides into three parts: a brief overview of Dewey’s view of education, an overview of how tyranny works based on Snyder’s 2017 publication, and the question as to whether and why education tends to be more tyrannical than democratic. The aim of this phase is to challenge educators to reconsider whether their educational practice and communities promote democracy.

#### **Step 4: A Deweyan view of education (15 minutes)**

Dewey's text *The Creative Task before Us* comes towards the end of a long career in which Dewey had wrestled with the theory and practice of education as a democratic project. It is perhaps difficult almost a century later to really grasp what this means, but Dewey's texts continually challenge his readers to reflect and to think about what we are doing as educators and as citizens. In an earlier text, Dewey (1933/1998) observed that thinking is as natural as breathing, but that does not mean that we naturally think *well*. It was the 'thinking well' that Dewey repeatedly called for, not to be progressive just to be different, but to understand why it is worth pursuing something and to carefully think through the ways this can be achieved. Indeed, *The Creative Task before Us* can be understood as a reiteration of this fundamental message, a synthesis of so much of Dewey's philosophical thought and commitment to education and society.

During Step 4 five key points that run through Dewey's work are briefly presented as background information to better understand *The Creative Task*. The first point is that the relationship between individuals and their environment is mutual, reciprocal and holistic. In Deweyan terms this relationship is transactional, meaning that it is indivisible and continually reforming. Each time an individual learns something new, his/her environment changes. As the environment changes, individuals also change and transform, i.e. develop, and our past experiences become resources for future responses (as in the drawing exercise). Over time, as we draw on past ways of responding, we begin to form habits and become socialised into ways of being and doing. Habits can be useful as they don't require us to always think from point zero, but they can also be problematic if they stop us from 'thinking well'. We might get 'set in our ways' and develop habits (ways of behaving) and dispositions (ways of responding) that we would not choose if we stopped to carefully consider our actions and responses.

From a Deweyan perspective, school is an authentic environment where people develop as individuals and learn to live alongside one another, that is, to form a society. This means that the habits and dispositions formed in school are of great significance. As Dewey (1966) stated, school is not preparation for life, but part of life. In other words, what is learnt in schools makes a difference to how we live today and the kind of society we live in tomorrow. Dewey valued formal education as an institution that shares cultural knowledge that children cannot discover without instruction and support. *How* cultural knowledge is shared, however, influences how we live.

For Dewey, school was an environment where children should have the opportunity to experience and explore different ideas and ways of being in order to develop their understanding and to create positive habits and dispositions as citizens. For Dewey, experiencing democracy as something lived and living, as a process and not an assumption, was a necessary feature of education.

It is useful at this point to reflect what is meant by democracy. Participants could write down their own definitions and put them to one side for the time being. The following questions can also be posed as food for thought:

1. Is democracy flawed if most people are wrong most of the time?
2. Is democracy a fundamentally selfish project based on individual entitlement with the loudest, most persuasive or moneyed voice getting to make the decisions?
3. If democracy is a human project that seeks the best possible life for all, what does this mean in practice? How to include children and young people in this process, what kind of experiences do they need to learn how to be democratic?

### **Step 5: On Tyranny (15 minutes)**

The step is draws on a 2018 publication by historian Timothy Snyder: *On Tyranny: 20 lessons from the 20th century*. This text was mainly written as a response to the election of Trump as the president of the USA. The aim of Snyder's text is to use real life examples to illustrate how democracy can be lost and replaced by tyranny. In Step 5 these twenty lessons are brought together under four themes: being active, being wary, being civil and being courageous.



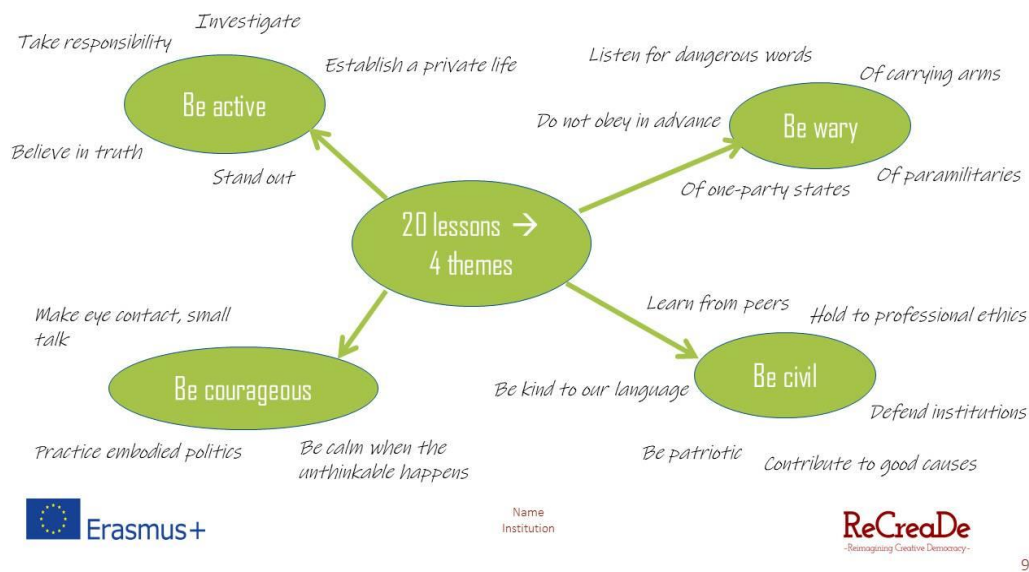


Figure 9: A visual summary of Snyder's Twenty Lessons.

'Being active' involves maintaining a private life and not giving everything about yourself away through digital media. Being active also means investigating news stories and investing in investigative journalism rather than being misled by fake news or misinformation. Snyder emphasises the value of believing in the existence of truth as something which provides a foundation on which to stand, and the need to take responsibility for our own actions, daring to stand out if, and when, the time comes.

'Being wary' includes listening out for dangerous words that can slip into our vocabulary and begin to distort our ways of thinking; or being wary of carrying arms, which can facilitate bloody encounters that are neither desirable nor intended but enabled if firearms are part of the picture. Snyder also warns citizens to not obey in advance, that is, to not carry out actions that pander to the ambitions of power-hungry politicians making them greedier still and to be wary of one-party states and paramilitaries, especially if they begin to infiltrate and replace the established police and military.

'Being civil' attends to how we relate to others. A dialogic perspective highlights the value of recognising that 'outsiders' can help 'insiders' better recognise our cultural assumptions and envisage new ways of being and doing (Bakhtin, 1986). Moreover, contributing to good causes and being conscious of how we use language, for example not just parroting popular phrases, helps us as individuals to be more conscious of who and how we are and want to be. A similar sentiment is expressed when we defend insti-

tutions that were established as shared efforts to maintain values – whether free speech, fair pay, justice. Being civil also promotes ethical commitments as professionals and as patriotic citizens working towards the best of who and how we can be as a commitment to an ideal.

‘Being courageous’ recognises that themes 1-3 require commitment and entail risk. These risks can be everyday acts of kindness, such as making eye contact and talking with strangers, recognising that taking a stand can be a physical as well as a metaphysical act, and that if and when the unthinkable happens, to be calm and carry on, not giving up. Snyder’s text includes many examples from the twentieth century that illustrate the points that are made here and are recommended reading for course participants! At the end of this overview, it is a good moment to pause to check whether anyone has any questions and to give participants a moment to reflect on how the different themes connect together.

### Step 6: On tyranny in education (10 minutes)

Step 6 re-uses the four themes to respond to the question: In what ways can education be tyrannical? This direct question bypasses the discussion as to whether or not education is tyrannical, focusing instead on educational habits and dispositions that are prone to tyranny.

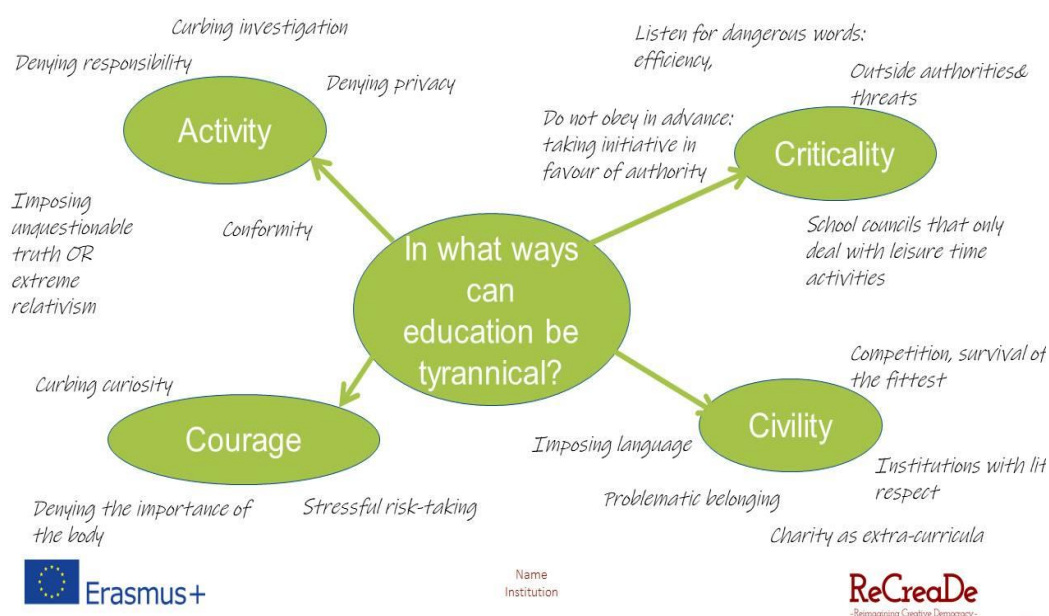


Figure 10: An initial mapping of the four themes in relation to education

The overview here is intended to initiate further dialogue by drawing attention to conventional habits and dispositions of education and looking at them from a different perspective. 'Being active' within the educational context is perhaps easier to think about in terms of what forms of activity are promoted or allowed. For example, privacy is difficult to maintain in many educational settings. Classrooms are public spaces that often demand that participants share their views as though they were public property and ready for evaluation. Whilst there is value in exploring different perspectives in educational settings, how this process is conducted makes a difference to the experience of sharing views (as Perttu's chapter highlights). Schools are conventionally designed to promote conformity rather than diversity, often through the enforcement of cultural norms that students can be punished for not adhering to, and student responsibility is reduced to meeting predefined expectations, rather than truly being responsible for oneself. In terms of the content of schooling, perhaps student projects can promote and even strengthen the intellectual curiosity of students, although the inappropriacy of questioning authority rather undermines the principle of promoting active investigation of pressing issues (Rajala, et al. 2016; Biesta, 2022).

'Being wary' is perhaps better described as criticality within the educational context, a term often included in national curricula, but this is also a difficult principle to exercise in relation to schools. Teachers and students are more likely to be praised for taking the initiative in favour of authority, for example, sitting quietly before a teacher enters the classroom rather than starting a debate that has not been timetabled (Rajala, et al. 2016). School councils too often deal with leisure and extra-curricular activities, rather than addressing the main business of schooling (Männistö, 2020). Dangerous words easily and readily slip into the vocabulary of school communities, with efficiency and excellence assumed to reflect positive educational values (Biesta, 2007) even if they originate from an industrial model that simultaneously homogenises and ranks participants.

'Being civil' is also often challenged in educational settings when competition is used to foster 'educational success' or 'appropriate' language is imposed rather than enriched (Palmer, 2014). Educational institutions often fail to respect participants, as the dropout rates of diverse students show, and charity is an optional extra, rather than a fundamental principle. It is perhaps unsurprising if education undermines rather than emboldens the courage of students to stand out and stand up to make a difference. Senses are dulled as students are forced to sit, increasingly disembodied, as virtual

realities replace physical excursions and interpersonal encounters (Biesta, 2022). These challenges are all the more difficult to address if educational communities are surrounded and infiltrated by evaluation as a form of control and constant threat. Under these circumstances risk-taking is understandably stressful for students as well as teachers.

This brief reviewing of education as a tyrannical force hopefully provokes responses among the participants. Some may already have thoughts that they are ready to contribute, others may just be beginning to form uncomfortable realisations or questions. Perhaps they have been part of education as a tyrannical force, perhaps this is why it is difficult for them to form questions now, but they have a sense that education could be so much more. I suggest that this is a good moment for small group reflections with low threshold questions to generate space for deeper discussions during the final phase. These questions could be:

- What has surprised you in this session?
- What has confused you?
- What would you like to think about more?

### **Phase 3: Developing education as a democratic practice**

This final phase aims to create a basis for reconsidering democracy as a feature that can and should belong to education, if and when educators themselves seek to be democratic in their own practice. One important point to realise is that as a notion and practice democracy has changed and developed over time. Moreover, as Dewey (1937) pointed out, democracy is a living relationship that needs to be nurtured, an ongoing task.

#### **Returning to the beginning (25 minutes)**

At the beginning of this session and at other intervals during the IP, participants have been asked to note down how they define democracy. Early understandings of democracy involved collective decision-making and collective action invested in the common good (Nikolaki, 2015). These understandings did not involve the idea of an individual will, consider justice as delivering the rights of an individual will nor individual power as democratic. It is worth asking ourselves, what do we really think democracy is and what

does it entail, what could or should it entail? This is leading to the bigger question of what if we learned to live a different way than we do now?

This question hopefully opens up a space for creatively reimagining democracy. Creativity is needed, as educators need to use different perspectives to re-view familiar habits and dispositions to re-consider how they act and expect their students to act and relate within educational settings. Imagination is needed because the answers to the challenges that are faced today might not yet exist, we might have to explore extreme variations in order to be able to find workable solutions and to forge political friendships that are worth pursuing.

Just before handing the floor to the participants, the final two points come from key thinkers that lived under oppressive regimes. Freire (2003) in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* wrote of the strong tendency in people to reproduce experiences of oppression rather than to implement visions of democracy. It is as though those that have been oppressed, when they rise to the 'top' see this as an opportunity to get revenge by punishing rather than liberating others. Written in these terms it seems like quite an extreme judgment, but if we think back on the session today, how many 'tyrannical' features of education have we employed in our own practice? Secondly, Bakhtin (1993) wrote of the need for each individual to consider where to 'sign my name'. The challenge here for us as educators is to carefully consider what we want to align ourselves with and what to stand for. Abstaining is not an option, but choosing where we align ourselves is.

With these huge questions hanging in the air, it is time to give the space to the participants, to allow them to breathe and examine their thoughts and responses together. A practical starting point is to re-read the definition that they wrote of democracy at the start of the session. Is there something that they might change, delete or add? Sharing their different definitions together should help them to begin to see from different perspectives and to rethink where they would like to sign their own names. Together, the student groups can turn to the final questions the session has been working towards:

- In what ways can education become democratic?
- What threats and challenges need to be faced?
- And, what kind of conditions are required?

Answers to these questions cannot be finalised in this session, but they provide anchor points to return to through (and beyond) the IP.

## Pedagogical reflection

To create greater space for student participation during the cognitive input, a digital tool such as Flinga or Padlet wall can provide a place for more examples and questions to be added. The Flinga or Padlet wall can then be available to participants during or after the session. It should be noted that these examples are not relevant to all educational systems and some educators do manage to avoid 'tyrannical tendencies'. Using the Google Jamboard was a useful addition in the Online IP. Another way of developing this session would be to ask students to divide into groups around one specific theme, e.g. being aware or being civil, digging deeper with one theme, before then reforming the groups to share insights and to discuss what practical changes would strengthen educational habits and dispositions.

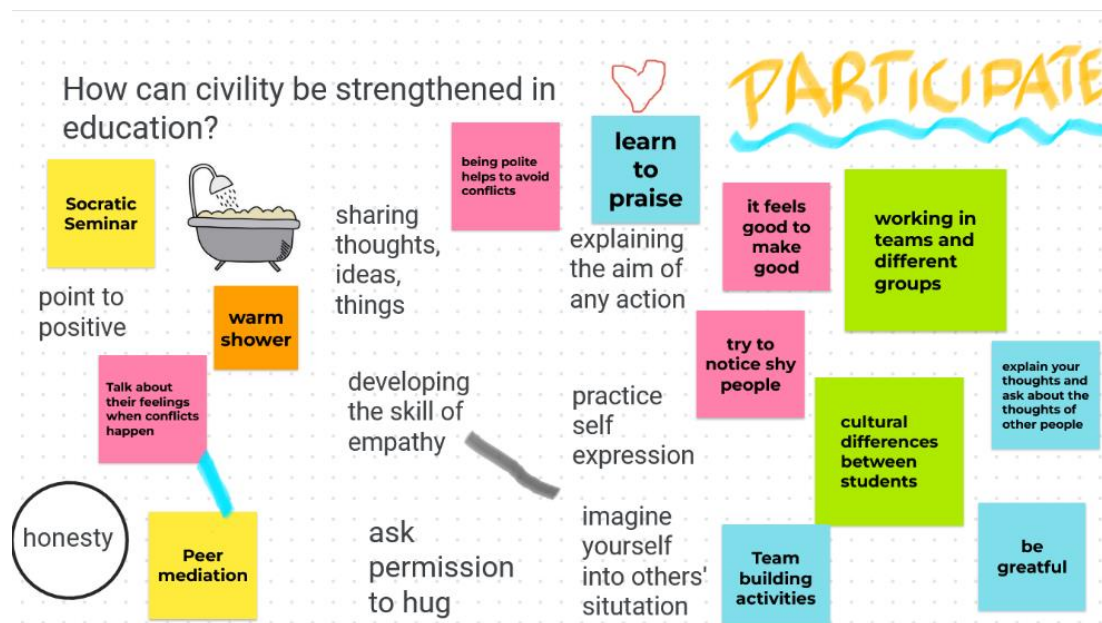


Figure 11: Student suggestions posted on the shared Jamboard

As a team, the ReCreaDe staff have sought to open the IP as a democratic project, an ongoing task we all share in and contribute to. We regularly discuss together how we can do this, to change established habits that silence participants and to deliberately include methodological approaches that challenge and stretch us as staff, too. Reviewing this session, I am aware of the tension of wanting to responsibly provide material that inspires, pro-

vokes and informs participants. I want to invite and welcome students into deeper dialogues, to be surprised and challenged by their reflections and insights as well. I know, however, it is too easy for these dialogues to be squeezed to the margins. I hope that educators reading this chapter can discern the themes and provocations that will help their students to enter into dialogue on issues that matter and re-form habits that promote democratic ways of being and doing together. Again I am struck by the notion of democracy as an ongoing task. Yes, I have to keep striving too.

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## **PART 2: DEMOCRACY AS A PEDAGOGIC ACT**



Figure 12: IES Cartima, used with permission

## 5 PROMOTING A DEMOCRATIC CULTURE AT SCHOOL

**Elvira Barrios**

*The need to learn democratic values, practices and principles at school, which is one of the most influential spaces in which children and adolescents socialise, seems self-evident. However, many schools in my context do not seem to be genuinely committed to the promotion of democratic citizenship among students beyond superficial levels, and it is my impression that this is the case also in other European contexts. This means that at a time of global crisis, disillusionment with democracy, and the threat to democratic values posed by growing populism, political polarisation and an ultraliberal form of capitalism, citizens may not be well-equipped by the school to face these challenges and act truly democratically in society.*

*As the literature on educational innovation has always insisted, teachers need examples of good practice and practical implementations of a given innovation so that they can envisage, imagine and hypothesise ways to transfer the insights gained in their professional development experiences to their own future practice, considering the particular context, learners, conditions, etc., of their teaching situation.*

*In the context of the ReCreaDe project, providing prospective teachers with a theoretical framework, references, ideas, and methodological tools to foster democratic engagement and participation in school encompasses, among other things, providing them with the opportunity to engage with examples of how this fostering of a democratic culture is carried out in ordinary schools.*

*Through my involvement in school–university collaborations and personal contacts with school head teachers, I have been fortunate enough to follow the trajectory of the IES Cartima School, a secondary school in Málaga, Spain. In addition to being designed as an innovative school in terms of adopting active, project-based and interdisciplinary methodologies and critical thinking, IES Cartima is also centrally focused*

*on promoting democratic involvement both within the school and in the wider community. Ever since its opening in September 2014, democratic practices and decision-making have been intentionally embedded in the everyday running and functioning of the school's procedures and routines. Interdisciplinary projects have also been designed around topics connected with democratic citizenship, such as social justice and gender equality. Even the school's name was democratically elected by the students, teachers, parents and administrative staff, in a process that involved groups of students working on proposals and presenting and defending them in public.*

*My experiences with IES Cartima sparked my interest in identifying, showcasing and analysing examples of good democratic practices in schools. This interest led to the present chapter, which offers a framework for showcasing and discussing democratic practices implemented in schools and imaginatively creating democratic practices for other educational communities.*

## **Identifying, analysing and creating examples of good practice**

The aim of the session presented in this chapter is to offer a framework for showcasing and analysing examples of good democratic practices and their connections to the central tenets of the ReCreaDe project rationale, namely Dewey's idea of democracy as a way of personal life, experiential learning, inclusion, and positive engagement with diversity as key democratic values, as well as creative pedagogies, including artistic initiatives. Additionally, the session invites participants to reflect on if and how democratic participation was encouraged in their school experience, the opportunities they were provided with to act, engage and participate democratically, the quality of that democratic participation, and the kinds of democratic practices they envisage themselves fostering as teachers. This session is organised into three phases and lasts between 2 to 2.5 hours and is designed for a group of 30-40 students, although it may also be implemented with smaller or larger groups. Pens and A3 paper are the only materials required.

### **Phase 1: Experiences of democratic practices as school pupils**

**Phase one** aims at getting participants to reflect on and exchange with other students their personally lived experiences of participation and democratic

practices as school pupils. Depending on when in the programme the session takes place, the teacher can draw on previous input by asking the learners to interpret their experiences in light of previous course content and discussions. As mentioned above, the first phase of the session encourages students to draw on their own experiences of democratic and participatory practices in school, reflect on them, and share their experiences with the group.

**Step 1: Individual task – My own experiences  
of democratic practice at school (10 minutes)**

The session begins by providing a brief overview of the contents, followed by asking the students to think and write notes about the democratic and participatory practices experienced at their primary/secondary/high schools as pupils. The students may be provided with prompts or questions, such as the following, but it is important to stress that they can explore any memories associated with the topic:

- How was pupil participation encouraged?
- Do you think that all students' voices were heard? If yes, how were they invited to be expressed and heard?
- Were you encouraged to participate in the functioning/organisation/decision-taking processes of the school or class? If so, how?
- What can you characterise as democratic and participatory at your school?
- Were there spaces for deliberation and exchange of ideas?
- Did you have class/school board representatives?
- How were they elected? What kinds of processes took place in the election of student representatives?
- Do you feel you were guided and encouraged to act as a proactive citizen that could affect changes in your class, school, or community?

### **Step 2: Group task – Sharing ideas within a small group (15 minutes)**

Students are now asked to get together in groups of four and share their experiences with each other. The students are encouraged to take notes on their group members' experiences for use in a later step. Note: In both steps 1 and 2 of the session, the students can be asked to interpret their experiences in light of previously covered course content and discussions. For example, Dewey's idea of democracy as an ethical idea that must be embodied in daily practice, or Bromell's (2009) differentiation between democracy as a 'market' and democracy as a 'forum' (or 'deliberative democracy') can be brought into the discussion.

### **Step 3: Group task – Sharing ideas with members of a different group (15 minutes)**

Students from different groups mix together in groups of four and share the experiences described and discussed in the previous small groups (Step 2). This phase finishes with the teacher/facilitator rounding up by bringing home to the students an awareness of their education (or lack of it) in democratic values and practices at school, the quality of this education, and the conceptions of democracy embedded in these values and practices. The teacher/facilitator also highlights the value of having direct or vicarious experiences of democratic practices in school and of reflecting on these experiences as potential sources of implicit (more than explicit) attitudes to democracy. Again, links are established by the teacher/facilitator between these experiences and crucial course concepts.

## **Phase 2: Presentation of good practices**

**Phase two** consists of the presentation and analysis of democratic school practices that embody the principles of democracy, participation, and civic activity and engagement. The presentation and analysis are guided by key concepts already covered by the course. This phase is input-oriented and focused on the presentation and discussion of democratic practices at one or several schools. In the context of the ReCreaDe project, democratic practices at Cartima Secondary School (IES Cartima, Cártama, Málaga) in the form of interdisciplinary projects were selected as examples of good practice.

#### **Step 4: Input session – Presentation of good practices in democratic education (30 minutes)**

This phase starts with contextualisation of the school and, if relevant, the school ethos (in the context of the ReCreaDe project, the location, type of school, students' background, characteristics of school staffing and managing/leading procedures, etc., were presented). This is followed by the presentation, analysis and discussion of several practices or strategies that embody principles of democracy, participation and civic activity and engagement. The analysis and discussion of the democratic features of the projects implemented by the school are guided by the key concepts of the ReCreaDe conceptual framework. Four examples of good practices discussed in the ReCreaDe IP are outlined below.

##### **'Give me a name'**

As is traditionally the case with Andalusian schools, when the secondary school first opened it had yet to be officially named. The leadership team (consisting of headteacher, deputy teacher and teaching staff secretary) saw this as an opportunity to create an interdisciplinary project to facilitate a participatory process in which the school community (including parents, students, teachers and administrative staff) could democratically choose a name for the school. The learning objectives – all part of the curriculum for the year group – included presentation, research, ICT, and critical thinking skills. Following the principles of project-based learning, the final outcome of the project was the public defence of a proposal for a name based on historical, scientific, pedagogical and/or philosophical grounds that resulted from a previous research and discussion process carried out in groups. The groups consisted of four 11–12-year-old students. Each group proposal was presented to an audience of fellow students. The proposals were also video-recorded and made available online to the school community. A commission comprising two parents, two teachers, two students and one member of the leadership team selected three proposals, which were then put to the vote<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> For more on this project in Spanish: <http://proyectocartama.es/portfolio-item/inauguracion-del-ies/> <http://proyectocartama.es/proyecto-dame-tu-nombre/>)

## **'School mural'**

This project-based activity aimed to transform part of the school space through art and artistic involvement as well as a process of researching the role of women in the wider community of the school. It also aimed to showcase women whose life stories contributed to transforming social conditions in the community. Artistic assistance for this project, which involved stenciling a representation of three women onto a school wall, was provided by internationally recognised street artist Andrea Michaelsson (aka [Btoy](#)). The project also aimed to foster creativity, acknowledge the role of women in society, inclusively engage students in contributing according to their talents and abilities, promote a sense of belonging among the students, who were new to the school, and encourage a sense of empowerment to transform their immediate surroundings and the wider community. Students were asked to investigate and identify outstanding, but not widely known, women in their local community that had proven their commitment to education and that, due to their proximity to the students within the community – particularly to female students – could serve as role models. The project also involved the presentation of proposals by student groups and voting on three women to be represented on the mural<sup>4</sup>.

## **'I deserve a street'**

Again conceived as project-based learning, this initiative aimed to raise awareness of the invisibility of women in public life and empower students with tools and strategies to transform unfair situations and practices. To this end, students were asked to research the names given to streets in towns and villages in their area. The conclusion was that women were far from fairly represented in the street names. Presentations and video recordings were made and addressed to politicians in the municipalities concerned to demand that more streets should be named after women. The campaign was extended to other secondary schools in Málaga and was even appropriated by a provincial institution<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> For more on this project see, in Spanish: <https://proyectocartama.es/portfolio-item/btoy-en-el-ies-cartima/>

<sup>5</sup> For more on the project in Spanish: <https://www.merezcounacalle.com/> and [https://verne.elpais.com/verne/2017/10/18/articulo/1508320946\\_405711.html](https://verne.elpais.com/verne/2017/10/18/articulo/1508320946_405711.html)

## **'March 15th – Global climate strike for future'**

On the occasion of the Global Climate Strike for Future on March 15th 2019, students were invited to participate in an assembly to watch a video featuring Greta Thunberg and discuss the reasons behind the strike. As a result of the discussion, students proposed concrete actions to fight against climate change. It was decided, e.g., to organise awareness campaigns addressed to students and families, contracts were drawn up where families committed themselves to adopt environmental protection measures at home, and teams of students assumed responsibility to check that certain initiatives to reduce waste and water and light consumption at school were being observed.

The following publications and websites offer examples of good practice in democratic education:

Bäckman, E., & Trafford, B. (2007). Democratic governance of schools. Council of Europe. Retrieved from <https://rm.coe.int/democratic-governance-of-schools/16804915a4>

Council of Europe (n.d.). Democratic School Network. Retrieved August 17, 2020, from <https://www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/democratic-school-network>

Council of Europe (n.d.). LEMON Learning Modules Online. Retrieved August 17, 2020, from <https://www.coe.int/en/web/learning-resources/home>

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## **Phase 3: Transference and generation of ideas for democratic practices in other contexts**

**Phase three** shifts the focus onto the participants again by encouraging them to envisage, imagine and hypothesise ways to transfer the insights gained in the session to their own future context, learners, conditions, etc.



### **Step 5: Individual reflection (15 minutes)**

Having been exposed to good practices in education for democratic citizenship and involvement, the students are next encouraged to reflect individually on how these practices, or new practices inspired by them, could be transferred to other educational contexts that they are familiar with (e.g. from personal experience, school placement experiences, etc.), or to envisage new practices for these familiar contexts by drawing on insights gained during the session. Use of reflective sketchbooks can help the student individually document their thoughts and reflections and generate new ideas and potential practices.

### **Step 6: Reflection in groups of four (20 minutes)**

The students next get back into groups of four, either their original groups (Step 2), or national groups if the participants come from different countries. The aim of Step 6 is to share the individual reflections and ideas from Step 4, to select one potential strategy or practice from each individual member, and to write/sketch the selected practices onto an A3 page/poster along with the reasons why they were chosen. The posters are displayed in the room where the session is taking place.

### **Step 7: Plenary discussion (20 minutes)**

In the final step of the session, the students regroup for a plenary discussion in which the structure and process of the session can be reviewed, before going on to discuss where the students think the key difficulties in devising and implementing practices to promote democratic attitudes and civic participation in schools lie. Finally, at the end of the session, the students are invited to have a look at the ideas and practices shown on the A3 posters displayed on the walls and to visit the websites introduced in Step 4 to further explore more good practices, ideas and strategies for promoting civic engagement and democracy in schools.

## **Pedagogical reflection**

This session aims to contribute to education programmes promoting democracy in schools in several ways: by getting students to reflect on their school experiences of participation, civic engagement and civic empowerment; by assessing the (non)democratic quality of their own school background; by

sharing their own experiences and learning from the experiences of others; by interpreting these experiences in light of the ReCreaDe conceptual framework; by being exposed to examples of good practices in democratic education; and, finally, by creatively envisaging democratic practices in educational contexts familiar to them.

The session design and content are inspired by two central ideas in Dewey's philosophy; that of democracy as a way of life based on the participation of all citizens in democratic processes, and that of learning through experience, as the students interact with their own experiences and derive their own meanings from them. This individual learning is then expanded and enriched as they also learn vicariously through the democratic practices and experiences of their peers.

Meaningful learning is also encouraged by a balance between reflection and action, both individually and collectively. The session thus combines individual analysis and reflection with collective sharing and deliberation, proceeding from the students' revision of their own background knowledge and experiences, to sharing these experiences and reflecting on others' experiences in light of previous course input and, finally, to a stage where previously gained insights interact with the features of a specific, familiar context in order to conceive new, creative possibilities for democratic practices. The session also fosters critical thinking, understood as heuristic skills and dispositions that take into account the social context and the political effect of argumentation and reasoning. Finally, among the good practices presented and discussed, the ReCreaDe IP included some practices in which art is used as a vehicle for political expression, recognition and action. Moreover, use of sketchbooks is encouraged as a creative innovative methodology to help students reflect and to create positive conditions for different forms of democratic participation.

The students' reflections in the sketchbooks and their personal communications and feedback regarding the session highlight the need to embed democratic practices in the ordinary curriculum and in all aspects of school life, and the responsibility of the school to empower students for civic action and to provide them with real experiences of democracy and deliberation. One participant interviewed as part of the session evaluation commented that she had come to realise that if a school is truly committed to fostering democratic values, all of its procedures and personal and professional relations and interactions should be revised and informed by this commitment. This was the reason, in her view, why so many good demo-

cratic practices could be found in one school, as was the case with the Car-tima Secondary School.

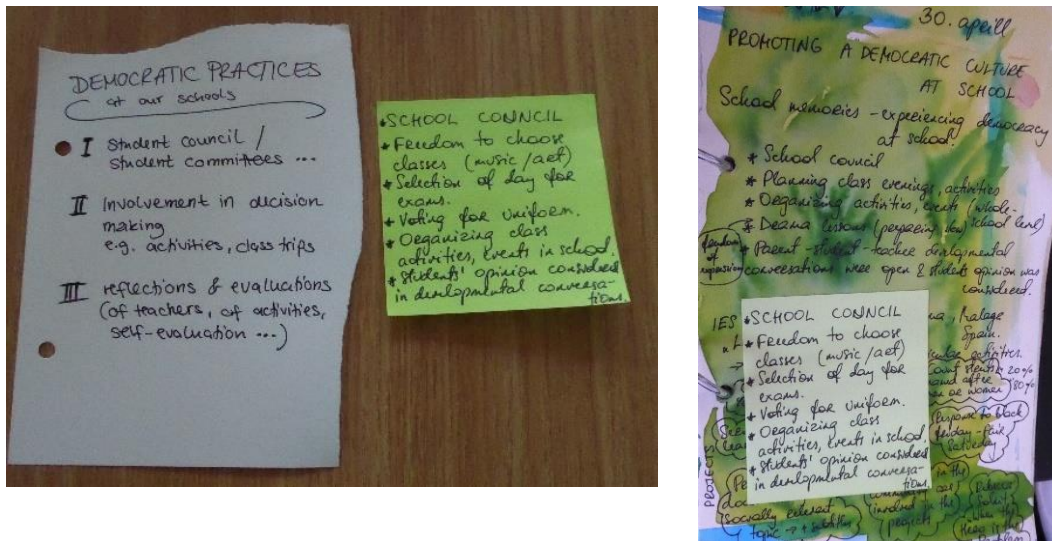


Figure 13: Sample pages from students' reflective sketchbooks, used with permission

### Conclusion: Examples of good practice and creative democracy

The proposed session draws on concepts and methodologies discussed and fostered in the ReCreaDe Erasmus+ project and IPs. If the session is to be implemented in a course on democracy and education, it is important that students are previously provided with the conceptual framework and methodological background that underlie both the design and the input covered by the session. In this sense, as previously explained, the session is informed by key Deweyan concepts, such as democracy as a moral ideal and the value of experience in learning.

Additionally, the session explores connections between arts-based methodologies and both learning and democracy. This is aimed at through the use of sketchbooks as a validated learning method to express and explore ideas and meanings, and the discussion of practices where art is used as a tool for political expression and for awareness-raising for social recognition and political demands. The challenges of human rights, social justice and diversity (cultural, racial, gender, etc.) in the far from egalitarian neo-liberal form of capitalism of Western societies, which are the central focus of other sessions in the ReCreaDe IP, are also topics that lend themselves to be raised and discussed in this session.

Finally, by drawing on individual and shared experiences of democracy in educational contexts and good practices of democratic education in schools, this session prompts participants to imagine and create new practices that take into account the specific organisational, curricular, contextual, etc. conditions of the educational settings that they are familiar with.

## 6 DEMOCRACY IN LEARNING SPACES

*Erika Kopp and Orsolya Kálmán*

*Since the beginning of our career, we have been very interested in the open and hidden, conscious and unconscious messages conveyed by school and classroom situations, and the school environment itself. As teacher educators, we think it is very important to make student teachers sensitive to these messages, to make them aware of their importance. That's why we were so happy to be able to lead the pre-school visit module in our first project – we hoped this was a great opportunity to take advantage of the intercultural experience to help students become sensitive to these messages. We also used the experience of the module in this project. However, we have had to think through these messages with respect to a much more difficult topic here, focusing on democracy and creativity.*

*Working together on this project, we talk a lot with the members of the group about the responsibility we all, each individual, must preserve European democracy, the difficulties we face in our everyday life and the role that the school plays in this. These problems have now become even more critical. It was therefore interesting to read Dewey's speech, chosen as the starting point for the project, which did not lose its validity. What he wrote about 'democracy as a way of life' is a particularly important thought for us. But there are situations and circumstances where this is difficult to achieve. However, as Bibó puts it, we can create 'small circles of freedom' around us. This was the starting point for designing our session.*

*In the session, we approach classroom culture by examining learning spaces and environments. These spaces carry messages about how those who created them think about the world and 'shape' social relations and practices. In the classroom, teachers and students can create spaces that help shape a 'democratic way of life' and 'small circles of freedom'; equally, however, they can also create the opposite.*

*Who owns this space? Who can make decisions about the space? Whose needs does the layout consider? Who has access to objects and tools? Who can be present in the space and who cannot? Whose objects can appear in the space? – The answers tell a lot about the ‘way of life’ that is created in the given space. We want to support students to understand the message of school spaces more deeply as a result of multicultural group discussions, and to reflect on their own interpretations of space.*

## **The role of the learning environment in democratic education**

In this chapter we summarise our experiences of this session, which focuses on the role of the learning environment in democratic education. The session was included in the IP before the school visit and aimed to establish the activities carried out during the visit. In developing this chapter and considering what might be relevant to the reader from our experiences gained during the ReCreaDe project, we formulated two questions:

- (1) What professional considerations, personal concerns and experiences are behind the formation of a learning session during an intensive programme implemented in international cooperation? and
- (2) How can thinking about learning spaces help interpret classroom democracy?

In the first part of this chapter, we address the first of these questions by presenting our personal and professional journey during the project and the development of this session. We then continue to describe the session itself, detailing the possibilities and limitations of preparing for a school visit. At the end of the chapter, we answer the second question by summarising and evaluating our experiences.

### **Our way to the learning session**

In 2015 we joined a group of international colleagues with a long history, having worked together previously on various other projects and collaborations. This collaborative history positively influenced the atmosphere of the group’s discussions and shared thinking. Looking back at the beginning of the previous project, InOut, it was truly inspiring when we began to think together about the purpose, activities and possible outcomes of the intensive programme. It was exciting to follow how each member of the

group, from different fields, with different professional backgrounds, looked for a place within the structure of the intensive programme and helped each other find topics that fit their specific field and research as well as serving the project as a whole. Although the group members have changed in part, this same creative atmosphere has continued to characterise the collaborations and working method of ReCreaDe – its creative spirit has remained the same.

This process – shared thinking, inspiring one another – is also how the theme of the ReCreaDe project itself was born. Developed as a continuation of our informal conversations within the framework of joint brainstorming, the ReCreaDe theme, like the theme of the previous project, is a central node that is important to all members, but to which we are all connected in different ways. In other respects, the process of developing both programmes was an important experience for both of us. Perhaps we could sum up this experience as ‘freedom of teaching’. As university professors, we were constantly faced with the impact of labour market expectations on higher education programmes, which puts increasing pressure on educators to focus on utility and direct applicability in courses. Of course, we do not want to question the importance of usability for an entire higher education programme, but in many cases this approach dominates programmes, overrides value education, critical thinking, etc. In our point of view, higher education – and especially teacher education – educates not only the workforce, but also critical intellectuals. This requires in-depth planning processes and, most importantly, time, which is becoming less and less available at the level of full programmes. However, working together on an intensive programme, perhaps because of the international nature of the programme, provides an opportunity for the freedom to create.

Working together on this project, we talked a lot with the members of the group about the responsibility we all have to help preserve European democracy, the difficulties we face in our everyday life, and the role of the school in these respects. These issues have now become even more critical. It was therefore interesting to read Dewey’s essay, chosen as the starting point for the project, which has lost none of its validity. What he wrote about ‘democracy as a way of life’ is particularly important for us (Dewey 1916/2001).

There are situations and circumstances where living democratically is more difficult to achieve. However, education plays a key role in constructing individuals and societies whether or not the education system is demo-

cratic. What can we do in difficult situations? In Hungary we have experienced strong centralisation of schools, and external control over schools has strengthened over the past decade. However, these processes are not limited to Hungary: an erosion of the autonomy of schools and teachers (e.g., strengthening of centralised curriculum, external audits, external evaluation of teachers) is appearing in more and more European countries. These circumstances are not conducive to pedagogical approaches that, like Dewey's theory, interpret democracy 'as a way of life'. In such cases, shrinking conditions provide fewer and fewer opportunities for people to live out democracy in their everyday life. Moreover, there are countries where democracy as a way of life needs not to be defended but built, and its construction is not supported by the social circumstances. Therefore, in order to interpret the creation of democratic living conditions, we went back to the thoughts of the philosopher and social researcher István Bibó, the minister of the 56th Hungarian Revolutionary Government. In his work, in which he interprets the development of Central European societies, Bibó proposes that in societies that are not conducive to the systemic development of democracy, democracy can be born in smaller, closed, autonomous groups, and that these groups could generate repercussions on the social system as a whole (Bibó 2011). These groups are 'small circles of freedom', as he called them. In education, we can create such a 'small circle' in the family, the classroom, or even the entire school.

In this session we examine and discuss the role of education and the task of promoting the development of democracy as a way of life. In situations where the external social environment makes this difficult, or even impossible, we need to create 'small circles of freedom' in education. For us, the IP works as just such a circle of freedom. As a pre-task for this session, students have read Chapters 2 and 3 of Dewey's (2001) *Education and Democracy* where Dewey wrote that the functions of education are 'direction, control, or guidance'. Students have been asked to reflect before the session on the question: where can you identify these functions in school spaces you know? Moreover, Dewey added, 'the only way in which adults consciously control the kind of education which the immature get is by controlling the environment in which they act, and hence think and feel'. Students are also asked to consider how they interpret this statement as a prospective teacher.



## Preparing for a school visit

The aim of this session was to prepare for a school visit. This session was held in the second phase of the IP and anticipates the half-day school visit and follow-up reflective discussion by building on pre-session readings and reflective questions. With this goal in mind, drawing on our experiences as teacher educators, we considered the specific opportunities offered by the internationality of the programme. School visits and class observations are, as we well know, usually an integral part of teacher education programmes, and the participants therefore all had rich experiences of them. In interpreting the role of school visits in the learning of teacher candidates generally, we must always consider that the students already have nearly 1,200 hours of 'observation' experience by the time they arrive at teacher education. These previous experiences significantly determine the student teachers' learning process generally as well as, in particular, their framework for interpreting the experience gained during school visits. This factor is usually a great challenge for teacher education programmes, which usually contain a number of elements that promote reflection on and interpretation of prior experiences. Summarising these considerations, we can assume that students come to the IP with an already developed internal school image, which basically also frames the experiences that can be acquired.

Compared to a teacher education programme, what are the opportunities of visiting a school in an international IP? In both the previous and the current project, we thought of the school visit as a specific form of learning that allows participants to reflect more deeply on their prior school image through intercultural encounters. Our basic assumption is that the specific situation created during an international IP contributes to deepened self-reflection (Lee 2011; Abraham & von Brömssen 2018). In order to support this, we use discussions in heterogeneous groups as a basic pedagogical tool in the preparation and process phases of the school visit.

The question may arise as to why we have chosen the learning environment as the theoretical framework for preparing a school visit. This choice was strongly influenced by the experience of the previous project, in which we found that intercultural and individual differences were relatively easy to understand when examining and interpreting space, and that this lens also encourages thinking regarding the interpretation of hidden messages. As one student wrote in his reflection:

*(...) we can argue that even though in our own countries we usually have closed and pre-arranged spaces, I believe that it is possible to rethink space and build different learning environments in order to create new dynamics aimed at developing alternative activities in which students can create an emotional connection to space, feeling a sense of belonging.*

As we were well acquainted with the schools visited in the first IP in Budapest, we assumed that the rather closed school spaces encountered there demonstrate well how space limits school democratic functioning. The theme of the session also relates to Dewey's thoughts on democratic education. He writes about the environment as follows:

*...the only way in which adults consciously control the kind of education which the immature get is by controlling the environment in which they act, and hence think and feel. We never educate directly, but indirectly by means of the environment. Whether we permit chance environments to do the work, or whether we design environments for the purpose makes a great difference. And any environment is a chance environment so far as its educative influence is concerned unless it has been deliberately regulated with reference to its educative effect. An intelligent home differs from an unintelligent one chiefly in that the habits of life and intercourse which prevail are chosen, or at least colored, by the thought of their bearing upon the development of children. But schools remain, of course, the typical instance of environments framed with express reference to influencing the mental and moral disposition of their members. (Dewey 1997. 18-19)*

This session is built on this interpretation of the learning environment, thinking of spaces as carrying direct and indirect messages that inform the education that takes place within them. When developing the session, our goal was to support students through intercultural experiences in understanding the messages of the space and the role of the actors in shaping the messages. The session consists of four phases. During the session the students worked in mixed groups formed during an earlier session and based on the students' choices as to which school they would like to visit. This was important to us, as we wanted to support students in understanding the messages of school spaces more deeply through multicultural group discussions and to reflect on their own interpretations of space.

## **Phase 1**

In Phase 1, the task of the group members is to think about what they like and dislike as a teacher or student in a given classroom, using classroom photos.

## Step 1: Individual task

Look at the photo of your group and try to read the space's hidden messages by thinking about the following:

- What could be the rules in this space? Why?
- Who can determine the layout of this space?
- Who or what is allowed in this space? What are the legitimate elements in the space?
- What would help your teaching if you had to teach in this class? And as a student, what would help your learning if you had to study here?
- What would you miss as a teacher in this environment? And as a student? Collect your answers both as a teacher and as a learner (individual work) (10 minutes)



Figure 14: Secondary school classrooms (© Kálmán & Kopp, 2021)

## Step 2

In Step 2 the students then discuss their individual thoughts in small groups and gather suggestions for changes that should be made within the classroom to meet everyone's learning needs. The groups then present their main suggestions to the whole group, highlighting three main points. The implicit purpose of this phase is for participants to reflect on the complex needs that may arise in a learning space.

## Phase 2

In Phase 2, the concept of learning environment is presented to the students in a short lecture addressing the historical changes in school spaces,

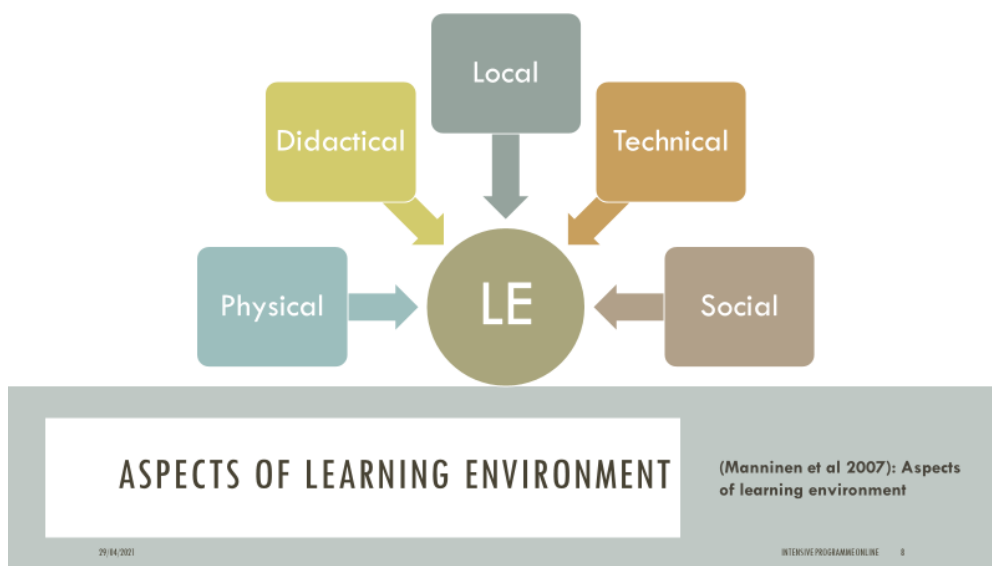


Figure 15: Five Learning Environment Aspects

theories about the effects of school spaces on student learning, and theories of the learning environment. The learning environment has become more and more the focus of educational research and development (Réti 2011). Much of this research approaches the learning environment from the perspective of learning effectiveness (Blackmore et al. 2011). Among the resources available, we looked for ones that could be quickly understood by students and help them interpret the complexity of the learning environment. Based on this, in the session we used Manninen and colleagues' theory (2007) of learning environment and its categories, assuming that this model would help students understand the complexity of the learning environment and the interactions between its elements.

### Group task:

- Discuss the different opinions as a group. Based on the different needs, suggest any changes to the environment that would better suit the needs ALL OF YOU as students and as teachers (20 minutes)
- Present your three most important changes to the whole group (1-1 minutes)

## Phase 3

In Phase 3, the students work in small groups on short literary excerpts. The group members are asked to share four excerpts with each other, each member reading one excerpt. Based on these, they then collect questions and aspects that could be used during the school visit. Each group then creates a poster based on their collected questions and ideas. The instructions to the students are:

- In the two texts, select the factors or evaluation criteria of the school learning environment that are associated with a democratic and creative educational environment. Make a list of these factors in the group. Write next to each factor how information could be gathered about them during the school visit.

The readings for the group task are:

#### 1. DESIGN PRINCIPLES: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Sanoff, H., Pasalar, C., and Hashas M. (2001). School Building Assessment Methods, School of Architecture, College of Design, North Carolina State University. (p. 21–22)

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED448588.pdf>

#### 2. ASPECTS OF LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Réti, M, Lippai, E (2010). Educating Space: National and cultural differences in the process and [with] quality criteria of school building programmes (pp. 9–11)

[https://www.oktatas.hu/pub\\_bin/dload/kozoktatas/ped\\_szakmai\\_szolg/fenntarthatosagra\\_neveles/oko\\_elmeletihatter/1.5/Educating\\_Space2.pdf](https://www.oktatas.hu/pub_bin/dload/kozoktatas/ped_szakmai_szolg/fenntarthatosagra_neveles/oko_elmeletihatter/1.5/Educating_Space2.pdf)

## Phase 4

In Phase 4, the groups present their posters to each other, reflect on each other's work, and draw ideas from each other.

### Pedagogical reflection

In this reflection, we summarise the experiences gained from implementing the session. In doing so, we cover not only our experiences of the current project, but also the experience gained during the session organised in the previous project to prepare for the school visit, as the experiences of the two projects together influence our thinking about the further development of the session. In the reflection, we focus mainly on our professional dilemmas.

Firstly, some thoughts on the use of the prior knowledge of the participants in the session. The recall of prior knowledge was essentially the task of Phase 1, which could be partially realised within the current framework. However, two important opportunities were not exploited: on the one hand, the participants' prior knowledge and experience of school visits, and on the other hand, the elements discussed in the 'Democratic Classroom' session. By extending the timeframe of the first phase, both topics can be included. This also strengthens the internal coherence of the entire IP.

We consider the basic methodological approach of the session, including the approach based on student cooperation and discussion, to be fundamentally successful. We felt that the students were inspired by working together. Our experience is that learning from each other in a group works well in intensive programmes. It can be assumed that international intensive programmes, especially in teacher education, are preferred by those students who are already open to cooperation. In addition, the group-building activities implemented in the first part of the programme encourage the development of the international group and lay the foundations for later group activities. However, it could also be felt in this session, and this is evident in the reflections of other sessions as well, that language skills and the demanding use of language significantly influence the group dynamics. This is a problem not only in this session, but in the IP as a whole, and we will therefore address this at the programme level in the future.

The biggest difficulties during the session were caused by the complexity and diversity of the theoretical frameworks we have chosen. For some students, the learning environment concept was completely new and

consequently difficult to fully grasp and use. During the group discussions in Phase 2, participants seemed to see clearly the relationship between their own learning needs and the learning environment and have constructive ideas in response to it. However, when the space was examined from the teacher perspective, the perspective of the traditional teacher role was mostly used. Perceivably, even in Phase 3, it was difficult for some students to use the theory as an interpretive framework. During the reflective conversation following the school visit, we also observed that participants rarely mentioned their experiences of the learning environment.

In a previous IP, we had used the theory of school culture as a theoretical framework for preparing the school visit, and this theory was more easily applied by the students in analysing their experiences. To address this problem, we have planned the following changes: (1) to interpret the learning environment, we will return to Dewey's original concept and use his original text (*Democracy and Education*) on the Social Environment and Social Medium. Dewey interprets the concept of environment much more broadly than the other theories we used in the session. (2) In addition, we will support reading of the literature with more focused questions. The questions should be more specifically related to the topic of democracy, orienting students to reflect on the relationship between the spatial environment and democratic living conditions. It would help if participants read the suggested literature before the IP, but we experienced that this is becoming less common among participants from year to year. Therefore, we recommend more texts be read by students during the session.

## **Conclusions**

To conclude, we return to the original question raised in the introduction: How can thinking about learning spaces help to understand classroom democracy? Throughout the project, we interpret democracy as a 'way of life' that is shaped by human actions and relationships between people. In school settings, the learning environment has a key role in this by mediating the relationship and social practices of teaching and learning. These environments carry messages about how those who created them think about the world and 'shape' social relations and practices. During the current intensive programme, dialogue between participants from different school cultures and learning environments helps the participants to gain a deeper understanding of the messages of their own learning environments.

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## 7 DEMOCRACY IN SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

**Carmen Sanchidrián, University of Málaga (Spain)**

*'Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?'*  
*'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,' said the Cat.*  
*'I don't much care where ...' said Alice.*  
*'Then it doesn't matter which way you go,' said the Cat.*

Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

*Alice's conversation with the Cheshire Cat has great similarities with our work as researchers. It all depends on the questions we would like to answer. The answers that we will receive from textbooks or benches or pictures depend on the questions. Asking good questions is one of the most difficult tasks. Everything begins with a good, right, accurate question. It is not easy to ask questions to a law, a written document or a testimony, but it is even more difficult to ask a question to a pencil or to a school uniform.*

*For many centuries, educational science had a blind spot for classrooms. Historians of education studied the thoughts and work of pedagogues, dead pedagogues, and laws, theories and regulations, but we knew hardly anything about real-life education activities in the classroom. Following successive turns, mainly since the eighties, historians of education started to change their perspective and chose a cultural, interpretative perspective attempting to unpack the black boxes of schooling. School objects, how they were used and by whom, when, where... appeared to be the key to opening these boxes.*

*Among the school objects (textbooks, notebooks, uniforms, drawing, stationery supplies, school bags, posters, exams, photos, school buildings, desks...) textbooks have been the most studied. They are easy to find and, undoubtedly, they offer rich information about the official curriculum, defined broadly as *the content of schooling in all its forms* and narrowly as *a lesson plan*. In both cases, school books have proved to be*

effective tools for understanding the idiosyncrasies of certain historical time periods as they allow us to examine the ideologies, concepts and values of the social groups in power.

There are several personal stories behind this chapter, or this session, interests that were separated in my life for years and that have finally come together in my daily life and work. My interest in education and museums forms the basis of most of the things I do. Being an historian of education interested in pictures, museums and objects, the cultural turn has allowed me to work with school objects, pictures and school museums.

Connecting pictures, school objects, museums and history of education, this chapter addresses history as a subject of education and the history of education. Taking post-war Spain as a case study, although it is possible to find similar examples from different countries and periods (from the past and currently), we offer examples of the ways in which Franco's regime naturalised its political control, created a national history, and imposed a national identity.

But, there is a problem with school objects. Often, we don't see. We don't pay attention to the things that are closest to us, the things that are part of our daily lives. When we walk through our city, we see tourists taking photos of places that we pass by every day but that we have never 'seen', that we had not noticed. And that 'unusual' look, the look from outside, is what makes us notice something that has gone unnoticed. This happens with classrooms. School is so common in our lives that we hardly even look at it. Classrooms have become a synonym for education, although the COVID-19 pandemic has utterly disrupted the education systems. Within this chapter, or session, there are several seminal ideas: sometimes, we look, but we do not see; taking pictures is a different way of looking and, of course, of seeing; and school objects communicate ideas, symbolise values, and convey emotions. If we consider meaning and value, we are in the suggestive domain of cultural history. Totalitarian regimes have, to survive, always exerted strict control over education, teachers and school books. Teaching history has been strongly linked to the nation, with outcomes that have been good and bad. Constructing history for an inclusive nation (democracy and diversity come together) can be a force for good, although constructing history for the exclusive nation, especially one which sets itself against its neighbours, is a dangerous force in the world.

I do not think it is necessary to explain the connections between education and politics, power and history, history and democracy, education and totalitarianism, or democracy and diversity, among other possible combinations. In different ways, these connections will nevertheless appear in this chapter. Looking at history as an educational subject from the perspective of the material culture of the history of education will reveal new perspectives about the past and about ourselves.

## **An approach to History as a subject and the History of Education**

The main goal of education is to form good citizens. But what does a good citizen mean? While there is no single right answer to this, the following, by Cameron White, can be offered as a basic agreement:

*Good citizens are people who have a fundamental understanding of history, who have tolerance of other cultures and ideas, but who also believe there are basic human rights that need to be protected, and people who can critically analyse information. They then must go one step further and apply this information to solutions to further democratic ends. (White, 2005, p. 84)*

One of the main objectives of the ReCreaDe project was to implement different active methodologies and offer an interdisciplinary approach to democracy and education. In this project, most of the teachers came from different backgrounds, although we were all involved in teacher education. There were representatives from diverse fields: pedagogy, teaching of mother or foreign languages, drama and education, social education, sociology of education, philology, geography, and history of education. Our challenge, then, was to look at the same issue from different perspectives.

The goal of this session is to help to create connections, as learning is making new connections. My field of expertise is the history of education, and I would be very happy if today, tomorrow, or perhaps next week, the students could connect this session with the rest of the IP and with their own experiences. This field has undergone similar changes during the last twenty years to the rest of the social or human sciences in its turn towards cultural history. This has greatly expanded our sources and our objects of study. Specifically, the incorporation of school objects (not the objects themselves, but who, how, when, where, for what and why they were used) has allowed us to peek into what happened inside the classrooms of the past.

In addition to putting students in numerous situations where students from the same country, from different countries, or from different educational levels (students on the IP will be nursery, primary or secondary teachers) can debate and encounter different points of view, the teachers of this IP agree on the need to offer academic content. This session, which normally takes place towards the middle of the IP, aims to integrate and show some of the background theories of the IP and to visualise them. It connects

theories and materials that students are expected to have read or watched before the start of the IP (e.g. a TED talk or a text).

This session has three well-defined parts. The starting point for each is to verbalise the meaning of the content and the reasons for the activities. The students, future teachers, must always be aware that the activities proposed by their teachers are not a one-off occurrence, but have been carefully thought out according to the learning objectives.

## **Phase 1: History of material culture – Objects matter!**

The first aim, since we are in a History of Education session, is to ask what kind of history we want to do. It is neither a descriptive nor a factual history, typical of late idealism or of positivist sociology, but a story that moves between ideas, meanings and values. It is important to know that disciplines change over time and, in addition, that those changes are conditioned by context.

The cultural adjective, applied to history or geography or anthropology or, in general, to the human and social sciences, gives them a different perspective from which the historian or geographer or anthropologist will ask different questions, and, to find answers, they will need to turn to different sources. In the case of history of education, this has led to questions about everyday life in the classrooms of the past, for which it is essential to know the objects that were in those classrooms. However, each object may have a different meaning and value for each subject and, moreover, meanings are not permanent, but may change over time. Looking at the history of education from the perspective of its material culture uncovers new perspectives about the past, and about ourselves.

### **Look and see: See the objects and ask them questions**

Objects are part of our life, of our history. *Objects are everywhere*. Each day we are surrounded by objects that carry a particular meaning and offer certain functions. We move through everyday objects, passing through them unaware.

We all carry personal items in our bags and have certain objects in the bedroom or in the office. Our personal belongings give information about ourselves: for example, our tastes, values, the importance order has for us, our personal characteristics. Some people keep everything, others easily

detach themselves from objects. From here, before starting to work with the school objects, students are invited to think about the objects they keep in their rooms or on their work table and to consider a problem – often, we are unaware of objects around us. We do not see, do not pay attention to, the common things, to the objects that are part of our daily lives. When we walk through our city, we see tourists taking photos of places that we pass by every day, but that we had never noticed. And that ‘unusual’ look, the look from outside, is what makes us notice something that had gone unnoticed. Why do we see and look differently when we take photos? It is because of the camera, or because of the seeing? It is possible *not* to see something because we are taking pictures. Yet, it is also possible to take pictures of objects, spaces, people... that no one around you has seen.

Classrooms have become a synonym for education, although the COVID-19 pandemic has utterly disrupted the education systems. School is so common in our lives that we hardly even look at it. Then, when we ask adults questions about the use of school objects or about the routines of their school life, the information is frequently vague, in addition to being distorted by the passage of time so that the good or bad are remembered above all: a teacher, an excursion, having lunch in the dining room, a special day, an essay... Memories are blurred, idealised by the passage of time, by nostalgia for childhood days, or tainted by a bad one-off experience.

After reflecting on these aspects, we realise that objects are not always the same, nor are they used and perceived in the same ways, and we see examples of both objects that were in daily use fifty years ago that cannot be identified today, and objects that are used today but are unknown to certain sectors of the population (e.g. many related to the digital world). It is also possible to find objects that have remained, but with different uses.

### **Step 1**

- Take a post-it.
- Think about your most important school object.
- Describe or name it on the post-it.
- Explain your choice.



Figure 16: Objects suggested by students written & displayed on post-its

In most cases, without any explanation given, it would be impossible to understand the reasons for the object choices, and even the reasons that are given can sometimes be quite obscure. After this introduction, we invite the students to reflect on how school objects can help us increase our knowledge about school life in the past. A number of school objects are then shown to the students and they are asked to say what questions they would ask the objects. The students are then encouraged to recognise that history cannot be defined either by its object or by documents, and that it is possible to study the history of everything and anything (history of pencils, history of school uniforms, history of school buildings, etc.) and to use all kinds of sources. The questions that are posed constitute the object of history and, consequently, determine the basis of our work. Therefore, we want the students to ask themselves questions about objects and their meaning, questions that could help us to know what education was like in the past, including the prevailing social and moral values.

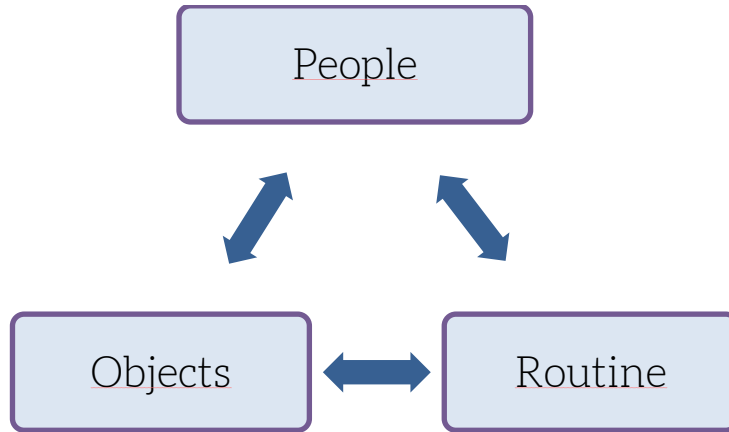


Figure 17: Exploring meaning: connections between objects, people and routines

In front of a blackboard, we can ask ourselves who used to write on it and when. The blackboard was the space where teachers used to write and draw things (text, diagrams, pictures) that students had to copy into their notebooks, but it was also a place where students were evaluated. The student was called forward to the blackboard to answer questions, complete a task, or to write something. When the children came home they would often say to their parents 'I was called to the blackboard today' or 'teacher sent me to the board today'. It was also the place where one student in class was in charge of writing up the names of any students who misbehaved when the teacher left the classroom, etc.

Similar questions arise in front of a map. Where and when was this map made? By whom? When was the map taken out in the classroom? Who was pointing at the maps, and how? For what reason? What did the children do when the teacher pointed at the map? Who was asked – one student, or the whole class? Or in front of a photograph (school photos are considered school objects) (Tinkler, 2003): what happened before and after the photo was taken? What is the teacher's position in the photo? How many children were in the classroom? How were they dressed? Can we guess where and when it was taken? What for? For a school yearbook, or for parents to buy? Who took it?



Figure 18: Pages from students' reflective sketchbooks, used with permission

## Phase 2: The Black Box of Schooling

In phase 2, the following table is shown and described to the students as it is especially useful for supporting the objectives proposed in the IP. It represents the school as a black box surrounded by the educational context, the social context, and some of the elements that are part of each of these squares (classroom, educational and social contexts), although some of them, teacher training or publishers, for example, are located in between. Considering the school within these contexts is necessary for historians of education, but also for anyone who approaches a classroom and wants to understand what is happening there. Therefore, when our students visit a school in the country where the IP takes place – this visit is a key activity – we must bear in mind that almost everything we see (school materials, layout of the classrooms, number of students, timetables...) is conditioned by the educational system, the political and social system, the economy, the ideology of the current government, and the history and culture of that country.



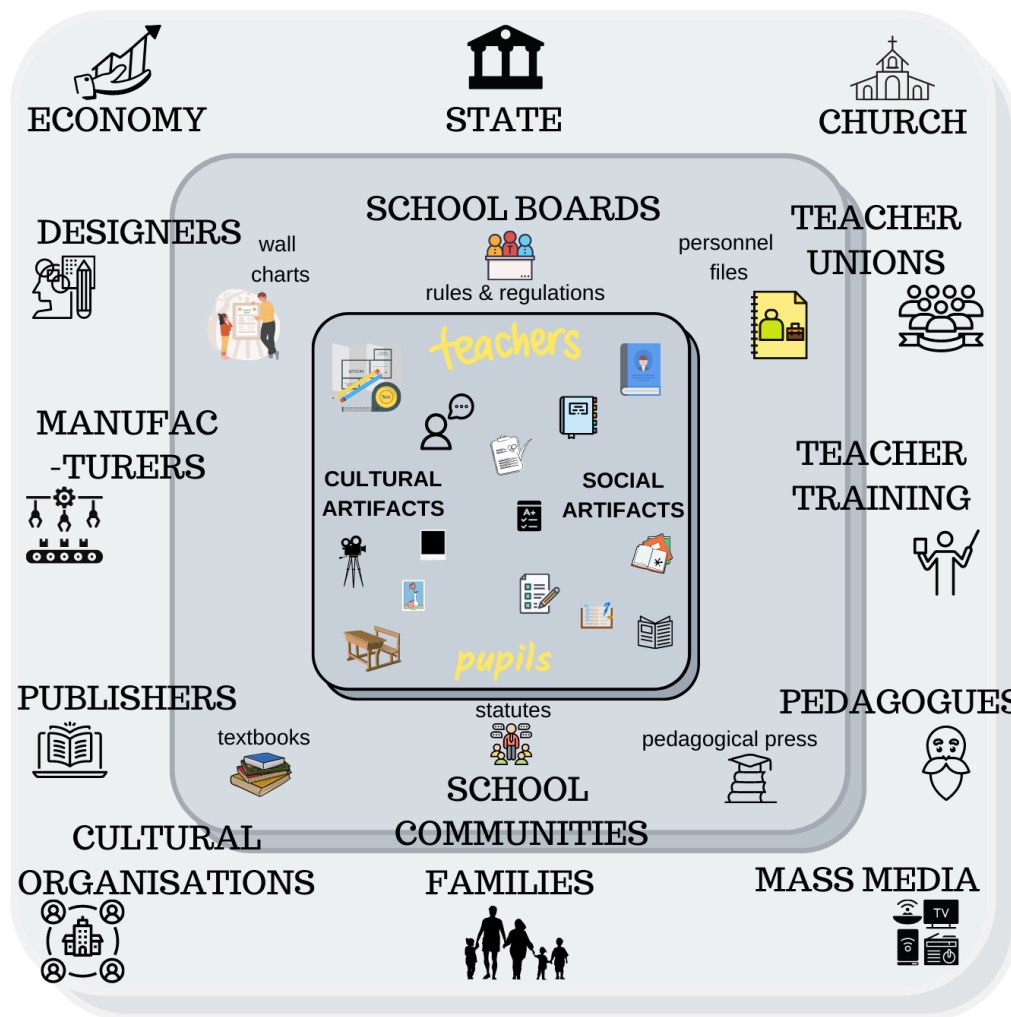


Figure 19: *The Black Box of Schooling*, based on Braster, Grosvernor & Pozo, 2011, p. 277

This also informs how we view and think about both who, and what, are in the classroom, i.e. the students and teachers as well as the different school objects – which go far beyond just the teaching materials. School objects can range, for example, from the school building itself to an individual essay written by a child and the writing tools, uniforms, maps and symbols present in the classroom. All school objects can be classified into two main groups: cultural and social school objects. Cultural objects are those that have been created outside the school to be used in it, such as school books, the buildings, or the teacher's table; social objects are those that have been created in the course of school activity, such as drawings, notebooks, a diary written by a teacher, or a report from an inspector. Cultural objects are, by nature, more plentiful (e.g. there are thousands of copies of each textbook and millions of school desks), whereas social objects, such as an individual student notebook or a drawing, are unique, and, moreover, families tend to be more

likely to discard objects made by their children than to get rid of school books.

Material sources, like every primary source, oral, written, or visual, have limitations for historians and must be interpreted in their context. This is why it is important to use as many sources as possible when doing research. Historical criticism of the source is always necessary. The selection processes that material sources undergo before reaching us could change our results if we are not aware of them. For example, sometimes parents or teachers keep selected notebooks (those of the best students, or those that they choose or prefer for some reason) and hence we cannot deduce that all the pupils in the classroom, or a specific child, always did the tasks with that level of quality.

The study of school objects focuses on practices of consumption, trade, and the intimacies of daily life, which contribute to our understanding of past of education. Artefacts can, if we are able to ask them *good* questions, show us another way of approaching the past.

### **Phase 3: Asking schoolbooks questions**

The third phase focuses on presenting and analysing schoolbooks, perhaps the best known school objects, from the perspective of this intensive programme: democratic values and education for democracy. Among the school objects (textbooks, notebooks, uniforms, drawings, stationery supplies, school bags, posters, exams, photos, school buildings, desks, etc.), textbooks have been the most studied object. They are easy to find and offer rich information about the official curriculum, defined, broadly, as the content of schooling in all its forms and, narrowly, as a lesson plan. In both cases, school textbooks have proven to be effective tools to understand the idiosyncrasies of certain historical time periods as they allow us to examine the ideologies, concepts and values of the social groups in power. An example of this fact is the introduction of Darwinism in textbooks, which was strongly conditioned by the opinion of the religious authorities of each country and by their role in education systems. The evolutionist theory reached most European countries at the same time, but this was not reflected in schoolbooks.

It is easy to find similar examples from different countries and periods. To approach the subject of this session as part of the IP, taking post-war Spain as a case study, we offer examples of the ways in which Franco's re-

gime (1936-1975) naturalised its political control, created a national history, and imposed a national identity.



Figure 20: Front covers of Spanish school textbooks

The students are presented with several pages from two reading books for 7- to 9-year-olds widely used in Spanish schools during the Franco dictatorship, and they reflect on the texts, images and activities proposed for school students. Most history textbooks use images to illustrate the history that they tell. The two books that we use are *Yo soy español* [I am Spanish] (Serrano de Haro, 1943) and *El hermano de Paloma* [Paloma's brother] (1963), to which we will briefly refer. Both are elementary primers. Text and images within school textbooks are usually designed to inform students' emotional and sentimental being. *Yo soy español* [I am Spanish] presented children a Manichean world: good and bad, sinner and saints, traitors and patriots. It was republished from 1943 to 1966 (23 editions) and in it we can find statements such as:

*“España es la misma ahora que antes y será la misma siempre. ¡España es eterna! ¡Y yo soy una parte de España”* [Spain is the same now as before and it will be the same forever. Spain is eternal! And I am a part of Spain!]

These sentences are particularly striking because they appear in an elementary history book; saying that something (a country, a religion, a space, or whatever) 'is the same now as before' is contrary to the study of history.

History is about time and space, about both persistence and change. To study the history of something that never changes is, therefore, meaningless.

Another sentence that students always find impressive is 'Y si España necesita mi vida, mi vida tengo que darle' [If Spain needs my life, my life I will have to give to it]. Our first thought was that this approach was typical of totalitarian countries, until Jo commented to us that in Finland, for instance, a democratic country, anybody applying for Finnish nationality is required to sign a similar commitment: to be prepared to commit to fighting for the Finnish nation if necessary.



Figure 21: The best is ... Spain! Sample pages from a Spanish textbook

*El hermano de Paloma* (1963) is a friendlier book and a later publication, but the message remains: Spain is presented as better than the rest of the world. The book presents some nice, colourful pages about different European countries, but the conclusion is that there are a lot of countries, but

"la más bonita de todas, la más hermosa... La más buena... La mejor, es: ¡España! Estoy muy contento de haber nacido español (...) debéis de saber que ser español es una cosa muy grande, muy grande...". 'the most beautiful of all, the most beautiful ... The best ... is: Spain! I am very happy to be born: Spanish (...) you must know that being Spanish is a very big, very big thing'.

These schoolbooks constructed national identity through the lens of the totalitarian regime, in opposition to the 'other', the ideological enemy. These approaches connect with the core idea of *The danger of a single story* (Adichie, 2009), already known by the students:

*How the [stories] are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power (...). The single story creates stereotypes. And the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.*

Nevertheless, the National-Catholic ideology of Francoism was not original and repeated the arguments of former historical periods. Any textbook can be analysed from the perspective of the values that it is trying to transmit to the students and whether these are compatible with democratic values. This activity is especially fruitful as multiple connections with the subject of democracy and education are established. For example, nationalism and democracy, democracy and supremacism, democracy and human rights, the cult of leaders, nationalism and diversity, education and dictatorships, or education and democracy, among others.

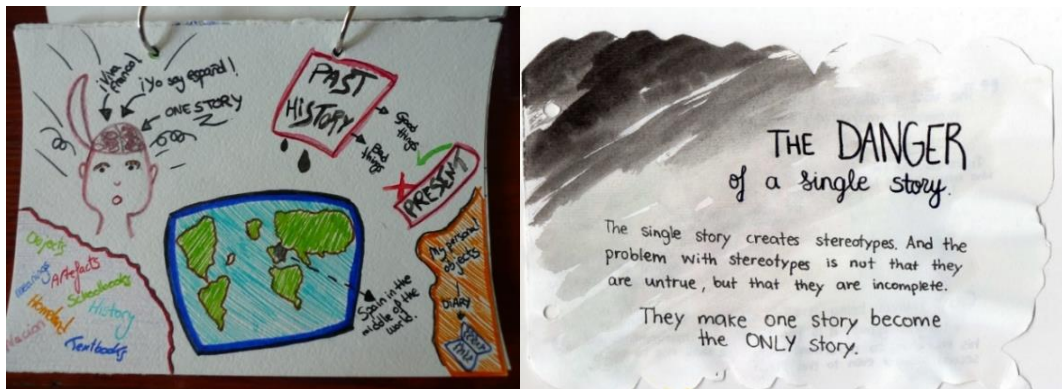


Figure 22: Sample pages from student reflective sketchbooks used with permission

Next, to foster debate and to conclude the session, we summarise the seminal ideas:

- School objects communicate ideas, symbolise values, and convey emotions.
- Teaching of history has been strongly linked to the nation, with both good and bad outcomes. The practice of exalting one nation above others has produced horrific consequences.
- Constructing history for an inclusive nation (democracy and diversity come together) can be a force for good, although constructing history as an exclusive nation, especially one which sets itself against its neighbours, is a dangerous force in the world.

There are connections between education and politics, power and history, history and democracy, education and totalitarianism, or democracy and diversity, among other possible combinations. In different ways, these connections appear in this chapter. Depending on the time, more sessions could be introduced; for instance, a session to consider and discuss nationalism and democracy. It would also be beneficial to approach the concepts of nationalism, patriotism, supremacism and their interconnectedness in order to develop critical thinking about the ambiguity of such notions. Another possibility would be to facilitate a debate about nationalism and language. Broadly speaking, the connections between history, pedagogy, geography and all of the social sciences should be underlined and made evident.

### **Final activity: Reflective questions (groups of four students)**

1. What were you taught about nation and homeland at school?
2. Did you learn about this in a particular subject?
3. Can/should/must these concepts be taught to immigrants and/or refugees?
4. Could this analysis be connected with the nationalism that is alive in the 21st century?
5. Does it help to develop democracy? Why?

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## 8 ASSESSMENT, DEMOCRACY AND CREATIVITY

**Orsolya Kálmán & Erika Kopp**

*As teacher educators, we constantly find when teaching about learning, teaching, planning and assessment that student teachers like to talk about assessment rather than other topics that they perhaps find too theoretical. They are also very ready to articulate their feelings about it. These feelings can be positive or negative, but never neutral. However, as students, they tend to very readily accept in their own case that the teacher is responsible for assessment and that the teacher has the power to evaluate their work and achievement.*

*The previous IP, InOut (Inside out – Outside in. Building bridges in teacher education through encounters with diversity), was our first experience with this group of teacher educators and with the experimentations of the IP. As new participants, it was hard work for us to imagine how student teachers' group projects on what they have learned from the IP in a freestyle presentation format could be supported and reflected on. This need for deep reflection gave us the idea to think about the culture of assessment as a possible topic in such a diverse community.*

*In ReCreaDe, our purposes were twofold, on the one hand we tried to give voice to students in assessment, facilitate their reflection on assessment, and share the power of evaluation. On the other hand, we provided opportunities to think about creativity and how it can be assessed. We conceptualised creativity in assessment as a learning outcome of the IP that can be evaluated, and as a way of designing and implementing assessment methods together with student teachers. We built on the approaches to assessment for learning and as learning.*

*Our session begins with a drawing task. Student teachers are asked to each prepare a 'My assessment journey plot' showing all the ups and downs in relation to assessment. This is followed by a pair discussion on the diversity of journey plots, and*



*then a group discussion on feelings about assessment and the power related to assessment. Then we focus on creativity and misconceptions about creativity, and engage in a joint discussion on assessing creativity. Finally, we explore different approaches and tools for assessing creativity and participate in creating together an assessment method that can be used for evaluating the group projects in the IP.*

## **The practice of assessment**

The practice of assessment in schools is to a great extent formed by cultural traditions, routines that usually haven't been called into question by student teachers. In some countries assessment involves repetition at the beginning of each lesson, in others students take more externally developed written tests, or in some cases there may be a high emphasis on grading right from the first lesson, while in others grading is only introduced at the end of primary school. In a diverse student teacher community, as in the case of the ReCreaDe community, student teachers can experience these differences and can question their taken-for-granted views on assessment. This process of raising awareness about conventional ways of assessment helps to think about the aims and reasons of experienced assessment practices, which is crucial in a period when evaluation in educational systems has been strengthened, and the focus on measuring educational outcomes on every level has been getting more and more attention.

In *Creative Democracy* Dewey states that democracy is 'a personal, an individual way of life', which means that democracy can appear in our behaviour and activities in schools, how we as teachers and future teachers shape learning, teaching and assessment. If democracy 'is a reality only as it is indeed a commonplace of living' then teachers cannot be the only ones who have the power to evaluate learning, students' work and outcomes. The exclusive power of assessment prevents teachers and students from creating a democratic life in schools. Therefore, teachers have a crucial role in sharing the responsibility of assessment by involving students as agents in assessment procedures. To reach these aims, students and (student) teachers first need to engage in regular conversations on assessment and to jointly construct the why, what and how of assessment.

This kind of personal engagement of students and (student) teachers in shaping the content and the method of assessment encourages a joint creative process. The focus is more on the process of creating assessment than the output of the joint work. It is important to note, however, that if some-

thing is assessed in schools it will be perceived by the participants as a more valued and important ingredient of learning and teaching (see Biggs 2003). Therefore, focusing on creativity not only as a process but also as an outcome can help everybody to experience creativity as a crucial way of living in democratic schools and societies.

The session has three phases. The first part focuses on students' personal experiences of assessment and how they relate to the democratic nature of assessment. Also, two conceptions – assessment of learning and assessment for learning – are compared in the light of lived democracy. In the second phase we have a discussion on creativity and why and how it should or could be assessed in schools. In the last part, we explore and evaluate some methods and tools for assessing creativity and the participants then take part in creating together an assessment method that can be used for evaluating the creative group projects in the IP.

Approximately 20-30 student teachers can participate in the session, which takes around 1½ to 2 hours. When the session was trialled in the IP programme we had a limited timeframe and therefore not every task was implemented.

## **Phase 1: Personal experiences of assessment and its democratic nature**

Our session begins with a drawing task. The student teachers are asked to each prepare a 'My assessment journey plot' showing all of the ups and downs in relation to assessment. In drawing the plot, the student teacher reflects on their important experiences of assessment. They define the experiences as positive, neutral or negative, and can also consider how strong feelings they had about that assessment. They mark approximately when it happened and use keywords to describe the experience (see example plot). After drawing their assessment journey plot, they show them to each other in pairs and compare each other's plots. We finish the task with a whole group discussion.

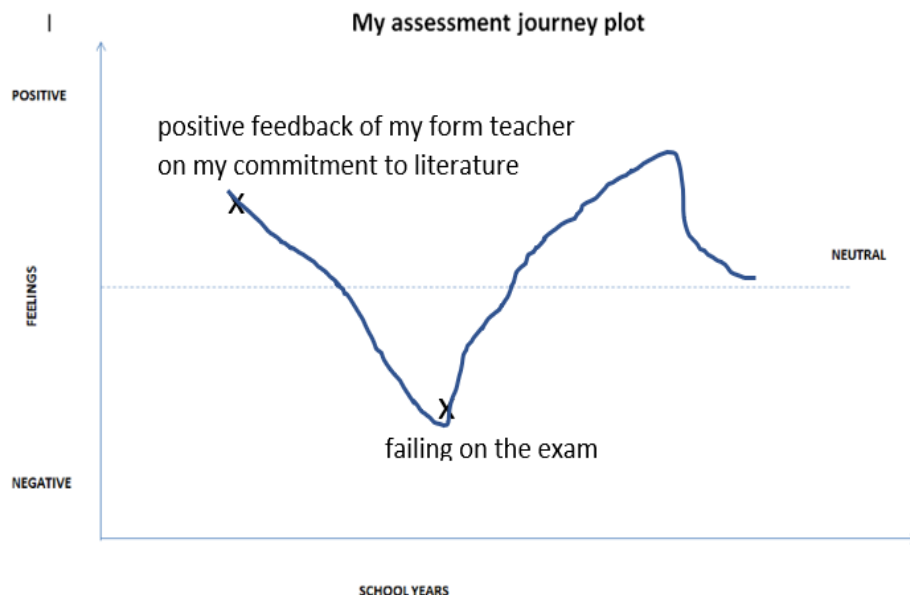


Figure 23: An example assessment journey plot

As an input to the discussion, everybody shows their plot to the group to get a picture of the typical assessment journey plot shapes. The first impressions can be related to certain main features, such as significant ups and downs, where the plots are flatter, and whether there are more positive, negative or neutral experiences of assessment. It is also important to give opportunity to students to express their thoughts and ideas about what might be the reasons behind these feelings. Students typically report more positive or negative experiences than neutral ones, and the balance between positive or negative feelings about assessment can also differ from group to group. However, it is always worth noting whether the student teachers have more negative feelings about assessment than one might expect from students who are aiming to become teachers.

As a second round of the discussion, the pairs are asked to share one relevant important positive or negative experience of assessment. Using a table or flipchart we collect these experiences in two columns, one for positive and the other for negative experiences. Discussing the examples, we try to identify together those practices and experiences where the students themselves had a voice, an engaging role in the process of assessment, and those where the experience was highly controlled externally or/and from top down by teachers, headmasters, external evaluators, authorities. Originally, we as teacher educators had an assumption that forms of assessment where students can shape the assessment themselves would be associated

with more positive experiences. However, this wasn't the case in our experience. Therefore, it is relevant to address in the discussion whether the students' positive or negative views of assessment depend on the students' own personal success, regardless of how they perceived their agency and involvement in assessment, or whether their positive experiences were more due to the joint construction of assessment practices by teachers and students. The goal of this discussion is to help student teachers become more aware of issues of power and agency in assessment, to understand how schools in different European countries have different practices regarding the extent to which assessment is externally regulated or open to joint construction by students and teachers. If time allows, an opinion line can be formed by the students to visualise their perspectives on the assessment traditions of their own educational system.

Considering and building on student participants' prior knowledge, the conceptions of *assessment for learning* and *assessment of learning* should be explained and linked to the joint construction of assessment by students and teachers as well as to the externally and top-down defined nature of assessment (Black & William 1998; William 2011; Heitink et al. 2016; AAIA n.d.). The following table can be useful in discussing aspects of the two types of assessment that are less known or less deeply understood by the participants.

Table 1: Differentiating between assessment of learning and assessment for learning

	<b>Assessment of Learning</b>	<b>Assessment for Learning</b>
<b>Power and agency</b>	Externally regulated, top down, teacher driven	Joint construction and interaction of student, peers and teachers, joint responsibility
<b>Student's role</b>	Passive (accepting the assessment)	Active, initiative
<b>Focus</b>	Judgement based on predefined qualities	Development process of individual students, improvement
<b>What?</b>	Mainly knowledge	Personal competencies
<b>When?</b>	At the end of the learning process	Regularly throughout the learning process
<b>Criteria</b>	External, uniform	Personalised

## Phase 2: Creativity and assessment

In Phase 2 we focus on creativity, construct a joint understanding of creativity together with the participating student teachers, raise awareness of some misconceptions about creativity, and engage in a joint discussion on why and how to assess creativity.

For the purpose of achieving a critical understanding of creativity and working on a personal sense of creativity, we first use an opinion line where each student can indicate on an imaginative scale from 1 to 7 how much they agree with the statements. With this task we can highlight common misconceptions or taken-for-granted ideas that can be misleading for understanding, developing and assessing creativity. Some or all of the following questions can be posed to the student teachers: Is creativity:

- limited to the arts (1 on the scale) or does it apply to every subject (7 on the scale)?
- a skill to be learned or pure talent?
- hard work or fun?
- originality or both originality and value?
- something that needs a field of knowledge, or is no prior knowledge needed?
- a thinking skill or a major breakthrough?
- free play and discovery or stimulation of play and discovery?

During the discussion those students who have a more common, shared interpretation of creativity as well as those students who stand alone or in small groups committed to other views of creativity are asked to argue for their opinions. During the discussion, as teacher educators it is important to broaden the student teachers' view of creativity without suppressing individual opinions. To do so, we can also refer to prior research (see Ferrari et al., 2009 p. 17 as cited in *Developing the Cambridge Learner Attributes* 2011 p. 60).



Figure 24: Mapping learner attributes based on Ferrari et al. 2009, p. 17

The next step in thinking about creativity is to ask the student teachers to write two or three keywords related to their understanding of creativity. Then, we show them a commonly used definition: 'Creativity is the interaction among *aptitude*, *process*, and *environment* by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is *both novel and useful* as defined within a social context' (Plucker et al., 2004, p. 90). Working on a joint understanding of creativity, first, everybody tries to find keywords that can be related to this definition and explain them. Then, we collect those keywords that are in tension or in contradiction with the presented definition and explain these features in more depth. As a last step, we think together about any elements of creativity that we may have missed so far. Similar, contradicting and new elements of creativity are collected on a blackboard or flipchart so that the student teachers can use them to develop their own understanding. At the end of the discussion everybody has the opportunity to write their own personal interpretation, i.e. definition, of creativity.

To develop a joint understanding of creativity, as a final point, the question should be raised about assessment. It is relevant to share our views on assessing creativity in schools, so questions can be posed such as: Is it important to assess creativity in schools? If yes, why? This task is a more unstructured discussion where everybody can share their thoughts in smaller groups; it is not a problem if these thoughts are under construction, if the ideas are in the process of being formulated. As teacher educators, we view creativity as an ill-reflected goal of 21<sup>st</sup> century schools; if creativity is a collective endeavour and an everyday lived experience as Dewey understood,

then schools as institutions and those who are in charge in educational systems can be threatened by it. So, thinking about assessing creativity and how to assess it can help us to work on a joint and deep understanding of creativity and strengthen the position of creative acts in schools.

### **Phase 3: Joint creation of assessment for the creative group presentation**

This part of the session focuses on the student teachers' own work towards developing a joint assessment tool. In our Erasmus+ projects, the intensive programmes always end with group presentations designed by student groups from the same higher education institutions. In these presentations students are asked to show what they have learned in the IP in their own creative way. They should create a presentation in a format that they choose that helps them to express their own personal understanding of *re-thinking creative democracy*. This task requires significant autonomy and responsibility of the student groups. To get more familiar with this challenging task and to understand this kind of creative group presentation in more depth, we decided to initiate a joint meaning-making activity on what a good creative group presentation involves.

We therefore introduced T-card to the students as one of the methods of learning for assessment. T-card is a tool for gathering students' own views and criteria about what a good learning product – in this case a creative group presentation – means for them. Firstly, student teachers think individually about what the main features and criteria of a good creative group presentation are, and they write down their ideas on post-it notes. Secondly, the ideas are collected and explained to everybody for clarity. Thirdly, as a whole group, we start to categorise the individual ideas into bigger groups. T-card helps the student teachers use their own language and identify their own views on creativity, making the criteria more tangible. These jointly constructed criteria can support the planning process of the presentations and can be used as an input for teachers' and peers' feedback. The result of the T-cards is always situated in nature, the purpose is not to generalise these criteria but to strengthen the engagement and commitment of those students who participate in the programme. Students in the last IP found the following as the most important features of a good creative group presentation: well-distributed, originality, interactive with the audience, quality of content, understandable structure, entertaining, confidence.

Table 2: T-card example for mapping a creative group presentation

Main categories	Individual ideas
	...
	...
	...
	...
	...
	...

*T-card*

## Pedagogical reflection

In schools and teacher education institutions, for us, student engagement in assessment is a crucial element of living democracy in a personal way. We set the aim of not only showing how students' voices can be heard and involved in assessment, but also of implementing it, acting it out. As teacher educators working in Hungary, we have regularly experienced how teachers are reluctant to share the creation of significant assessment tasks with students. Students are asked about their opinions, and they can give feedback on each other's work, but any new ideas of the students should almost always fit into the teacher's predefined framework for assessment. Working with T-card was an experiment for us in the ReCreaDe community and based on our experiences we felt that, overall, student teachers and colleagues of teacher educators were open to the joint construction of and students' engagement in assessment. Based on our discussions with students during the session, we also understood that thinking about creativity is important for student teachers, especially highlighting that creativity can be learned, and that it is therefore also relevant to assess creativity and provide feedback for its development.

Reflecting on our session, we identified some elements that could be further discussed and improved. Students should be informed in advance that this session also focuses on discussion of the creative group presentation, as this helps them become aware of their influence on the assessment of the group presentations. We should also make stronger connections with the other sessions of the IP (e.g. when students are sharing their own experiences about their educational system) and we could also reconsider whether the topic of assessment should be addressed not during the final



days but during the first part of the IP. Lastly, since it turned out that there was not enough time to explore the cultural aspects of assessment, it might be preferable to focus on the student teachers' personal experiences of assessment.

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## **PART 3: DEMOCRACY AS AN AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE**



## 9 EXPLORING TEACHER AUTONOMY AND MOTIVATION THROUGH DRAMA TECHNIQUES

*Allan Kährik, Katrin Nielsen*

*Once upon a time, I was sitting with my father in his flat, drinking tea and discussing education. The year was maybe around 2003, and it was a bright and cold winter morning. The tea was excellent, and we were trying to get to grips with what the core basics of a general primary and secondary education curriculum should be. And, then, my father said, 'Well, it all depends on the teacher. A teacher is fifty per cent a transmitter of new knowledge, a carrier of knowledge. Then, a teacher is fifty per cent a character developer and worldview provider. Finally, a teacher is fifty per cent an actor'. He then added that whenever he used this metaphor someone in class usually started protesting that together that makes 150%, which doesn't add up mathematically so it just can't be true. But that is precisely the point of the story – to illustrate the difficulty and complexity of the teaching profession.*

*I've carried this story with me and used it, and, true to form, somebody normally points out that I've made a big mistake, that 150% is just way wrong. And, continuing in my dad's footsteps, I explain each time that that's teaching – you have to be in it 150%.*

### **Teacher identity themes – teacher as a leader**

The teacher's leadership task is a difficult and important one as they have to plan, organise, provide and maintain a learning environment where both knowledge transformation and character education take place. As communication makes up 80% of what goes on in the classroom (at least according to

Jesper Juul, 2013) a teacher as a public actor has to perform using both verbal and non-verbal communication skills. Therefore, teacher leadership as an important and integral part of teacher identity was chosen as one of the starting points for our teaching and learning workshop session in the ReCreaDe IP. Our understanding was (and continues to be) that the lecture format for exploring complex and fluid teacher identity issues should be integrated with drama in order to address the management of the teacher education process as one of the key functions stemming from teacher identity.

Our idea was to bring drama and teacher identity issues together to explore how to support the development of teachers' leadership competencies in teacher education by applying drama methods. However, we do not focus on the teacher's leadership competence as a whole, but on three identity components that we consider prerequisites for effective teacher leadership: autonomous motivation for both teacher and learner (Ryan & Deci, 2017), ways of thinking/growth mindset (Dweck, 2017), and optimistic explanatory style (Seligman, 2006). We wanted to create a workshop where we blend the theory of teacher identity components with creative exercises as embodied models or social laboratories in order to observe and analyse how teacher/learner leadership relations might manifest physically. Our focus overall was on how to lead the learning of the learner: how to make the learner free to take responsibility for their learning, how to make them believe in improvement – that this is possible, and how to overcome cognitively biased negative thought patterns and acquire more optimistic ones. We tried to grasp the concepts played out through drama exercises (Boal, 2002).

Drama is a social art. It operates simultaneously at a real social level of interaction and at the symbolic level of drama(tic) language. These two functions operate in a dynamic relationship of mutual complementarity. Drama has four main principles:

- Drama functions as a social laboratory – through learning by doing we are able to model, change and prove reality through the use of the dramatic medium.
- Identity can be seen as a personal narrative that is constantly extended and modified by the effect of many other stories around us and by experiences to which we are exposed.
- By creating a fictional world – acting out – we can gain greater understanding of our own personal narratives.
- In the dramatic situation we are 'in' and at the same time 'out' of it enough to not to be afraid of it, but to be able to recognise its dis-

tance from reality. This phenomenon can be a key factor in attitude and behaviour change (Somers, 2008)

## **Workshop exercises**

In our workshop we used storytelling, mini-lectures, visualisation, drama techniques, observation and reflection. When selecting the drama techniques to use in the workshop, we proceeded from two basic exercises, one from forum theatre (Colombian hypnosis) and the other from drama conventions (improvised dialogues in roles). The choice of technique was determined by comparison of teacher professional identity on a performative axis – the teacher as a performer/actor in front of the classroom who seeks the best performance versus the teacher as a participant in the learning process (as an actor in devised theatre). This approach is based on Aristotle's belief that teaching is a practical art and belongs to the arts. The teacher performs in the classroom as a performer (action artist) using the strategies of both performer and participant in learning situations. First, the teacher plans and makes a script for the learning process, then directs it as a leader, then participates in it (sometimes as an actor), and, finally, manages the reflection and summary.

For the first drama, we chose the Colombian hypnosis exercise from Augusto Boal's repository 'Games for Actors and Non-actors' (Boal, 2002). The exercise comes from the arsenal of the oppressed theatre and one of the opening techniques in the series 'Feeling what we touch (restructuring muscular relations)'. Boal, the creator of several techniques of social theatre, including forum theatre, sought to empower the oppressed in society with his method and concluded based on his theatrical practice that personal change towards coping better in life begins with diversification of people's physical repertoire. Colombian hypnosis is a physical exercise that allows the participants (working in pairs) to forget their bodily boundaries and fears, to bypass conventional behaviour, and let the body be free (Boal, 2002).

The activity takes place in pairs. One partner stretches out their hand and the other partner is 'hypnotised' by the palm of their outstretched hand. The first player begins to control the movement of the second player. When the controlled player follows the partner's hand without thinking about his or her movements, full attention is achieved, and it is the leader's job to offer their partner challenges without compromising their safety. The roles are then switched. With this exercise, we wanted to give students an opportuni-

ty to perceive themselves in the role of both leader and follower and to discuss these aspects.

Our second task was a role play for improvised dialogue between an imaginary teacher and student. In this pair exercise the partners discuss with each other, one acting as a person with a fixed mindset and the other as someone with a growth mindset, after a while swapping teacher/student roles. The role play is used for modelling real-life situations and for observing the communication styles in both mindsets. The aim of the exercise is to acknowledge both attitudes in oneself and in others and to experience the feeling that arises as a response to consciously articulated beliefs that otherwise might remain lurking in the subconscious.

While the emphasis in the regular classroom is on cognitive skills, drama studies also develop affective and psychomotor skills. The learner is fully involved in the drama process, emotions are welcome, tacit knowledge is relied on, and knowledge is consolidated through continuous reflection. By combining the lecture's cognitive parts auditorily and visually with drama exercises, we attempted to create a holistic experience of the core concepts of teacher identity focusing on teacher leadership, i.e. the teacher as a democratic leader. Based on this, we designed a workshop following the Bowman 4 C model (Bowman 2009). First, we wanted to update the knowledge that the participants already have, and then build new knowledge on this foundation. Second, we designed the input of new knowledge as mini-lectures alternating with practical exercises and reflection. Our aims were to:

- 1) Revitalize the traditional lecture format;
- 2) Activate the body to think along with the mind;
- 3) Connect the learner with personal experience;
- 4) Establish the learned content in the emotional memory by playing it through.

## **Drama workshop**

The aim of the workshop was to integrate the theoretical foundations of the teacher's competence as a leader in the educational process with drama methods. The expected learning outcomes were:

- Participants recognise themselves as teachers and as leaders;

- Participants understand their responsibility as a leader in managing learning and educational processes and in creating a safe growth environment for the learner;
- Participants are aware of and reflect on their experience of leadership / being led.

Drama scenarios can and should be tested only in practice, and in each context – time, place – the participants act according to their own rules. Re-enactment creates opportunities to explore scenarios.

At the beginning of the ReCreaDe IP we felt that we were spending too much time indoors, so we looked for an impromptu location for our workshop somewhere outdoors, which we found in a public park in the Old Town of Budapest. The chosen park area was fenced and bordered on one side by a semi-circular staircase, in front of which was a circular hard-covered area in which street drawing was allowed, around which the drama exercises could be carried out. The area selected for the exercises was not strictly limited, but participants were asked not to lose sight of the rest of the group. The 90-minute workshop followed an intense study session with the 32 participants (students related to teacher education from 8 universities, 4 lecturers participating in the course) and us as workshop organisers (2 lecturers). We tried to explore the location by drawing visualisations on the ground and moving about the space as fully as possible.

We began with some warm-up exercises, instructions and a ‘drama contract’ (ground rules for participation, including the freedom for any participant to step out from the activity at any point). The task of the warm-up exercises was also to enable participants to make connections with each other. We then delivered the lecture material orally, simultaneously creating a schematic drawing of teacher identity with street chalks on the paved circle. This drawing developed over the course of three lectures, reaching completion by the end of the workshop. At the same time, we performed two drama exercises (Boal exercise, role play) and their instruction. We concluded the workshop with final reflections. After the workshop we, the teachers, discussed and took notes on what worked and what did not, and the scenario below is a modified version which was then tested with another group of students<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> We tested the modified scenario on 18.09.2020 with 24 students and can conclude that the modifications were justified. As the workshop was longer, ca 3 hours, we also confirmed our initial understanding that the reflection part needs both more attention and time.



TC - LAND - MEYER (1994)  
THRESHOLD CONCEPTS

"like love... a shirt of flame,  
blazing with passion"  
POLANYI (1969)

COMMITMENT

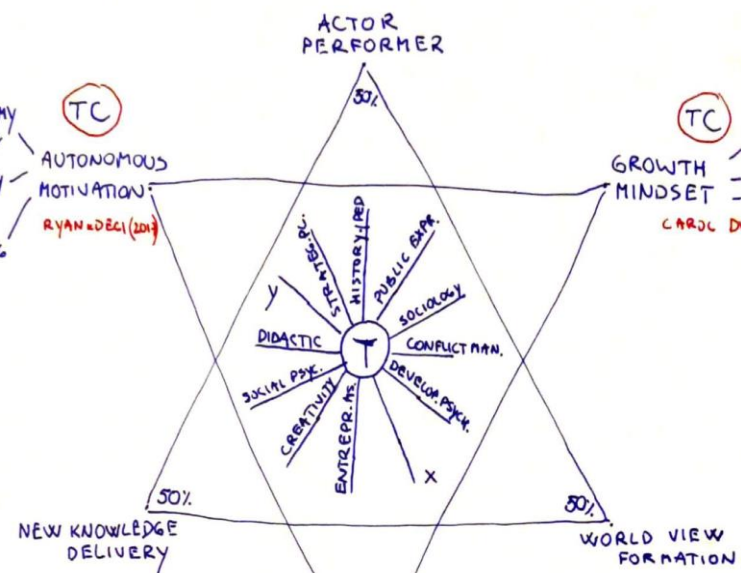
AUTONOMY  
INTEREST  
MASTERY  
WILL  
MEANING  
VALUE

TC

AUTONOMOUS  
MOTIVATION  
RYAN + DECI (2017)

TC "NOT YET"

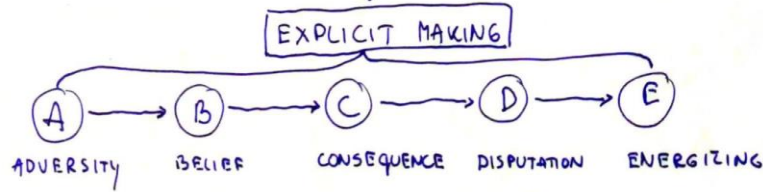
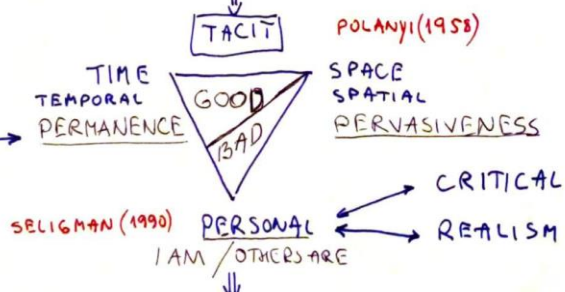
GROWTH  
MINDSET  
PROCESS  
EFFORT  
CAROL DWECK (2007)



OPTIMIST EXPLANATORY  
STYLE

TC

IT HAPPENS  
↓  
THOUGHT  
↓  
FEELING  
↓  
RESPONSE



COURAGE  
TO  
FAIL :)

- 1) DIARY - SKETCHBOOK
- 2) GROUP REFLECTION MIRRORING
- 3) EXERCISES FOR NOT TAKING ONESELF SO SERIOUSLY

Figure 25: Conceptual scheme of the workshop mini-lectures (drawn in simplified form during the initial workshop in Budapest).

## Workshop – Prologue

At the beginning it is important to make a 'drama contract' with the participants. Our contract consisted of four agreements:

- In addition to the lecture, we will be working on our feet, moving around creatively;
- Participation in the exercises is voluntary, each participant is free at any time to step aside and observe;
- We will be accepting towards each other's performance;
- Presence through action is important, and after each activity we will reflect on what we did, saw, and experienced.

The process is started off with a short physical warm-up involving some games or movement tasks (e.g. mirroring exercise) and by dividing the participants into pairs. (Our first student teacher group was quite familiar with each-other, having done several drama tasks together before). We also introduced the side-coaching technique during these warm-up activities.

## Workshop – Act I

**Visualisation:** A chalk triangle is drawn on the ground.

**The framing story:** 'Drinking tea with father' sparks intrigue – the teacher is 50% a transmitter of knowledge, 50% a character developer and worldview provider, and 50% an actor. The purpose of the narrative is to personalise learning and initiate intrigue. Hopefully (and usually) one of the learners will notice that this makes 150% not 100% and call out the 'mistake'.

**Short whole-group discussion** on what 150% actually means, and whether this is possible.

**Visualisation:** A circle is drawn inside the triangle with rays coming out of it. 'Teacher identity' is written in the circle. Different topics and areas of teacher education (didactics, pedagogy, psychology, social psychology, philosophy, sociology, etc.) are written on the rays.

**Didactic input:** All of these topics and areas should be mastered by the teacher as part of lifelong learning – it is only possible to become *initiated* in them during higher education. Equally, when the teacher enters school, their

identity must be based on something more fundamental than just a set of introductions to different sciences.

**Visualisation:** Another triangle is drawn, and 'autonomous motivation' is written at one corner (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

**Short whole-group discussion** on 'autonomous motivation' (based on the theory of self-determination). The teacher must be autonomously motivated and, by leading the learning and educational processes, they must encourage the development of autonomous motivation in their students.

## **Workshop – Act II**

**Activity:** Columbian Hypnosis. Work in pairs. Teacher as a leader. The group (already divided into pairs) is split in two: observers and performers.

**Didactic input:** The teacher is always a leader in learning processes and has to choose their teaching strategy within the moment in relation to the participants. As legendary English drama teacher Dorothy Heathcote stated, you have to stretch young people (keep them in the zone of proximal development, as per Vygotsky) and force them to explore their own boundaries in order to broaden their understanding. Here, we are modelling a leadership situation by playing Boal's Columbian Hypnosis. The purpose of the game is to explore the roles of leader and follower.

### **Instructions to participants:**

- Guide your partner with your palm around the room
- First ensure your partner's safety of movement, so that they start to accept your leadership
- At the same time, give the follower different (body-based) tasks or challenges that help build their trust.

**Notes to facilitator:** Continuously observe and side-coach the co-working pairs. Allow the participants enough time to get used to the movement and enter the creative realm. Swap roles in the middle of the process. The observers can be provided with questions before the exercise or encouraged to raise their own questions or topics. Even better, give the observing pairs a specific playful role – e.g. as 'leadership experts'.

**First reflection – after-performance discussion:** The acting group (performers) continue their reflection in the same pairs, sharing their thoughts and feelings about the process (how they felt during the task, what happened to them during the process, how successful was their cooperation, which was their favourite role as a participant: moving around as a leader or a follower?). At the same time, the observers also discuss with each other: How was leadership shown/performed during the improvisations? Was the leadership firm or loose, safe enough, minimising stress, or offering challenges? Was the follower led purposefully by intention or did leading just happen somehow? How safely and creatively did the leaders succeed in guiding the followers? What thoughts and feelings arose during the physical improvisation, what connections can they make with their own personal autonomous motivation?

**Second reflection:** After the discussion in pairs, allow the observers to share their insights as feedback with the performers. As necessary, guide the discussion towards leadership – what strategies and qualities guide and manage a creative and democratic learning process?

**Notes to facilitator:** Repeat the process by swapping roles: the previous observers now get to perform the exercise, and the previous performers act as observers. If appropriate, give each pair of observers the task of following one acting pair. This enables more focused attention to be paid to the details of the physical improvisation, leading to deeper reflection. In this case, the pairs should be assigned before the performers carry out the task. Observers can also be assigned the role of an observing expert midway through the observation ('mantle of expert' strategy). This opens up the possibility to discuss how they experienced the process firstly as themselves and then after the role-change as, e.g., 'leadership experts', an 'educational committee' or 'trainer's association'.

### **Workshop – Act III**

**Visualisation:** Back to the triangle. 'Growth mindset' is written at the second corner of the triangle (Dweck 2017).

**Didactic input:** Sometimes things go awry, and management fails. A person is autonomously motivated, but their previous beliefs hinder them because their body speaks another language. Fixed mindset/beliefs – what are they?

They are hidden, paralyzing. How do they occur? How to detect them and be liberated from them?

Growth mindset/experiences – what are they? How to support them? The teacher should realise their importance for him- or herself and also support them in students and provide a connecting bridge to the observed activity – a reference to reflection or action by a couple.

### **Workshop – modification (Act IV)**

**Activity:** The lecture is followed by role play dialogues in pairs: one participant (A) takes the role of a fixed-minded, pessimistic student/teacher; the other (B) is a teacher/trainer/facilitator. They pair act out a problem or issue of A where B has to persuade A towards an optimistic, growth mindset way of seeing the issue.

**Notes to facilitator:** Groups can also be allowed to create improvised scenes about similar relations and incorporate them into learning situations and re-enact them, and then discuss. Alternatively, one can use process drama for deeper examination of evolving situations.

**Visualisation:** Back to the triangle. ‘Optimistic explanatory style’ is written at the third corner of the triangle (Seligman 2006).

**Didactic input:** If pessimism accompanying a fixed mindset is learnable, an optimistic and resilient growth-oriented mindset is learnable, too. To begin with, one has to become aware of one’s feelings and emotions. Then, one can become aware of the beliefs that led to them and begin to realise, reflect on, question and change any beliefs that support a fixed, pessimistic view and way of life. The three characteristics of optimistic and pessimistic beliefs are permanence, pervasiveness, and personalisation. Persistent beliefs and beliefs that support pessimism hinder effective process management and necessary decision-making. Their transformation begins with awareness of them. Two ways of becoming aware of these beliefs: verbal (diarying and analysis) and physical (drama exercises and reflection).

The session ends with a detailed analysis of the key concepts and teacher identity and then how these qualities influence creative and democratic learning.

## Pedagogical reflection

### Bringing in the voices of students – participant reflections

After the workshop, we conducted a qualitative study using in-depth interviews (n=4) for data collection. We asked the members of the target group to formulate the purpose of our drama workshop as they perceived it. Self-understanding in relation to cooperation with other group members and opening up teacher identity were highlighted. For the participants, the aim of the workshop was to become aware of the boundaries that allow security in different communication situations and in selected roles.

*What is my nearest zone to enter my circle so that I feel safe. The way I behave, myself, when I am a teacher at school, [how] I take on the role of a teacher ... The way I was cooperated with. How much I was followed by the other. How much will I follow, myself? How much I am willing to take the step ... How much I feel like I am a member of [the] group and [that] I want to take that one step. Or [whether] I'd rather look from [the] side and draw my own conclusions. Feeling where I am now as a teacher when I am a teacher at school. (R3)*

In conducting the workshop we followed the principle of constant alternation of theory and practice as well as the principle of continuous reflection. Dividing the study group into two was in the service of continuous reflection. The observing group was able to reflect on their experience by observing the exercises of the other half of the group. The members of the target group rated this as a useful and activating innovation based on their previous experience and experiences gained during the workshop. The task of the observation group was to observe and reflect on how the performing group solves the task and at the same time to reflect on their own experience of performing the exercise.

*I've usually done these exercises in such a way that everyone does everything [at the same time]. But now we had a chance to watch, which was very good, because it's a whole other thing when you can watch how people ..., if I have the power, how I then behave and what I do, either I do exercises that are manageable for everyone or I just think wow! What can I do now and can they do it at all? All that wouldn't come out if I had to do it myself all the time... the fact that we did it this way alternately was very good. (R4)*

Considering the content of the workshop, the nature of the teacher's role, identity and managerial function were highlighted. The teacher's leadership behaviour is taken on by the class and reflected back to the teacher. The teacher is thus, inevitably, an example and a worldview shaper.

*The teacher is an example. (R2) That's where one had to lead and the other had to follow. In the process, it turned out that the class follows the teacher and is a mirror image of the teacher. (R1)*

The purpose of the workshop exercises was to enter into a role and then follow that role model, leading a partner or being self-directed, while becoming aware of the emotions, tensions, expectations, etc. that emerged in the participants during the exercise.

*I developed such relationships as a teacher, as a leader, and then we did, practically, those exercises [where] one guides the other, how it kind of looks, what thoughts [and] emotions arise when you are actually physically guided [and] when you are someone else's leader. (R4)*

The choice and implementation of the learning environment generated several positive emotions related to fresh air, freedom, openness, physical visualisation of learning processes and general support for learning in the environment. As the majority of ReCreaDe sessions were classroom-based, we were able to create a different and exciting environment for the participants by activating them physically.

*[it] was a really great atmosphere for learning in my view, the fresh air, the sense of freedom ... really nice, free and open. There was no feeling of being restricted (R1). It had such an 'aha' effect on me, that wow, that's how things can be approached, not just indoors (R3). It was really good that we were outside because it was so different. First of all, it immediately puts people in a different mood for learning ... the environment actually supported [learning] a lot ... which maybe also caused us to remember more from this session, because we were somewhere else. (R4)*

The theoretical parts and exercises of the workshop formed a holistic approach for the participants. During the exercises the participants moved around and, to listen to the theory part, they gathered around a circle in which a diagram illustrating the theory was drawn. The purpose of the theoretical part of the workshop was to present a conceptual holistic vision (inevitably simplified), which would also help the participants to imagine the teacher as a leader in a holistic way.

*This... was [a] whole thing [that] you did and I remember it was very well done... you pointed out in general and specifically what the identity and leadership of the teacher is. (R1) But what I liked about this workshop was that it was like theory and practice alternately. (R4)*

The participants perceived the presentation of the theoretical parts together with the gradually completed scheme as something new and different.

*Well, the drawing you drew ... I really liked that you visualised your story at the same time. And very ingeniously ... the same circle that was down there and with those chinks ... In the end, a hexagon came together, all of which is the nature of a teacher. The main thing that could be [applied] in school ... I have remembered the method as a picture. And that's what I took with me. How to approach things from a completely different angle. It surprised me, the method as such. (R3)*

Reflection in the workshop was intended to be continuous in groups. In addition, reflection was involved after each exercise and in general at the end of the workshop. It turned out that after the end of the workshop spontaneous informal reflection between the participants continued. Moreover, at least some theoretical concepts left their mark, enduring for at least a month after the end of the course, as could be concluded from comments regarding the optimistic explanatory style (Seligman, 2006), such as the following:

*The fact that you're not beating yourself down right away ... You just talked about how to think optimistically, not to start putting oneself down when making a mistake. (R1)*

To summarise our evaluation of the workshop based on the students' reports, we managed to create a drama workshop on teacher leadership that combined theory and practice, and to carry it out in an intriguing way. What we were unable to plan for sufficiently was a common time for final reflection. Although the participants continued to reflect spontaneously, this took place outside the scope of the method.

*I actually would've expected even more drama, and also maybe more time for reflection there on site, because for me I'd say the main reflection took place after the workshop, which is also okay, because we had the time and space for it then. But at the same time, it might also be important to allow more time for reflection when everybody is there together. (R4)*

## Conclusions

Me as a leader, me and power – this issue of power and freedom is directly linked to democracy. According to Dewey's (2008) approach to democracy, one of its principles is lifelong learning and growth on the one hand, and freedom on the other. The question of power and freedom, in turn, is related to autonomous motivation, or the freedom to decide, and the perception of the meaningfulness of what a person has decided to do. However, free-



dom, meaningfulness and the desire to constantly develop, i.e. the pursuit of mastery, are the three important components of the theory of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This, in turn, is based on beliefs about whether a person is evolving, that is, has a growth mindset (Dweck, 2007), because if a person believes that he or she can evolve and improve their leadership skills, even if he or she fails in something, then this relates to an optimistic explanatory style (Seligman, 2006).

The purpose of theory lectures is to support a growth mindset by providing the learner with tools to understand the experiences gained through drama. The concept of autonomous motivation helps the learner to understand that he or she needs freedom to perform tasks and that the tasks must make sense to them. Identifying persistent and growth-oriented beliefs further helps the learner to understand what might hinder them from carrying out the leadership process, and an optimistic explanatory style offers a way to deal with persistent beliefs after the teacher has recognised their existence.

Implementing drama using Columbian Hypnosis as an approach involves modelling learning processes and simultaneously teacher/learner leadership situations. Leading the partner in these drama exercises requires guidance-in-process and the future teacher must be able to anticipate possible reactions from the participants and to intervene if the learning situation becomes awkward for the participants. The application of drama techniques (performing and observing) can empower teacher education students and beginning teachers by helping them to become aware of their own narrative, i.e. their beliefs and fears. Watching others' performances also offers possibilities to reflect on different leadership situations and to find and explore connections between oneself and others, between personal and universal. It should be stressed that reflection is a central component of drama in education and should be carefully planned into learning processes. As the student group was international and used English as a common language, it is highly probable that some students experienced difficulties following the language. We attempted to present and experience topics that are complex and profound (persistence and growth issues, fixed and growth thinking, resilience), and the situation was therefore challenging in terms of content (topics), medium (language), and social interaction (performance stress). This additionally stresses the importance of reflection and the need to plan and provide enough time and a safe environment for it.

When the teacher manages processes related to student development in the classroom, then the teacher must also have growth experiences related to student development. Thus, supporting student development requires an understanding of student development and growth capacity. If the teacher follows the principle of an optimistic explanatory style towards both himself and the student, supporting their incremental beliefs, then the teacher must not make the processual space too comfortable for the student. Being in process, in the proximal development zone, requires enough effort and excitement to see if one can handle it. If an exercise, task, problem, etc. is too simple, it causes boredom and reduces the meaning of the activity, in other words, it inhibits autonomous motivation. Equally, if the exercise is too difficult, its meaning and freedom of performance are lost, which also inhibits autonomous motivation. The challenge that arises, therefore, is how to keep different students more or less together in the process in such a way that they are all more or less acting within their zone of proximal effort or development, so that what happens to them also supports their growth aspirations. The purpose of the theory points of the drama workshop was to show that in order to support each student's development, manage their development process, and understand them, the teacher must be aware of their own attitudes about who, what and how the student is. As a result, autonomous motivation, a growth mindset, and an optimistic explanatory style are important components of the identity of an empathetic democratic teacher in lifelong learning. The teacher is responsible for the learning process. Responsibility should be accompanied by freedom. The freedom to do something that is important, meaningful and exciting.

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# 10 THE OUTCOME OF TEACHING IS SEEING THE UNSEEN: AWARENESS OF YOUR OWN ATTITUDES, VALUES AND RIGHTS

*P-O Hansson & Julia Powell, Linköping University, Sweden*

*In recent decades, pre-corona, we have seen unprecedented progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) concerning access to water, sanitation, education, and poverty reduction and increased life expectancy. However, human rights are not a similar success story. During the pandemic we have experienced in many countries police brutality and violation of rights. Post-corona education therefore has an essential role in promoting human rights, gender equality and democracy and thus supporting, strengthening and rebuilding quality education for all. Research has shown that effective education programmes can reduce misinformation, increase knowledge, strengthen positive values and attitudes, increase skills to make informed decisions and act upon them, and improve perceptions of social norms (UNESCO, 2009).*

*P-O: Human rights has been an important focus area for me for many years. As a chair of an NGO with projects in Kenya, in my dissertation investigating Kenyan runners' use of smartphones to improve their rights, and as a lecturer of numerous courses at Linköping University, Sweden and University of Nairobi, Kenya. So, first and foremost, this is an interesting and well-known topic for me. Secondly, the purpose was to activate the participants in the workshop with a variety of learning activities and exercises. Thirdly, the plan was to engage a teacher training student of mine as a workshop leader and create active participation among the student participants. My previous experiences of actively involving students as leaders of exercises and discussions, or as a*

lecturer in university courses and field studies are positive. The response rate in terms of engagement, curiosity and interest from student peers is generally high. One reason for this is that the student who leads the exercise or lecture is well-prepared and willing to do his or her best. When they know the presentation will be in front of student peers they prepare well and put more effort into delivering the content. In addition, it is positive for the student leader to try their wings in the teaching role. Another reason for success is that it breaks routines, which stimulates interest and learning. All in all, there were opportunities for us in this workshop to develop and use different methods to promote learning about life conditions, democracy and rights. I highly appreciated that the teacher training student Julia took responsibility for her part of this session. I have used the exercises in other educational contexts with pupils and students, but the implementation, outcome and debriefing are always interestingly different depending on the participants.

*Julia:* At the tender age of twenty I applied to the teacher training programme at Linköping University. I wanted to change the world and improve people's lives! Five years later, in January 2020, I finally graduated, eager to finally start to work and slightly fed-up with complex theories not always being that useful in practice. Now, I'm still quite certain that I can improve pupils' skills, knowledge and self-confidence, but more humble in the knowledge that changing the world is not something you can do on your own. I am, obviously, many experiences richer. My experience consists of studying Swedish, Swedish as a second language, and Social Science at university, and I'm now working in a school as a newly graduated teacher. During the past years, I have also worked with people and education in various exciting ways, for example as a caretaker within social psychiatry, as a treatment educator at a residential home for unaccompanied refugees, and as a project leader for a municipal development project. Working as a teacher as well as in my previous jobs, I've found that I strongly agree with the sociocultural approach to education as I've seen the advantages of active participation, scaffolding and cooperation. The zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1986), which also plays an important role in the sociocultural approach, has also come close to my heart. Teaching Swedish as a second language, which is what I do at the moment, has strengthened this belief and I see it as one of my main tasks to identify my students' zones of proximal development and create lessons that are performed there.

With P-O as a teacher trainer educator you are, fortunately, drawn to value-based learning and to having a curious and active approach to pupils and to education. During my five years at the teacher training programme at Linköping University I have

experienced and used exercises aimed at engaging and activating students of different ages. This is what we wanted to do during the workshop in Budapest, and also what I want to do as a professional.

The ReCreaDe IP in Budapest was another enriching experience. In applying for the course, I hoped to develop my thinking and knowledge about democracy as well as my skills as a future teacher. My belief was, and is, that sharing experience improves one's ability to see things from different perspectives and understand other people, which was an opportunity provided during the course. One text that played a leading part during the course was John Dewey's (1939) 'Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us' in which Dewey emphasises cooperation and learning from others in a democratic society and expresses democracy as a 'way of life' (Dewey, 1939:2f). In retrospect, that was also an ambition of our workshop on human rights.

Investment in quality education requires well educated teachers who create awareness of their own values, attitudes, and common rights. Therefore, this chapter illustrates workshops where teacher training students from different European universities collaborate, discuss, and learn from each other about human rights and democracy. Learning is promoted in the workshops through active participation and social interaction (Wenger, 1998) by engaging students in collaborative exercises, such as creating their own photo exhibition, and enabling students to educate each other by leading sessions and sharing experiences. This type of learning enables engagement, communication, collaboration, and active participation. The approach aims to develop creativity to generate ideas, understanding, awareness and updated knowledge scaffolded by peers, mentors, and teacher educators.

## **The session**

The importance of human rights is even more important in changing times. From a global perspective, we are experiencing populist leaders in more and more countries, traditional parties that are failing to attract as before, increasing numbers of people voting for extreme nationalistic parties, growing contempt for politicians, and police brutality. However, we have lately seen an upswell of social justice, human rights and climate change movements. Protest movements such as Black Lives Matter, I Can't Breathe, and Fridays For Future are some leading examples.

In this chapter we describe how we, a teacher educator together with a teacher training student, facilitated a workshop where students from different European universities collaborated, discussed and learned from each other about human rights and democracy. The aim of the workshop was to

promote learning through active participation and social interaction within an activity (Wenger, 1998). This perspective of learning is based on a sociocultural approach in which knowledge is constructed through social interactions with peers. Active participation was crafted through different value-based exercises and the creation of the students' own photo exhibition in order to illustrate human rights and share experiences. This chapter outlines the workshop session as well as the advantages of collaborative learning and the importance of human rights in education.

### **Workshop session**

The workshop was part of the 10-day IP held in Budapest. Different topics and content were taught, discussed and deliberated among the attendants, who were teacher training students from seven European universities. Our topic of responsibility at the workshop was human rights. This workshop was planned and implemented by a Swedish teacher student (Julia) and teacher educator (P-O) in collaboration.

### **Sociocultural perspective**

In this workshop, we use a sociocultural perspective where individuals and collectives acquire and develop their knowledge, skills, and experiences in social contexts. This type of learning enables engagement, communication, collaboration and active participation (Wenger, 1998). The approach aims to develop creativity to generate ideas, understanding, awareness and updated knowledge scaffolded by peers, mentors, and teacher educators. Learning is understood to be embedded in situated environments and practices, where learning is relevant and meaningful. Lave and Wenger (1991) stated that learning primarily develops from less complex and less vital periphery tasks; in this way, newcomers and novices gradually become masters. Thus, people learn through a dynamic process of increased participation and social interaction within an activity (Wenger, 1998). In other words, the person who masters a technique can then guide the novice. During the learning process the novice borrows competence or 'steals' knowledge of what he/she finds most appropriate (Brown & Duguid, 1996) from those who are more experienced. Gradually, a greater degree of autonomy develops to deal with an assignment. Generally, the learner begins as a participant and develops into an active and known contributor, who may even attain the level of an expert. Their participation changes from what Lave and Wenger (1991) have re-

ferred to as 'legitimate peripheral participation', where they simply observe or act in a secondary role, to one in which they gradually increase their responsibility and are able to manage the activity themselves. The purpose of this workshop activity is to learn skills through active participation with peers and, in addition, to achieve a shift in learning from a first- to second-order perspective (Marton & Booth, 2000). The first-order perspective is learning facts, while the second-order involves conceptualisation and how individuals experience various aspects of the world. These two perspectives are interrelated and teaching must apply both perspectives, which is the goal of this workshop.

### **Workshop prerequisites**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations in 1948. The UDHR consists of 30 articles and covers the most fundamental rights and freedoms of people (collectively and individually). The articles can be divided into groups; civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. UDHR is a keystone for international laws and is the most translated document in the world, available in more than 360 languages (UN, 2015a). One of the basic human rights is education, which is clearly stipulated in article 26: '*everyone has the right to education*'. In 2012, the UN brought human rights into the 21st century by creating Agenda 2030. Agenda 2030 consists of 17 interconnected Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) based on human rights. The goals all strive to fight poverty, climate change, inequality and injustice, as well as promote peace. Education is likewise included in Agenda 2030 and the sustainable global goal no 4, to: '*ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*' (United Nations, 2015b).

### **Activities**

The workshop on human rights was divided into three phases to enhance interest, build connections and use the participants' creativity. In phase one the participants were given a short introduction to human rights to ensure they have a fundamental understanding of the background of the workshop. Phase two consisted of two value-based exercises to activate and engage the students as well as stir emotions. Similarly, in phase three the students were instructed to create a photo exhibition on human rights. The phases



work well as a whole, but can also be carried out separately. The activities and the experiences gained from them are described and discussed below.

### **Phase one: Human rights development (20 minutes)**

The session started with a short lecture including a brief background and history of human rights. This was presented by Julia using a PowerPoint illustration with texts, figures and photos (see Figure 26). The introduction was directed by seven Ws:

- 1) Why are human rights important?
- 2) What are human rights?
- 3) Who founded human rights?
- 4) When were human rights founded?
- 5) Why should we respect human rights?
- 6) Where are human rights violated?
- 7) What do you do when rights are violated?

The lecture included an exposé of historical milestones, important documents, institutions and creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). UDHR was described as 'a document of do's and don'ts'. The lecture also surveyed the 30 articles and 25 conventions. Examples of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights were given and the fact that human rights are universal and indivisible was emphasised. Julia's lecture concluded with a look ahead and description of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).



**A document of do's and don'ts**

- Freedom, equality
- 30 articles
- State -> citizen
- Moral commitment
- 25 conventions – legally binding



Figure 26: PowerPoint illustrations used.

### Phase two: value-based methods (40 minutes)

Phase two consisted of two value-based exercises. The purpose of these exercises was to let the participants experience what human rights or the lack of them might be like, as well as helping the participants truly understand that human rights are universal. Another purpose was to create a common ground for further discussion. Additionally, one aim was to inspire the participants to use value-based exercises in their future teaching by demonstrating their advantages and possibilities. The exercises conducted are called 'Privilege Walk' and 'Rights for Everyone'.

The Privilege Walk strives to show that although human rights are intended to be inalienable and universal, the hard truth is that, in reality, their application, or violation, in fact varies depending on a range of factors, such as a person's gender, place of birth, age or other more or less invariant conditions. The Privilege Walk starts off with the participants being asked to stand on an invisible line facing the leader (Julia). Each participant is then given a role card with a brief background description of a fictitious person including their age, gender, nationality, relationship status, level of education, and profession, etc. So, standing on the line are no longer teacher training

students from Europe, but different people from all around the world. For example, a 50-year-old secretly homosexual woman in Uganda, a rich French widow with a summer house in Montpellier, and a politically engaged and government-critical male in China. Next to them: a 16-year old Afro-American boy in the USA, a child in Yemen, a hard working woman in Bangladesh, a newly married young woman in Saudi Arabia, and a farmer in Ethiopia worrying that joining the farmers' union might create problems. And so on.

Next, the time comes for the participants to walk. Or not to walk. That is the question. The leader calls out different statements. These statements derive from different human rights articles. If the statement applies to the role played by the participant he or she is asked to take one step forward. If not, the participant is instructed to stand still. *'There was never any doubt that I would start and finish school'* the leader calls out. Half of the participants take a step forward. *'I've never skipped a meal or gone hungry because there was not enough money to buy food'* the leader calls out. Some participants stand still, some take a brave step forward – not surprisingly, the same participants as for the first statement. And so it continues. *'I am not afraid about what will happen if I'm stopped by the police'*, *'It's never a problem for me to express and practice my religion'*, *'My family never had to leave my homeland due to conflicts or war'*, etc.

A pattern quickly becomes visible. While some participants keep on walking, happy-go-lucky, some stand still. They start to lean against the wall with a resigned look. The core questions start to come into focus: *Who has, and who has no, human rights? Why?* To discuss these questions, pause the walk after a few statements and ask the participants both out in front and at the back: *'How does it feel?'*

The Privilege Walk ends with the participants revealing which role they were given and discussing their experiences from the exercise. Sharing thoughts and describing one's sense of the activity is a major and crucial part of the exercise. The person playing the golf-playing middle-aged Australian male politician described how he quickly stopped being aware of the people that were left behind him. Certain he was going to take another step further each time he eagerly listened to each statement with a smile on his face. The people not given their rightful human rights were not in his field of view and he no longer even noticed them. In contrast, one of the female participants who did not get an opportunity to walk (the 14-year-old pregnant girl in Tanzania whose parents were peasants) testified that she quickly

felt abandoned and abject. She describes that she almost stopped paying attention to the statements as she knew they would not include her. Both of these are important and interesting experiences, and they were discussed by the participants during the session. The fact that the participants actually get to feel what it is like to be the person eagerly walking or the person left behind gives fuel to the discussion. Even if the experience is minimal, it gives a hint of what it is like when your human rights are violated.

Other topics that might be fruitful to discuss after the Privilege Walk are prejudice and critical thinking, including questions like:

- What do we really know about education, economy and laws in different countries?
- Did the participants take steps based on their prejudices or actual knowledge?
- Where did the participants' prior knowledge or understanding come from?
- What do we really know about the world and the life conditions in different countries?

During the Privilege Walk participants have to decide whether or not to take or not take steps based on what they believe is correct in that moment; it is nevertheless important to discuss the assumptions behind their decisions. As Professor of International Health Hans Rosling has shown numerous times, our knowledge about the world is often outdated and prejudiced (Rosling, Rönnlund Rosling, & Rosling, 2018).

The second exercise in our workshop, '*Rights for Everyone*' was a card game. The exercise aims to make clear that *everyone*, without distinction, is entitled to *all* human rights. *Rights for Everyone* starts off with the participants being divided into small groups, in this case four to five students from different universities. Each group is given the same 24 cards, which illustrate human rights (Figure 27).

1. <i>Express your opinion</i>	13. <i>Clean water</i>
2. <i>Health</i>	14. <i>Write whatever you like</i>
3. <i>Clean air and environment</i>	15. <i>Travel freely</i>
4. <i>Clothes</i>	16. <i>Leisure</i>
5. <i>Food</i>	17. <i>Marry anyone you like</i>
6. <i>Right to vote</i>	18. <i>Have a career</i>
7. <i>Protection against child labor</i>	19. <i>Belong to an organization and attend meetings</i>
8. <i>Vacation</i>	20. <i>Equality between sexes</i>
9. <i>Shelter</i>	21. <i>Protection against discrimination</i>
10. <i>Freedom of speech</i>	22. <i>Free Internet</i>
11. <i>Freedom to choose and practice your religion</i>	23. <i>Reasonable salary</i>
12. <i>Education</i>	24. <i>Peace</i>

Figure 27: Game cards

All groups are instructed to be members of parliament in a fictive country. The instruction also states that the country is poor, which means that the MPs cannot guarantee all of the human rights. Due to this, they are requested to remove five cards. Everyone in the group has to agree before making a decision. At first, the choice seems to be quite easy and the decision is made quite quickly. The groups can be heard discussing, for example, ‘*Vacation isn’t that important*’ and ‘*Do the people really need leisure?*’ (see Figure 28). Five cards are removed.



Figure 28: Students engaged in group work prioritising human rights

After a quick debrief, the groups are instructed to remove another five cards, this time because of a serious crisis in the country. Again, the group members have to reach a consensus. It takes longer for the group to agree this time. *'We can't take away the right to marry the person you want'* and *'People need a reasonable salary, don't you think?'*; the discussion goes on. Nevertheless, in one group free internet has to go, in another group the right to protection against child labour is withdrawn. Among others. After agreeing on five cards to remove, each group presents what rights they chose to remove and what rights they chose to keep and why. To make the choices even harder, another round can be conducted by asking the groups to take away another five cards. Once the final cards have been selected, all groups are asked to discuss the following questions:

- Which rights were most difficult to remove?
- How did it feel to remove those cards?
- Did the group agree? How did you resolve dissonance? Did you compromise?
- What real circumstances can lead to a government not guaranteeing all human rights?
- What happens in a society if people do not have these rights?

Conducting this exercise during ReCreaDe in Budapest, we summarised the game by discussing the questions above together. Afterwards, the participants were asked whether they think they have a good knowledge of hu-

man rights. The participants stated initially they were fully aware of the human rights articles. Of course, they were conscientious students and future teachers who had listened to a lecture on just this only a few hours ago! However, now we asked them to reflect on *What does it mean that human rights are universal and indivisible?* This question turned the perspective and the students' own thinking towards the insight that it is not possible to choose between human rights, to consider certain rights 'less important' and withdraw them. By doing so, you violate the rights. The participants were then asked: *What did you do when you acted as MPs?* This question opens up an 'aha' moment for the students when they realise that, contrary to their theoretical knowledge of the principles and value of human rights, when it came to practice, they ranked and bartered them.

### Phase three: Photo shoot and exhibition (60 minutes)

The workshops' third and final phase was a photo shoot. The participants were instructed once again to divide into small groups (4 to 5 students from different universities). Each group was given two articles of human rights. The assignment was to produce one photo illustrating a human right and another photo illustrating a human right violation. This was to be done within 60 minutes using smartphones. The framing of the photo shoot activity was broad and creativity was encouraged: the photos could be authentic or fictive. The groups were instructed to write a few words of explanation of the photos. The photos were displayed as a classroom exhibition on the following day. Figures 29 and 30 below show some of the photos.



Figure 29: Article 8 (author Julia participated in one group and is placing a hand over the mouth of a student colleague)



Figure 30: Photo illustrations of article 11 and article 26

After the 60 minutes we reassembled to discuss the photo shoot and the photos. The group members described their working process and choice of photos. Clearly, the groups had difficulty illustrating the rights themselves. The majority found it easier to illustrate a violation of a right. In the discussion, participants also deliberated and shared experiences of human rights and violations in their own home countries. Interesting stories were shared and striking differences among the countries were discovered. This part of the workshop session unfortunately had limited time, and participants expressed their dissatisfaction with having an insufficient opportunity to explain their experiences and challenges in society and listen to others. If time had not been limited, the photo exhibition would have taken place in connection with the photo shoot, which would have been a better and more logical course of action. We would then have had a greater opportunity to discuss the photos in more detail and to dig deeper into the questions raised by the photo shoot.

## Pedagogical reflection

The overall goal of the workshop was to give insight that human rights are universal and indivisible. This was especially realised in the card game. The participants removed rights and sensed the consequences of this for people's lives. The unexpected twist at the end of the exercise invited participants to reflect on their actions. The workshop demonstrates different ways of actively engaging the students. The lecture, value-based exercises and photo exhibi-



bition constituted learning from first- and second-order perspectives: factual knowledge about human rights articles as well as reflection on what human rights mean on a personal level. However, the participants would have appreciated more time for deeper discussion of their own experiences of human rights and rights violations. This was found to be a burning issue for the participants, as revealed in Julia's first exercise. The participants did nevertheless share experiences, collaborate and actively engage in different exercises during the session. They listened to each other's life stories and illustrated their perceptions of rights (e.g. photo exhibition). Thus, the situated learning environment gradually increased their involvement through what Lave and Wenger (1991) call 'legitimate peripheral participation'.

The reactions to the workshop were overall positive, and many of the students appreciated playing an active role and exploring, not only learning about, human rights. The workshop raised questions, initiated discussion and affected students' emotions in the ways that we intended. One participant however suggested that the exercises could be seen as ridiculing and frivolous, not taking human rights in earnest. This is an important viewpoint; however, we argue that valuable insights into complex topics can be developed through exercises that also amuse. Even if the participants are laughing while taking the photos or ham acting during the Privilege Walk, this hopefully makes them more aware of the human rights and of violations against them. In this case, therefore, we argue that the goal justifies the means, and that the means are also essentially positive in nature.

Eighteen months after the Budapest ReCreaDe IP, Julia asked the student participants if and how the workshop has affected them and whether they have used any of the exercises. The answers were very positive and satisfying. The participants described the workshop as well conducted and educational, and the exercises as touching and inspiring. One of the participants stated:

*During the different phases of the workshop I grew increasingly aware of the fact that human rights are not a given for everyone, and that people I intellectually knew to be less privileged than me would actually not be under the protection of these rights. This was not an eye-opener per se, but definitely helped me to become more sensitive to inequality in the distribution of even such a basic thing as human rights.*

In addition, several of the participants stated that they have used the 'Privilege Walk' on different occasions in order to discuss democracy as well as

identity and equity with their own students. They described the exercise as having been successful and thought-provoking.

## Conclusion

Knowledge and understanding of human rights are of great relevance to future teachers. By extension, their knowledge and understanding will affect students and schools, causing a ripple effect. In the strategy of educating teachers it is important to give opportunities to gain personal experiences by reflecting upon one's own rights and privileges as well as rights in different scenarios. This has been shown to be effectively achieved through the use of collaborative exercises, for example by creating photos, which are very powerful tools for creating insights and understanding. In addition to the seven W's presented in the initial lecture, a final key question can be put to the participants: *What can you do to help ensure human rights for all?* It is of utmost importance to encourage each and everyone to stand up for people's equal value and universal rights. All of us play a role in determining our common future; so, to quote Mahatma Gandhi: *'Be the change that you want to see in this world'*.

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# 11 SONGS AND VOICES FROM THE PAST

**Brigitte Roth, PH Wien**

*When I first thought about the main ideas underlying our new IP, especially democracy and creativity, I started thinking what democracy and creativity mean for my teaching as well as for myself as a political human being. And, of course, I asked myself what ways I could contribute something meaningful to the programme.*

*As a language teacher I am constantly trying to be creative, to use creative methods, to offer creative texts, to ask my students to write creative stories. As a citizen living in a Western democracy I am extremely interested in democracy, in human rights, children's rights, the UN, and what all of this means for each of us. What did it mean in the past, and what does it mean today? So, I wondered, what could I choose as there are so many interesting options.*

*Then, the lines of poems and songs started popping up in my head. The melodies, of course, as well: 'Imagine there's no countries, it isn't hard to do, nothing to kill or die for, and no religion, too' (John Lennon) or 'Freedom is just another word for nothing left to lose' (Janis Joplin/Kris Kristofferson). This – as beautiful words always do – quickly attracted other lines, images, words, parts of songs. So, I walked around for days, thinking of songwriters and poets, of their hopes for a better, freer, more democratic future. Then I started to look them up, I listened to old songs (and new ones), I listened carefully to old friends and their well-known songs and to songs that I did not know before, that I could not remember, that I had never really listened to. Or that I had forgotten.*

*Suddenly I felt addicted to the music, to the words, and I could not stop humming the songs. Then I knew: Joan Baez, a long-time favourite with her beautiful voice, would start off my session on 'voices from the past'. We would all listen to her, to what she had (and has) to say. She and Woodstock. And Bob Dylan. The heroes*

from my past, I was too young then, still a child, but I loved their music later on as well. And still love it.

As soon as you start looking for interesting songs, they appear everywhere. And sometimes a song does not let you go again, it follows you. In a nice way, a loving way. This happened to me with Joan Baez' song 'Joe Hill' which she sang at Woodstock in '69. I could also feel this after our session. Students, born 30 years after Woodstock, could relate to the story she told.

Creativity is something you have to wait for patiently, in my opinion. This is what I did. Then I found them, the poets. Numerous songwriters have talked and sung about democracy, about justice, about freedom, about the Unions. I just had to listen to them, collect their songs and stories, choose some of them, and offer them to our students.

## The session

### Warm-up: A well-known song

We started the session with Joan Baez and her interpretation of the song 'Imagine', written by John Lennon in 1971 – nine years before he was killed. As a warm-up, participants were invited to talk about John Lennon, to look up facts about him. I deliberately chose somebody well-known and a well-known song as I wanted students to be able to contribute something and to feel safe at the beginning of this class. 'Imagine', of course, is a highly political song, too, and students were happy to really listen to the words (again or for the first time?), and after the song they took part in a lively discussion. Especially the line: '...you may say I am a dreamer, but I am not the only one...' is a line, a thought, that many students know and feel attached to.



Figure 31: Photos: Left: Joan Baez playing at the March on Washington in August 1963. Right: Dylan and Baez during the same civil rights 'March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom', August 28, 1963. By Scherman, Rowland, U.S. Information Agency. Press and Publications Service. (ca. 1953 - ca. 1978) - NARA - ARC Identifier: 542017, Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=149647> and  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=149559>

### The heart-breaking story of a Swedish unionist

We continued the session with another Joan Baez song, a song/ballad that she sang at Woodstock in 1969: Joe Hill. Swedish-American labour activist, songwriter and cartoonist Joe Hill (1879–1915) was born as Joel Emmanuel Hägglund in Gävle, Sweden, and emigrated to the US in 1902. He had various jobs, was frequently unemployed, and was a union member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

In 1914, a grocery store in Salt Lake City was robbed and the owner and his son were shot. Joe Hill was arrested by the police, but he resolutely denied that he had been in the robbery and that he had killed the shop owner. The trial and his conviction generated international union attention but, even though he was most likely innocent, Joe Hill was executed by firing squad on November 19, 1915.

The story of Joe Hill is interesting both because he was an interesting political actor as a unionist and because he was executed even though he was almost certainly innocent. The students loved the song and discussed the obvious parallels with the 'Black Lives Matter' movement.



Figure 32: Photo of Joe Hill, Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=606729>

### **Globalisation and the unions**

Bob Dylan's song 'Union Sundown' is nearly 40 years old and was written well before most of our students were born. Nevertheless, it is a surprisingly modern song mentioning numerous current problems – globalisation, unemployment, capitalism, child labour.... Many of the ideas discussed in the other lectures during the course can be found in this song.

### **Freedom is just another word... Janis Joplin (1970)**

Janis Joplin (1943–1970), one of the most successful rock stars of her time, died of an accidental heroin overdose in 1970 at age 27. In many ways, she was a very influential singer and performer, and her fans were shocked by her sudden death. Her remarkable performance at Woodstock, her relationships, her drug abuse – many teenagers of the 60s identified with her, she was one of the best-known faces (and voices) of the hippie generation. Many young people of her time were looking for alternative lifestyles, and the hippies advocated nonviolence and love. Her song 'Me and Bobby McGee' describes an open (sexual) relationship and the search for freedom.

Janis Joplin still influences singers and songwriters: 'It seems to me the suffering and intensity of her performance go hand in hand. There was always a sense of longing, of searching for something. I think she really sums up the idea that soul is about putting your pain into something beautiful' (Welch, 2013).



Figure 33: Joplin photographed by Jim Marshall in 1969, one year before her death. Albert B. Grossman Management (personal manager), New York. - eBay itemphoto frontphoto back, Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=21497927>

Nowadays, many students still know Janis Joplin, but many do not. So it was interesting for the students to listen to a singer who was born at the same time as their grandparents (or even earlier) and who expressed the feelings of the '60s. The students were surprised how modern her ideas are. And just like the teenagers of the '60s, many identified with her.

## Democracy

Our final song was 'Democracy' by Leonhard Cohen. The Canadian poet and singer-songwriter Cohen (1934–2016) cared about America and expressed this love in his song 'Democracy' (*'I love the country'*), but he was also horrified (*'but I can't stand the scene'*). The line *'Democracy is coming to the USA'* is repeated again and again in the song. Democracy is coming *'through a crack in the wall'*, it is coming *'from the people'*, *'from the places where the races meet'*, *'from the sorrow in the street'*. Democracy is not established by a political party, he believes. He is *'neither left or right'* and he feels *'hopeless'* and *'sentimental'*. *'Sail on, sail on, oh mighty ship of state'* he sings, a journey from *'need'* past *'greed'* and *'hate'*. Life seems hopeless, there is garbage and decay, but there is also hope: *'I'm still holding up this little wild bouquet'*; democracy, a little bouquet of flowers.



## Pedagogical reflection

The purpose of this session was to offer students songs that talk about the core values and concepts of our IP course. To start, I always briefly introduced the story behind the song, the story of the singer or the author. Then, we listened to the song together. Afterwards, students were invited to discuss the song, their feelings, their ideas, and maybe draw parallels from what they had heard or discussed in the IP course before.

Songs can provide a highly motivating, engaging, and realistic basis for interaction. The listeners are actively involved, they want to understand the ideas (and the many non-native speakers also the language). Talking about poems/song lyrics allows students to bring in their personal feelings and ideas and to connect political ideas with personal thoughts and feelings.

The words of poems and, especially, songs often stick easily in mind, yet at the same time it can be difficult to grasp what exactly the author wanted to say. This, of course, opens the door to free associations and interpretations, to express emotions and ideas. The topics the songs mention are in themselves interesting, and they go back to all the ideas that the IP offered. So, after the many lectures about democracy, about children's rights, diversity, and numerous other topics, offering songs changed the focus.

Songs often touch our personal feelings, our hearts. We hum along and remember some of the lines. We know some of the lines by heart; they pop up together with the music. Songs are repetitive, important lines are repeated again and again. Language and words may also be used in different, unexpected ways so that we listen more intently. Sometimes songs follow us, and it may be difficult to escape them for days.

Literature and poetry offer a strong personal perspective, a personal point of view. Many poems tell a story, behind which there may be political views, interesting ideas, feelings... The singer shouts at us, wants us to listen, to open our eyes, to fight with them against injustice. This is why poems and songs are a perfect starting point for discussions. There are no right or wrong interpretations. Songs are highly motivating, they are interesting, and they give us something worthwhile to think about and to discuss.

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## The songs

John Lennon, Imagine: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLQ7I3GmbIs>).

Joan Baez, Joe Hill: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX7M9psHOrM>

Bob Dylan, Union Sundown: (<https://vimeo.com/69728315>)

Janis Joplin, Me and Bobby McGee:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2mCe0MmBMs>

Leonard Cohen, Democracy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DU-RuR-qO4Y>

## 12 CRITICAL CREATIVITY IN THE BLUE BALLOON PRETEXT

### *Allan Owens and Per Simfors*

*Four years passed between the time I first heard the name Peter Altenberg, and the creation of the 'Blue Balloon', a drama pretext based on his short story 'In the Amusement Park' (1902). I was walking one morning with my Swedish project colleagues Per Simfors and Anders Magnusson along the wide roads of Vienna towards PH Wien (University College of Teacher Education Vienna) where we were to start work that day. As we walked, our conversation turned to Per's doctoral studies and the work of Altenberg who lived and wrote in Vienna. Per said he would send me some of Altenberg's idiosyncratic short stories, which he did. I was surprised at how he could create such curious worlds in stories under a page in length.*

*Another year passed and we were together again, working on a project in Finland in the 'Rose Park' building at the University of Jyväskylä. Per had been looking with participants at two of Altenberg's short stories and there were a few copies scattered on a bench. I sat down and read them again, and, for the first time, sensed the dramaturgical possibilities of 'In the Amusement Park'. I hoped I was not stealing someone's copy as I popped it in my bag. One year later we were back in Vienna and Per gave me another copy of 'In the Amusement Park'. I read it again. On one of our last evenings in Vienna Per arranged to show me, Holger Jahnke and Jo Moate the park where Altenberg wrote the story. It was idyllic. We sat on a bench and I imagined Altenberg sat there and the characters in his intriguing story walking by. I read the story out loud and we all pointed up as though watching the blue balloon – central to the story – disappear into a radiant blue sky.*

*Two years later we were to run the first intensive programme of our new project 'ReCreaDe'. I was thinking about which pretext I might use for the coming year of 2019, which included ReCreaDe at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. I remembered*

the park in Vienna and us all pointing to that blue sky. I dug out the copy of 'In the Amusement Park', read it again and it was at this point, years after first encountering the story, that the pretext started to be shaped.

I make two points in telling this backstory. The first is that, as is the case here, the roads of creative processes for me are usually not straight, quick or clear, and are often travelled with others. There are implications in this in terms of education aspiring to be relational, collective and democratic, as this runs counter to the current hegemonic neoliberal agenda with its emphasis on the individual, competition and clarity, in which the educator writes lesson plans to teach participants what the educator already knows (Owens and Adams, 2016). The second point, with thanks to Holger Jahnke for introducing me to the work of Gunnar Olsson, is that there is no creativity without place (Olsson, 2007). Educational encounters take place in specific locations with all their idiosyncrasies. In scaling them up, their resonance for the learner is often lost and, again, such specificity runs counter to the dominant education agenda, which favours generic imposition and is not interested in the particularities of the learners' understandings (Adams, Al-Yamani, Arya-Manesh, Mizel, Owens, & Qurie, 2020). These points are picked up again in the final reflections section of this chapter, but now to turn to a description of how the activity was shaped and then to the activity itself.

## **Description of how the activity was created**

Whenever I hear about a new story, I always wonder if they might hold dramaturgical possibilities – whether there is room within them for me and for others. The answer isn't defined by genre, but by ellipsis gaps in the story that can be played with to create a dramaturgical narrative that allows me and other people to step into possible worlds that are different to our own worlds, but which resonate with them. Noticing, sensing and intuition feature prominently in much literature on the concept of creativity in education (Chemi, 2018; Harris 2016). Ellipsis in story writing features in pedagogical literature. Playing with these gaps in order to ask questions – How is the world, our society, our lives? Do we want to keep them the way they are, or change them? – features in the literature of applied drama in the oral, participative, emancipatory tradition of theatre in which I work. Coined by Cecily O' Neil (1995), pretext drama varies in form according to the practitioner (Adams & Owens, 2016). As I practice the form, and in this chapter, a pretext allows for the creation of an excuse to know through not only the written and spoken word, but through the body, still and moving, through

sounds and silence, rhythms and patterns of voice; all shaped in arrangements of time and space (Owens, Korhonen, & Pässilä, 2021).

I followed this creative process in 'In the Amusement Park' as I looked for gaps and wrote down in my sketchbook questions that are not answered by Altenberg, questions he may well not have been interested in. I photocopied the short story and cut it into what might be dramaturgical units, some just a sentence, which might allow for the creation of a task. I started to rearrange and remove some of the text, remove some of the characters and actions in it. Next, I took this into a physical drama devising session with a colleague and we played around with it, experimenting for a couple of hours to see what might work dramaturgically and deciding on a starting point before Altenberg starts the story. Through this process, the blue balloon became a symbol and metaphor to explore the relationship between an uncle and his niece, between teacher and learner, about education and desire, power and knowledge, about what it means to learn in a context of inequality, about how this plays out and might be reimagined, about creativity and democracy.

## **Description of the activity**

The Blue Balloon Pretext is a collective participative activity, with the proviso that anyone can also sit and engage from the sidelines if that is where they learn best. On one level participants re-enact a story, set in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The story acting out level is simple and accessible: an uncle takes his niece to an amusement park. She is a young girl, and when she sees blue balloons for sale, she immediately wants one. He buys her one, which she lets go, as she does with the second balloon he buys before persuading her to give a third balloon to another girl stood by the park gate. The girl by the gate takes the balloon home, where it gradually deflates. In acting out the story in small sections, the participants are asked to adopt the role of uncle and niece. As there are lots of small sections, each participant gets to work with many other participants one by one. The acting out is often very physical and as much emphasis is placed on the doing as the talking, in other words, on embodied learning.

On another level – that of narrative and interpretation – the participants get the chance to watch each other and interpret. This level is made possible by the way the story has been re-structured by the drama educator. The group is divided into two alternate roles, actors and audience: the audi-

ence half, in pairs, gets to watch the actors acting out their small section of the story in pairs, and the actor and audience roles are then switched. The emphasis on this level is on what those who are watching the performances see. The concern is not with the quality of the acting out per-se, but with what the participants who are the audience are seeing and thinking and feeling as they watch. Many participants realise that what they are watching and taking part in is a metaphor. What is taking or not taking place between the uncle and his niece is learning, is education, is a power situation playing out kaleidoscopically. Participants are invited to look in turns how the situation between the uncle and his niece is like, and not like, that between teacher and pupil, lecturer and student, how it is like, and not like, formal and informal education. In other words, the drama is the story, but through a series of kaleidoscopic turns it becomes clear that the story is not the only thing that the drama is about.

On the third, critical creativity, level, participants are invited to agree or disagree with each other as they share their interpretations of what might be going on in terms of subtext and metaphorically (Adams & Owens, 2016). There are no 'right' answers, and the aim is not for the group to reach a consensus, but rather to engage in a process of dissensus, in discussion and in the acting out and watching of action. For example, one minute acting out the uncle, then the young girl, another minute articulating what they felt, then what they saw someone else seeming to feel, or hearing them articulate what they seem to think or feel. There is no move here to negotiate and compromise or bring ideas together as one. The educator's work here is to create opportunities for dissensus by radically listening to what individual participants say to identify the assumptions underlying their words and how they are said, and to bring this face to face with other assumptions articulated by other individuals or seemingly assumed by the whole group that are at variance with each other. The educator also informs the discussion with theory as appropriate, ideas from other times, places and cultures to support and challenge what is being assumed, all the time being aware that they, too, have assumptions and bringing attention to these when they are touched on and challenged. In the context of the Blue Balloon pretext and this book, the theory is related to, but not confined by, the concepts of creativity, pedagogy, education, power and democracy. The educator can also play roles within the drama to model, support, challenge and provoke.

The general aim is thus three-fold: firstly, to creatively engage in acting out and thinking through in role as another person; secondly, to watch and

interpret and articulate in different forms what has been seen, thought or felt; and, thirdly, to be critically creative about the implications of this metaphor, not just a story of a niece and her uncle, but of creativity education and democracy (Owens, Korhonen, Pässilä, 2020). The levels do not operate separately but kaleidoscopically (Pässilä, Malin, Owens, & Kuusipalo-Määttä, 2019), and this is where the skill of the drama educator comes into play, in knowing when and how to turn between them.

In total, the pretext-activity can take around two hours, shorter or longer depending on the context. It has been conceptualised for groups that can range in size from around 40 students down to 8, but numbers can be larger or smaller. Except for a large open space, music source and speaker, no further material is needed. A more detailed description of the story and narrative structure, showing how the three levels interrelate in practice, is provided in the following section. The chapter then concludes with a critical reflection on the value of the activity in relation to the overarching themes of creativity, education and democracy.

## **Description of the activity: Blue Balloon Pretext<sup>7</sup>**

### **Prologue**

Begin by making a drama contract (Owens & Barber, 2010, p. 10) with the participants. Firstly, to look after themselves physically, as there is much movement in this session and so health and safety issues need clearly flagging, including agreeing on where participants can and cannot go within the space. Secondly, to look after each other, not just physically by avoiding running into each other, but also by respecting what they say, not necessarily agreeing with them, but listening respectfully. Thirdly, to look after the space so as to avoid damaging it. Finally, to say that there is no need to physically participate; they can sit and participate by watching, appreciating and adding to the discussion from the sidelines. They can also choose to enter and leave the activity at any point.

Next, the activity is 'framed' (Adams & Owens, 2016, p. 27). Tell the participants that they are going to 'step into a story' in order to consider

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<sup>7</sup> For the full text of the 'Blue Balloon Pretext' see Owens, Korhonen, and Pässilä (2021).

what creative pedagogy is and what might be meant by 'a democratic educational encounter' and that they are going to reach towards this through the use of one form of pretext drama. Also, alert them to the fact that as an educator I will be taking part, sometimes in role, sometimes not, and that whilst leading I am also exploring my own understandings, not just trying to facilitate in a neutral way.

Next, introduce the pretext subject matter. Tell the backstory to the pretext as given at the outset of this chapter. Emphasise that 'like all pretexts in this book the story level tells of the actions happening and the narrative level opens up the subtexts, giving rise to the questions embedded in it and that the participants bring to it' (Owens, Korhonen, & Pässilä, 2021).

## **Act 1**

**Storytelling:** Introduce the setting for the story – a central park in Vienna, the year 1900. Play amusement park organ music to story-tell over.

**Small group work:** Ask participants to get into groups of 5/6/7/8 (depending on the size of the whole group) and as a group to use synchronised movement to create a blue balloon moving gently. The balloon is filled with a gas lighter than air and tethered by a piece of string to a balloon seller's hand. They do not need to create the string or balloon seller – I play this role.

Keeping the same balloon groups, divide the whole group into two and ask one half to sit down and watch the other. Just before starting, introduce 19<sup>th</sup> century fairground organ music as a soundtrack to the 'balloon performances'. Then, reverse roles: ask the other half to now stand so that those who have just performed can be the audience. When this is done, in the same small groups ask the participants to share any memories they have of balloons, from their own life, or books, movies, art. Give knowledge and metaphor input as relevant: for example, focusing on the rational, the capturing of helium in 1895, its use in balloons, and on the intuitive imagination, the symbol of the balloon and the metaphorical possibilities it opens up in this story. Emphasise that this is more than a story about a balloon.

## **Act 2**

Retell the opening lines of the story you have created as above. As before, tell this over the amusement park organ music. Continue with the introduction of the roles in the drama, a young girl, niece to the uncle who has en-



tered the park with her. Tell that she was so excited and could hardly sleep the night before as her uncle had promised to bring her here. Add that she thought of him as rather strict, like her teacher, but that she was so excited and in her sleep last night had dreamt of holding a blue balloon at the amusement park.

Clarify the roles by asking the whole group these closed questions: What does the niece think of her uncle? What did she dream the night before? Then ask these open questions: What age is this young girl? What shall we call her? Use her name from this point onwards in the drama. Give this knowledge input if the opportunity arises: Many famous artists, scientists and politicians were in Vienna at the time, it was a hub of cultural, scientific and political activity in the coffee houses and parks: Altenberg, Broch, Snitzler, Scheile, Klimt, Adler, Trotsky.

### **Act 3**

**Storytelling:** Ask the participants to listen to the story as the young girl and her uncle enter the amusement park. Over the music, retell the story and continue by telling that on entering the park the girl saw a whole host of balloons floating in the air held by a balloon seller. She had to have a balloon, just like the one in her dream the night before, but her uncle thought otherwise; they had come to walk in the park and be seen, a social morning for a quiet stroll, not for buying balloons.

**Improvisation in pairs:** Ask the participants to find a partner. One is the uncle, the other the girl. Uncle; you walk on. Girl; how do you persuade your uncle to get you a balloon? Maybe you are unsuccessful. Tell the group that you will play the role of the balloon seller, so they will have to come to you to get one. Balloons cost 3 marks each, which is a considerable amount of money. Keep the improvisation going for 4 minutes, then reverse roles. Same situation but maybe a different outcome. See how it is to act out this other role. Reflection through questions, for example: on a story level this is about a niece and her uncle in 1900, but on other levels, what is going on? Ask 'On a metaphorical level, what could this be about in 2020?'

**Knowledge input:** Introduce some facts about helium that the uncle wants his niece to learn while she is going wild with excitement; choose 2 or 3, for example: Helium is lighter than air.

**Improvisation in pairs:** One is the uncle, the other the niece. The task of the person playing the niece is to go wild with excitement. The task of the person playing the uncle is to convey at least three facts to the niece. Ask the pairs to find a space and do a countdown to start.

**Reverse roles:** Ask the partners to swap roles. This time the frame of the improvisation is the same, but the outcome may be different. Following this, split the whole group in two, keeping the same pairs. Ask those standing to choose which role they will play and explain that, this time, the aim is for those watching to observe and reflect on what they see both in action and in terms of the metaphor and what the movement suggests about the bigger themes being explored: creativity, education and democracy. Let the action run for two or three minutes then ask what they have seen and what literal and metaphorical connections they are making. After this reflection, reverse the actor/audience roles. Repeat the opportunity for reflection, this time bringing in relevant theory, e.g. Ranciere (1991).

#### **Act 4**

**Storytelling:** Continue the story, this time weaving in some of the actions you observed in the previous improvisations: When the niece started to get tired, the uncle asked her 'Would you like to go and give the balloon to that poor girl stood over by the park gate?' She looked at her uncle, then let the balloon go and watched it float off into the blue sky.

**Acting out in pairs:** Ask the participants to find a new partner and decide who will first play the niece and who the uncle. Ask the participants to re-enact the scene exactly as told in the story, with no changes. The aim is to see how it feels to be the niece and then the uncle. Then reverse roles. After completing this, ask the participants to reflect on what is going on metaphorically and literally and make connections with the larger concepts.

**Storytelling:** Continue the story. The uncle bought the niece a second balloon and suggested, again, that she might want to give it to the poor girl; but she let that go, too. He then bought her a third balloon. This time, she went to the girl and gave it to her, saying that she could enjoy letting it go. The girl said, no, and took the balloon home where for a while it floated on the ceiling; but, after a few days, dropped to the floor. When it does this, she says she wishes she had let it go and been able to watch it disappear into the sky.

After this, join all the pairs together into groups of four and ask the participants to reflect on the story and drama on plot, narrative, literal and metaphorical levels and what they understand at this point about the concepts of creativity, education, and democracy. Bring in relevant theory from literature on the arts, creativity and pedagogy, such as Craft (2001), Jones (2009), and Geilen (2013).

## **Pedagogical reflection**

The conditions for creative practices such a pretext drama to flourish in education are largely determined by the extent to which democratic principles are established in society. The dominant ideology of neoliberalism that currently permeates education systems across Europe and beyond often hollows out and colonises creative acts and events. It is dependent upon a mutable, reproducible and eventually dispensable content (Giroux, 2019). The content of the Blue Balloon session is the antithesis of this conception: it was created from and in relation to the ReCreaDe programme, is highly specific, context dependent, and participative. Whilst the pretext structure can and has been used in other contexts, the high degree of specificity that is created by this 'dramaturgical excuse' in a particular context is a manifestation of particular understandings that are neither transferable nor replicable, existing only in the moment of the event in which they occur. It is this singular significance of the improvised events in the pretext and the specific responses and reflections which create space in which participants can consider their understandings.

The purpose of this session was to allow participants to reflect on their understandings of creativity and the function of pedagogy and of education in democracy. This is within the tradition of using arts-based methods to allow for reflection and dynamic forms of evaluation (Benmergui, Owens, & Pässilä, 2020; Adams & Owens, 2021). The practice of pretext drama was also explicitly considered as it was being experienced, as a form of possible democratic pedagogy, as direct action and concrete experience. At the core of learning in pretext drama is the possibility for participants and the educator to reflect on their own understandings through those of others within the dramaturgical action created through story and narrative. This is best illustrated through examples, so I will present two here before commenting on them.

The first example occurred in the session when I suggested that the concept of neoliberal creativity was dominant in many education systems and could be best characterised and recognised by an emphasis on individual achievement and the valuing of competition in relation to this. In contrast, critical creativity is characterised by an emphasis on the collective and relational, on listening to diverse voices, and on understanding that being critical means recognising tensions in what we think is simple, in our unquestioned assumptions (Owens, Korhonen, & Pässilä, 2021). One of the participants responded by saying that competition motivated learners and is an important part of education in schools. I was curious to find out if all of the participants agreed with this or if there was a diversity of opinion. I asked if we could explore this a bit further and, as I did so, was trying to be ethical, trying to judge if this particular participant would be able to engage in closer examination of what he was saying. Although he said yes, we could explore this further, this is always difficult, and if I had sensed this was closing the participant down rather than opening up possibilities, I was ready to switch the focus.

I acknowledged that this was a strong and legitimate position to take and also wondered who might agree or disagree with it, as there were implications within this for our understandings of creativity in relation to education and democracy. Making it clear that we would deliberately pause the storyline so we could get a sense of what other people thought, I rephrased the statement into a question: 'Competition motivates learners and is an important part of education in schools'. Using the drama education convention of 'continuum' (Owens & Barber, 2010), I asked the participants to place themselves on an imaginary spectrum line that I drew between two chairs at either end of the room; at one end if they agreed, at the opposite end if they did not agree, and at any point in between. The whole group positioned themselves on the continuum and there was a wide spread of positions. I then arranged them into five groups according to where the participants were stood and asked them to talk amongst themselves about why they had stood where they had stood. I asked the original commenter to move freely among the groups and listen, saying that he was welcome to share any thoughts, having listened to others, as he had provided such an interesting focus for us. After there had been a chance to exchange thoughts, I invited comments from each of the five groups. As we talked, I fed in some theory where relevant.

In the second example, one participant said that creativity is an individual ability that some gifted individuals have and some don't. This raises the often-considered questions of creativity as a 'natural ability', a biological gene trait; or if it can be taught, or caught? Underpinning both of these questions is my assumption that creativity does not have to be conceptualised as individual genius or learnt skill ability, as well as, in terms of this pretext in this context, the question of what the potential is of collective creativity. This time I did not ask for a position on a continuum, but used another drama convention, Either/Or (Owens & Barber, 2010). One end or the other. Yes it can be taught and caught – No it cannot be taught and caught. This led to a discussion about the usefulness and unhelpfulness of creating such binaries when trying to understand complex concepts such as education, democracy and creativity.

Both of these examples show how the linear temporal frame of the story can be deliberately disrupted by using embodied positioning to create a physical illustration that views can differ. Through this sharing participants came face to face with other assumptions articulated by other individuals at variance with their own, listened to them, and were invited to reposition themselves at any point as they thought through their understandings. The original commenter was also invited to place themselves on the continuum, having heard what people had been discussing, and to reiterate their perspective or say how they had come to understand this. Participants can physically see where others position their understandings and are free to move in response to them. Being able to listen to and deal with diverse understandings, including those diametrically opposed to our own, is a fundamental process within any living curriculum or organisation purporting to be democratic. Within the pretext the invitation is to throw self into another position, at one moment to be the niece, in the next to be the uncle, in the next to articulate an understanding, in the next to listen to another voice at total variance with your own. This echoes Williams' (1961) argument that participation is the most fundamental component – and a goal – of democracy, and that the institutions of state, including education, should be seen as enabling in this respect.

My role as educator here, and indeed throughout the Blue Balloon pretext, is to identify assumptions in what individual participants say and reflect on my own, and to do this through dramaturgical means. Looked at from above, as the whole group move into different groups, pairs, halves, shapes, the learning can be literally viewed as kaleidoscopic; there are deliberate

turns in what is being looked at and considered and these can be surprising and beautiful. The point of such turns within the drama is that they can act as an excuse to enable participants to articulate their understandings about the central concepts, to listen to others, and have the right to disagree and also to change position. The shifts in this sense are not cosy, they can be troubling and challenging, they are concerned not with finding consensus but creating spaces for dissensus. As already stated, the levels do not operate separately but kaleidoscopically. If a key function of education is to create critical citizens (Apple, 2018), then the ability to participate by listening, speaking, physically acting, being challenged by others' understandings is given scope within the kaleidoscopic shifts of the pretext.

*In the realm of the arts, rethinking or reimagining ways of being are central to the practices to which attention is given. Creativity in this scenario is a means to perceive differently, just as much as it is a means to do things differently. Creativity without its critical edge is little more than a decorative social activity that can be colonised and utilised for any political or ideological ends.*

*(Adams and Owens, 2016, p. 7)*

## **Per's commentary**

I first came across Altenberg's text "Im Volksgarten" many years ago in connection with a graduate seminar on *fin de siècle Vienna*. It was one of the first texts by Altenberg that I read, and I was struck by the author's very special style – the brevity, the omissions and the openness, often leaving it to the reader to figure out the intended meaning. This very text was one of the reasons that I later spent several years investigating Altenberg's language and style for my dissertation project.

I was very pleased that Allan immediately saw the qualities of Altenberg's short texts when I introduced him to them, and it has been fascinating to see how the text about the blue balloon could be transformed into a drama exercise. Altenberg's work has, to a great extent, the format of short observations and little scenes from everyday life in Vienna. Altenberg declared that he would spontaneously just write down what he observed or whatever came to his mind, unfiltered and unredacted (see Simfors 2014). At the same time, different versions of his texts, modifications between editions as well as remarks in letters to friends bear witness of thoughtful composition and careful revisions, although never at the expense of his typical idiosyncrasies and apparent incoherencies (Simfors 2009). He cherished the short format, trying to create whole little worlds with just a few strokes of his pen. Alten-

berg (1919:113) went so far in his striving for brevity that he seemed to claim that complete silence ('my sacred silence') would be the ultimate form of expression.

In my view, the drama exercise as described above mirrors the kaleidoscopic character of Altenberg's entire work in a fantastic way, shifting focus and pausing the text to reflect on and act out some of the inherent ideas and motifs. A couple of examples will serve to show how the drama might also explore possible readings and highlight implicit aspects of the text.

The drama educator will obviously be allowed some artistic liberty when creating the pretext as a point of departure. In this particular case, for instance, the drama exercise focuses primarily on the rich girl, while the original text seems more focused on the poor girl, whose thoughts, repeated in variation, concludes the text. The poor girl is the only character whose inner world is accessible to the narrator. At first glance, the rich girl seems to be of less interest. She can repeatedly receive and let go of the object of her desire whereas, for the poor girl, letting go would be an irreversible decision. The balloons soon lose their meaning for the rich girl who is simply blasé from her unlimited access to them. For the poor girl, however, the encounter becomes a powerful experience of loss and desire.

On the other hand, the original text pictures the rich girl as repeatedly misunderstood by the adult world around her. Also, in the original edition, right after this text, Altenberg placed another text entitled "Das Genie" ('The Genius', focusing on a rich girl with the same name, Rosamunde, who is standing at a fountain in a park, completely absorbed in thought (Altenberg 1896:94). According to the narrator she is in this very instant 'a poet' ("eine Dichterin"), 'equal with the very best', but, again, the adult world does not appreciate her state of mind and she is asked by her governess to 'not just stand there' but 'go play with the other children'. As always with Altenberg, there is no explicit mentioning of the girls being the same person, but the placement of the texts next to each other should be seen as a suggestion that they might be.

In Altenberg's texts, characters represent types or typical situations rather than actual individual personalities. Perspectives can easily be turned around, and Altenberg does not always uphold a chosen narrative perspective throughout a text. It belongs to the typical stylistic features that it is often difficult to distinguish between the narrator's voice and that of the characters (Simfors 2009). The focus of this text could very well be on the

rich girl instead – a child misunderstood by the adult world. The drama accounts for this possibility.

Another character of potential interest is the anonymous accompanying person at the beginning of the text, possibly but not necessarily the child's uncle, characterised mainly by an obvious inability to convey technical knowledge in a manner suitable for a child, illustrated through the brief direct quotation from an academic-style explanation about 'a gas lighter than the atmospheric air'. It seems that the person is lecturing instead of trying to facilitate the girl's natural wish to play with a balloon. The drama brings this character into play as an acting individual whose pedagogical approach can be put to the test, calling for the participants' imagination to visualise his interaction with the girl and to fill the omissions of the written version.

Last but not least, Altenberg's frequently claimed observer status cannot always be taken at face value. Much of his work seems instead to be ambiguously pendent between observation and imagination, which is sometimes even alluded at in a playful manner. The reader is constantly called upon to participate in the sensemaking (Simfors 2009). Altenberg's first collection of texts *Wie ich es sehe* ('The way I see it') and all his subsequent books are not merely about seeing 'what is' but just as much about seeing 'what if?', which seems to align very well with the principles of drama.

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# AFTERWORD: FACE-TO-FACE AND DIGITAL ENCOUNTERS

*Josephine Moate*

ReCreaDe the Book is designed to share the activities and insights of the ReCreaDe team with other educators. We hope that by providing a more personal backstory for each chapter, we make the sessions more accessible and the approaches more doable. This is not a 'how to' guide, but rather a way of sharing our experiences in order to increase the resources of others. Their situations will be different, their educational communities and students are not the same, but by sharing our experiences we hope others are inspired to move forward with the task of reimagining creative democracy.

We also hope that ReCreaDe the Book also shares some of the joy that students and staff have experienced as they have come together at different times and in different places to explore ideas, values, difficulties and the potential of education together. Although on the one hand we are aware of the many and significant challenges facing education, educators, and educational communities, we have also found that by regularly meeting together we continue to be inspired to keep addressing the challenges and the task of reimagining creative democracy as educators. In our experience, the students and staff participating in IPs get caught up in conversations and dialogues that stretch across the boundaries of different sessions and of formal, informal and nonformal environments and across disciplinary fields, that stretch us, too, as educators and students of education. It is the way that these discussions and dialogues stretch the thoughts, understanding and potential of participants through relationships and community that is most valued by the ReCreaDe staff, and this is what we most feared to lose when the pandemic arrived. How the pandemic affected ReCreaDe – and what we

gained from this experience – are outlined in this Afterword, which divides into three themes: seeking community in the online ReCreaDe IP; reimagining creative democracy in the hybrid multiplier event; and the reflections of the staff on this experience.

## Moving the IP online

The first IP of ReCreaDe again saw the formation of an inspiring community of young educators. This is not to say that it was always easy for participants, staff or students. We regularly debated whether we are succeeding in making the IP democratic as we had so much content and guidelines to follow, and if we were leaving enough space for student reflections and contributions, but the course feedback and the student relationships maintained after the course underline the meaningfulness of the IP. As staff, we were looking forward to reforming and developing our sessions further. Honing the connections between different sessions, developing the flow, inviting more student teachers into the task of reimagining creative democracy. We advertised the second Vienna IP, recruited participants, and faced the disappointment of postponing the IP until the autumn – only to be disappointed again, we could not travel, we could not meet, we could not do as we had planned.

By the spring of 2021 we had to offer an online IP, and we had enough experience of online environments to know that this would mean that this IP would be significantly different to our earlier IPs. One of our main concerns was to develop a community, a sense that we were in this together, that each of us belonged and that we could take on the task of reimagining creative democracy together. The dates were set, the students were recruited, the programme was revised and Allan Owens took on the challenge of guiding the process of relationship building in the virtual space of the IP.

After our first introductions – My name is..., I come from... my area of education is... Allan asked each person to write two things into the chat: what does democracy mean to them, and what can they see from their window. Allan composed the following text in response to the activity – a polyphonic poem and the start of a new community.

*On a Friday afternoon in the Spring of 2021 people from 8 universities across Europe, met in an online space in the times of pandemic, curious about each other and what might be learnt by reimagining creative democracy. In a digital word-cloud they wrote 'Freedom', 'Equality' 'Responsibility', 'Community', 'Responsibility' 'Diversity' and one of them said that this is the task before us – democracy as*

*a way of life – remembering that in 1939, as today, the ways to reimagine are all ours. Before departing they wrote a poem and agreed to meet again most enjoyably on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April. This is the poem Written at the end of our first encounter: A ReCreaDe Co-Creation @ April 2021.*

### ***Reimagining creative democracy***

It is how we live-out life and a set of white steps in Liverpool,  
idea Islands, the dust in the corner of my room in Vienna,  
meeting new people and a beautiful sunny day,  
it is diversity of our group, river Emajõgi in Tartu, Estonia  
using names of people, we read about or see,  
a Robin Hood poster in Linköping, Sweden.

It is what is possible in the future,  
windows all around me in Budapest  
starting from a blank space, an empty flowerpot in Vienna,  
caring about the little things on a grey wet day  
interaction, a collection of covid face masks in my room,  
a crisis of democracy – a mirror in front of me.

It is excitement over the course to start and  
a plastic bag on the street outside my window,  
freedom of expression, clear sky with sunshine  
the chimney outside the window  
transcending reality, the sky between the leaves of trees,  
the challenge of diverse perspectives, a yellow house, Flensburg.

It is interdisciplinarity and a blossoming tree,  
I saw sunlight in the sky, it was all grey the whole morning  
and so, what even is maths in Budapest?  
It is sharing experiences with people from many different countries and contexts,  
I have drawn a tree and I see a lot of trees out of my window in Sweden  
being in the middle of almost nowhere, this empty University building in Viljandi.

It is what we all have in common and the raindrops sliding down  
my balcony windows in Jyväskylä,  
transcending reality, the sky between the trees' leaves,  
it is a seed that will grow, and I don't know what it will be,  
but it will be good with plants and right-angled triangles –  
my art lessons from primary school.

Is it too much democracy? A construction site in Flensburg  
no expectations, at the end feeling close to lovely people  
learning from a blank page coloured in a room of southern Spain  
I have drawn a flower and I see a sunny day -  
from my window in Flensburg  
tender branches of birch tree in the storm.

I have drawn a Europe map – all together and big enough  
to make difference in world.  
I do not even realise, sorry!  
The way my bookcase looks, it is a mess, but it does make sense  
till we meet again,  
the true essence of democracy.

To the surprise of many, an almost tangible sense of community developed in the Zoom room. The formal sessions were still intense, but the shared staff concern that the IP would no longer cross the boundaries of formal, informal and nonformal relationships and spaces was not realised. Unlike the passive resistance we had encountered in the now-conventional online teaching did not characterise the IP. Student participants suggested ways of meeting informally during the days, holding chess games in another Zoom room, asking for thematic discussion rooms to be opened for informal chats, and joining in for an online film evening. The creative playfulness that we feared would no longer characterise the IP was present in the chat comments, the smiles and emojis, the reflective sketchbook entries that were also sometimes now digitalised, and in the banter that began to filter into the space of the IP. Our initial concern that a virtual environment could not foster inspiring dialogues or relationships was not realised. The student participants kept their cameras on without being asked and remained present throughout the long days. As with earlier IPs, it was a genuine joy to watch the final group presentations and to observe the creative resourcefulness the participants used to share how they would engage in the ongoing task of reimagining creative democracy.

This is not to suggest that the IP was not without challenges. Sometimes, technical connections did not work. The biggest challenge, however, was the challenge to really ‘read’ the community with the pedagogical tact required to take discussions deeper, to sense and respond to consensus and dissensus. The need to ‘unmute’ before contributing, the time lag between contributions, or the overlap of speech created disjointed moments of communication, but despite these challenges a trans-European community took shape with different home environments across Europe becoming part of the shared spatial and social space.

The evocative report provides insights into the online realisation of the IP and the impact it had on the student participants. Staff reflections suggest that our pedagogical repertoires were enriched by the shared experi-

ence of observing how colleagues managed temporal, relational and technological considerations. We have learnt the value of breaking activities into smaller pieces in online environments, of involving students and sharing more personal reflections when possible. Although we recognise the significant value and need to run the IP online, one striking dissonance was the lack of transitional spaces, for example walking together to and from sessions, sitting side by side eating and reflecting on sessions, sharing impromptu stories that add personal and often philosophical depth to interactions. The absence of this transitional space was particularly striking for me at the end of Allan K and Katrin's online drama session. They had redesigned their session to include short YouTube videos for participants to follow and enact. The experience was so intense and engaging that when the session ended, I was totally disoriented to find myself standing in my own kitchen. I felt like I had been transported across time and space, and my brain needed time to catch up with my body. It is perhaps suffice to say that even though the online IP far surpassed our expectations, it left the participants all the more eager to continue dialogues in person.

## **The hybrid multiplier event**

The final event of ReCreaDe was a hybrid multiplier event hosted in Linköping. I was one of the distance participants, although most participants were able to meet in person. Entering the Zoom room, I could hear the warm sounds of chatting voices, the cadence of happiness, pleased to meet one another. Through my digital window across time and space, the faces I could see were visibly pleased. I was delighted to hear the familiar sounds of a classroom and reflected again on how the online IP had established a community that readily absorbed new arrivals to the community.

On the second day, Allan Owens led the Blue Balloon Pretext activity from England with Katrin guiding the students in the physical space in Linköping. Allan began by explaining how he had transformed a short story into a drama by drawing on play and movement. He then went on to explain that this is a story about being human, about education, about adults and children, and then established a drama contract with the participants, as outlined in Chapter 12. The participants were told that this session as part of the hybrid event would last approximately 45 minutes and that they are going to be given an opportunity to explore and understand both cognitively and through the body. Katrin momentarily took over by inviting the partici-

pants to stand together in the space. She explained that they can use the whole space and that she will ring a small bell when there is a need to get their attention. The storyteller is Allan, but participants need to use their imaginations and bodies to express themselves. Allan then explains why this pretext activity is more than just acting out – the aim is to investigate what is going on in the interaction. The function of the pretext is to support interaction and reflection – what is happening here, why?

As in Chapter 12, the activities begin with synchronised movements as the students in small groups imagine how to make a balloon together. The addition of fairground music to the activity seems to provide a rhythm that supports the formation of the groups. After four minutes of creative imagination, the groups observe the different balloons that have been created and Allan moves the pretext forward with the introduction of a young girl, the start of the story, and the uncle. At this point, the participants divide into pairs, one is Emily, the other is Uncle, and Emily wants a balloon. Per has the role of balloon seller. If ‘Emily’ manages to persuade Uncle to buy a balloon, they can buy one from Per. The scene is then reversed as the participants swap roles. At the end of this role play, Allan invites the participants into the educational encounter by asking them to consider what the balloon might be a symbol of or a metaphor for.

Emily eventually manages to convince Uncle to buy the balloon, and the story moves forward. Allan feeds in historical information regarding the discovery of helium and a hilarious interlude takes shape as various Uncles around the room seek to impart this knowledge to delighted Emily’s absorbed by their new acquisition. After several moments of acted chaos in which the participants again swapped acting roles, the bell rings, the students pause and are invited to sit and to reflect in pairs on what is symbolically and metaphorically going on. After a few minutes, different students share their reflections and Allan wonders aloud whether education is connected with desire – how does that feature with how we work in our classroom, and what about the link with democracy, what do we desire, what are we working towards? Allan also adds that helium cannot be kept in our atmosphere by gravity, when helium is released, it is lost to space. The aim here is not to teach, but to provide a space to reflect through interaction. The pretext is brought to a close at this point, although the story and the thinking continue. Before the participants enjoy the coffee break, they are asked to review the programme from the online IP and to look at their reflective sketchbooks in anticipation of the next task.



## The Democratic Classroom

When the participants returned to the classroom it was re-arranged with tables placed together to facilitate discussion between groups of 4-5 students. In this hybrid event, the Democratic Classroom has been revised. Whereas the initial task brief (in Chapter 2) was to negotiate a vision of a democratic classroom, in this event the brief is to share and bring ideas together on how democracy can be developed in the classroom. In the first part of this session participants were asked to draw on ideas they have taken from the programme, to select what the group agrees are the five most important points, and to note the ideas down using the paper and pens provided. In the second part of the task the interaction and negotiation transition from verbal to non-verbal modalities.

Just before lunch, the participants were asked to evaluate their interaction in part 1 and whether they were democratic during the activity – did they meet their own criteria for democratic engagement in education? One group member commented that the activity had been democratic because ‘we are all open-minded and quite a homogeneous group’. A member of another group noted, ‘This process was not democratic at the beginning because I just contributed my idea to the blank page and sat back satisfied, but someone else listened to all of our contributions and then responded to those’. Both of these contributions point to democracy as an ongoing task involving an active contributions and consideration of others. The points agreed on by the students are presented in the posters they produced together.

After lunch the students returned to their groups to complete the next task of painting the democratic classroom without talking. The talk is replaced by music playing in the background. This combines the music from Brigitte’s session with an activity that has not been trialled in the IP previously. Whether the participants paid attention to the words of the music on this occasion, it is not possible to say, but as a hybrid fly on the wall, it was fascinating to observe the change in group dynamics as a different kind of interaction began to emerge. Some students momentarily danced together, others walked to the beat. While talk vacated the relational space, music offered a different kind of relational encounter. From the outside, it seemed to be that, without talk, students were encouraged to pay more attention to what others are doing, watching what others added to the shared paper, and responding with their own contributions. Different students reach out to

one another, physically connecting, sharing ideas through a shared gaze and corresponding actions.

The Afterword closes with the students' reflection on this process, transcribed during their final presentation. These words and accompanying illustrations share the experience of the students, but this reflection also captures the spirit of Reimagining Creative Democracy - the Task before Us, and why, as a team, we believe that it is worth investing in this task with future teachers.



Figure 34: Cognitive and creative products from a student group

*When we started our process - first identifying key concepts, the written part, we had very traditional roles in the group - a leader and some people who weren't as heard so much - compromise happened. When we started to paint, some of our roles were reversed. The four corners [of the page] are where we began as individuals, but then we merged together in the centre, symbolising democracy. This relates to one of the key questions - responsibility and authority - and whether there can be compromise between them, which is very important in a democracy.*

*We think there is the possibility. In the end we managed to work together in a peaceful and harmonious way - represented by all of our faces in the top corner, which symbolises how we were at peace with our painting. We used a lot of symbols and it can be interpreted in many ways, e.g. diversity, peace, rainbow colours, love, how deep and symbolic our painting is. The cage is empty - the bird has flown.*

# **APPENDICES**

## The Budapest 2019 Intensive Programme Schedule

Table 3: The Budapest 2019 Intensive Programme Schedule

Day #	Time	Content
1/24.04.	18.00 -	Arrival day (evening) : Meal and Mingle
2/25.04.	9.00:9.15	Welcome: Zsolt Demetrovics, Dean
	9:15:9.45	Practicalities
	9.45:10.00	Coffee break
	10.00:12.30	Theory and Methods: Framework, Sketchbook
	12.30:13.30	Lunch
	13.30:15.00	Ice breakers
	15.-15.15	Coffee break
	15.15:16:00	Ice breakers
	16.00:17.00	Derive
3/26.04.	9.00:10.30	Creative Democracy
	10.30:10.45	Coffee
	10.45:12.30	Democratic classroom
	12.30:13.30	Lunch
	13.30:15.00	Emotions and diversity: a Resource for democracy
	15.00:15.15	Coffee
	15.15:16.45	Cooperative teaching and learning methods
4/27.04.	9.00:10.30	Bringing in other voices
	10.30:10.45	Coffee
	11.00:12.15	Children's Rights
	12.30:13.30	Lunch
	13.30:15.00	Workshop
	15.00:15,15	Coffee
	15.15:16.15	Learning environment, creativity and democracy
	16.15:17.00	Practicalities (preparing school visit)
6/29.04.	8.00:13.00	School visits:

Day #	Time	Content
	12.30:13.30	Lunch
	13.30:15.00	Reflections on school visits and Creativity, democracy, teacher education
	15.00:16.00	School systems
	16.00:16.30	Summary of the day
7/30.04.	9.00:10.30	Promoting a democratic culture at schools
	10.30:10.45	Coffee
	11.00:12.30	Educational History
	12.30:13.30	Lunch
	13.30:15.00	Democratic place-making
	15.00:15.15	Coffee break
	15.15:17.00	Educational leadership and motivation
8/01.05.	9.00:10.30	How Society turns into Tyranny
	10.30:10.45	Coffee
	10.45:12.30	Children as democratic agents
		Language and Power
		Voices and songs from the past
	12.30:13.30	Lunch
	13.30:15.00	Evaluation in the era of creativity
		From democracy to anarchy (and back)
15.00:15.15	Coffee	
15.00:16.00	Mapping	
9/02.05.	9.00:10.30	Theories of creativity & Process drama
	10.30:10.45	Coffee
	10.45:12.30	Theories of creativity & Process drama

Day #	Time	Content
	12.30:13.30	Lunch
		Preparing presentations
10/03.05.	9.00:10.30	Final presentations 1-2-3
	10.30:10.45	Coffee
	10.45:12.30	Final presentations 4-5-6
	12.30:13.30	Lunch
	13.30:15.00	Final presentations 7-8
11/04.05.		Departure day

## Word Clouds describing democracy on the first and final days of the Budapest IP

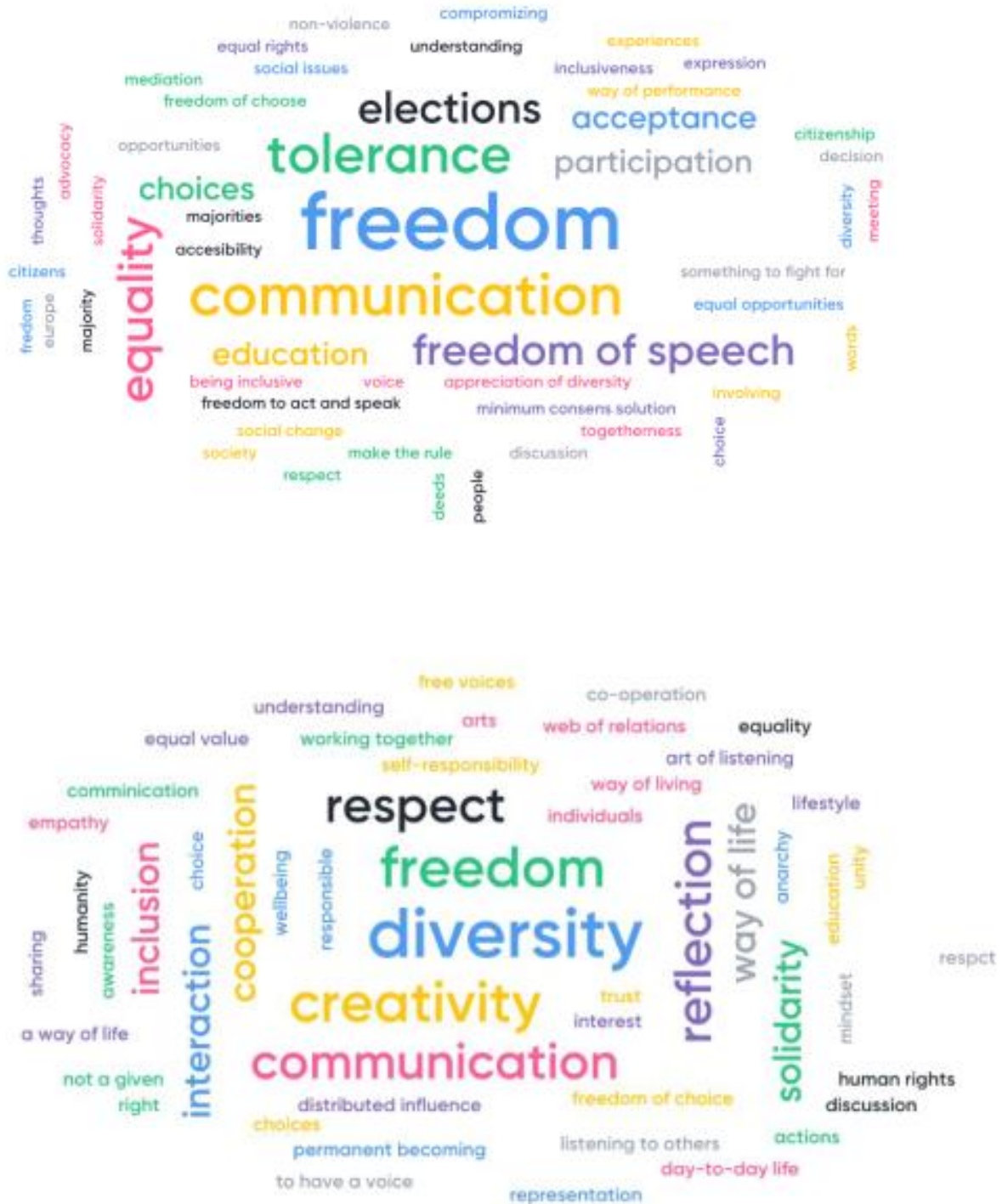


Figure 35: Word Clouds describing democracy on the first and final days of the Budapest IP

Table 4: Intensive online programme schedule 2021



Intensive Programme 2021 - preliminary schedule			
09.04.2021, 26.4.-30.4.2021, 07.05.2021			
Day	Time (CET)	Content	Person responsible
Introduction 09.04.2021 Friday	13:00 - 13:45	Welcome	Per Simfors
		Practicalities, timetable, introduction of staff	
		Assignments and Tasks/Dewey/Texts	
		Ice-breakers	Brigitte Roth
		COFFEE BREAK	
	14:00 - 14:45	Introduction to re-imagining creative democracy	Holger Jahnke
		COFFEE BREAK	
	15:00 - 15:45	Sketchbooks	Allan Owens
Day 1 26.04.2021 Monday	10:00 - 12:00	Creative Democracy - Dewey text	Holger Jahnke & Allan Owens
		LUNCH and SOCIALISING	
	14:00 - 14:45	Promoting a democratic culture at schools: EI	Elvira Barrios
	14:45 - 15:00	COFFEE BREAK	
	15:00 - 16:00	Sharing features of own educational system	Josephine
		TASK: REVIEWING TEXTS FROM HOME	
Day 2 27.04.2021 Tuesday	10:00 - 11:00	Democracy - Society - Power & Education - History	Carmen Sanchidrian
	11:00 - 11:15	COFFEE BREAK	
	11:15 - 12:00	Human rights - Children's rights (Per-Olof)	Per Olof Hansson
	12:00 - 14:00	LUNCH and SOCIALISING	
	14:00 - 14:45	The seeds and signs of tyranny (Jo)	Josephine Moate
	14.45 - 15.00	COFFEE BREAK	
	15:00 - 16:00	Bringing in other voices (Student driven) Reflection? Sketchbook time?	Josephine Moate
Day 3 28.04.2021 Wednesday	10:00 - 12:00	Drama - Creativity - Democracy and Education	Allan Owens
	12.00 - 14.00	LUNCH and SOCIALISING	
	14:00 - 14:45	Democratic Place-making (Holger)	Holger Jahnke
	14:45 - 15:00	COFFEE BREAK	
	15:00 - 16:00	Emotions and Diversity (Pertu)	Pertu Männistö
		EVENING	
	18:00 - 20:00	FILM	Erika Kopp





Day	Time	Content	Person responsible
Day 4 28.04.2021 Thursday	10:00 - 11:00	Learning environment and democracy (Erika)	Erika Kopp
	11:00 - 11:15	BREAK	
	11:15 - 12:00	Creativity, democracy and evaluatio (Orsi)	Orsi Kálmán
	12:00 - 14:00	LUNCH and SOCIALISING	
	14:00 - 14:45	Teacher leadership - Drama workshop (in teacher	Allan Kährik,
	15:00 - 16:00	Teacher Identity - a possible model	Allan Kährik
Day 5 29.04.2021 Friday	10:00 - 11:00	Language & Power	Per Simfors
	11:15 - 12:00	Songs and voices from the past	Brigitte Roth
	12:00 - 14:00	LUNCH and SOCIALISING	
	14:00 - 14:45	TASK: Initial preparation for final presentation	Per Simfors
	14:45 - 15:00	COFFEE BREAK	
	15:00 - 16:00	Review of the course - how have we managed?	???
Presentations Friday 2021-05-07	10.00 - 12.00	Student Presentations	
	12.00 - 14.00	BREAK	
	14.00 - 16.00	Student Presentations	



## THE RECREADE TEAM

Dr Frances Atherton

Dr. Frances Atherton's research has been largely located in the field of early childhood and focused on: babies and young children; thinking, learning and development; intervention and accompaniment with young children in learning environments; children's position in research and ethical approaches to practice with the youngest children. Frances's current ethnographic research explores marginalisation with homeless people, and has particular research interests in: being a woman on the streets; feminist theory and homelessness, and beyond text research methodologies.

Dr. Elvira Barrios Espinosa

Elvira Barrios Espinosa is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education at the University of Málaga, Spain. She was a secondary school teacher for four years. Her work as a teacher educator and researcher focuses on foreign language teaching and learning, teachers' beliefs and pre- and in-service teacher professional development.

Rebekka Diestelkamp

After finishing her BA in Comparative Literature at Freie Universität Berlin, Rebekka is currently doing her Masters in Transformation Studies at Europa Universität Flensburg, Germany. She joined ReCreaDe in order to take care of the website as well as meddle in all other affairs of the project, which she does with great pleasure.

### Dr. Per-Olof Hansson

Per-Olof Hansson teaches pedagogical content knowledge of Social Science as part of the Teacher Education Programme at Linköping University, Sweden. His courses address, for example, curricula and syllabi for primary and secondary education, teaching methods, assessment, and globalisation. P-O is responsible for field studies in Ethiopia and Kenya working as a supervisor and creating teaching placement opportunities for Swedish students in Kenya, Ethiopia, India, Brazil and Japan, as global exposure is also important for educators working in the Swedish context.

### Dr. Holger Jahnke

Holger Jahnke is full Professor of Geography and Geography Education at Europa-Universität Flensburg since 2007. Holger's academic interests include the epistemology of geographical thinking, the intersection between arts and science, cultural and humanistic approaches in geography as well as geography of education and geography education. He studied geography, French and Italian at the universities of Heidelberg, Nantes, Siena and Palermo before receiving his PhD from the Humboldt University in Berlin. Based on his own study and teaching experiences in schools and universities in several countries in Europe and beyond, Holger has been involved in several international projects in the field of transnational teaching and global sustainable development.

### Dr. Erika Kopp

Erika Kopp is Associate Professor at the Institute of Education at Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Education and Psychology in Budapest, Hungary. She works as a teacher educator and lecturer in the university's Education MA programme and in the Doctoral School of Education. She is interested in teacher professional development and has been involved in development projects related to school improvement and teacher education. Her current research focuses on innovative Protestant schools in Hungary.

### Orsolya Kálmán

Orsolya Kálmán works as Assistant Professor at the Institute of Education at Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Education and Psychology. She has been involved in developing and teaching in teacher education programmes

and BA and MA programmes in pedagogy as well as in the European Doctorate Programme in Teacher Education (EDiTE). Her interests as a teacher educator and researcher are teachers' professional development and learning, adaptive schools, beliefs about learning and teaching, and collaborative learning.

### Allan Kährik

Allan Kährik has worked as Assistant Lecturer in Pedagogy since 2017. His main topics include teacher identity and leadership, general competencies in the national curriculum for primary and secondary education, risk behaviour prevention and also entrepreneurship education in general (social entrepreneurship in particular). His research focuses on theological university education in Estonia and its possible future models with a focus on threshold concepts and possible strategies to reach beyond them (mainly in theological education).

### Dr. Paul Moran

Paul Moran is interested in the philosophy of everyday experience, and in particular the everyday experience of marginalised people and their relationship with forms of established authority. Paul recently completed a five-year ethnographic study of chronically homeless people, and is now part of a project investigating what home means for people who live in precarious circumstances, including homeless people and Palestinians in the occupied territories. In the past, Paul has also completed research projects on looked-after children and adoption.

### Dr. Josephine Moate

Josephine Moate is a Senior Lecturer based in the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Jyväskylä. Josephine coordinates a programme specialising in foreign language education for younger learners, among other tasks. Her research interests include dialogic approaches to education and teacher development. Josephine's interest in intercultural development and learning largely come from her own experience as an outside-insider or inside-outsider, having been raised in Britain before moving to Finland as a young teacher.

### Dr. Perttu Männistö

Perttu Männistö is a University Teacher and researcher at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. His research interests focus mainly on education for democracy and teacher education. Regarding education for democracy, Perttu's key areas of interest include democratic dialogue, politics of education, and philosophy. In relation to teacher education, he is especially interested in how well future teachers understand how social phenomena, such as student background, affect education. Perttu has also been involved in different projects and worked with issues such as human rights and prevention of radical extremism.

### Katrin Nielsen

Katrin Nielsen's background is in theatrical arts. At the beginning of her career she worked as an actress and Director at Endla Theatre, Estonia, then moved on to the development of theatre for young audiences in collaboration with ASSITEJ Estonia. Currently she is dedicated to improvement of drama pedagogy in Estonia by organising and leading courses and conferences. She teaches Drama Education at the Viljandi Culture Academy of Tartu University and her main research interest is the use of theatre and drama methods in education.

### Dr. Allan Owens

Allan Owens is Emeritus Professor of Drama Education and Co-Director of the Centre for Research in Creativity, Education and the Arts through Practice (RECAP) University of Chester where he is also Distinguished Teaching Fellow and National Teaching Fellow. Current work focuses on creative pedagogy, the intercultural dimension of drama and in particular the use of arts-based initiatives in organisational contexts. Allan has led long-term capacity building projects, run intensive short programmes, developed research initiatives and staged pre-text based interactive performances in collaboration with colleagues locally, nationally and internationally.

### Mag. Brigitte Roth

Brigitte Roth teaches English and teacher education at University College of Teacher Education Vienna (PH Wien) and the University of Vienna as a Senior Lecturer. She teaches future primary and secondary school teachers. Her

courses focus on creative language instruction, school practice, storytelling and reading for young learners, and English language teaching (ELT) methodology. She works in the International Office and has taken part in numerous Erasmus/Erasmus+ intensive programmes focusing on teacher education and the multilingual and intercultural classroom.

#### Dr. Carmen Sanchidrián

Carmen Sanchidrián is Professor of Theory and History of Education at the University of Málaga, Spain, since 1999. Her research interests include the study of material culture of education, the history of early childhood education, teacher training, women's education, and museums and heritage education. Her current research focuses on new ways of teaching, learning and presenting the history of education, the use of images and artefacts, and inquiry-based learning. She has been involved in several research projects and has published numerous papers and articles in the above-mentioned fields of study.

#### Dr. Per Simfors

Per Simfors holds a Ph.D. in Germanic Languages and Literatures from Washington University in St. Louis, a Master's Degree in Languages Education in Swedish and German from the University of Gothenburg, and has also studied Philosophy and German in Bamberg, Germany, and Graz, Austria. He has more than 25 years of teaching experience in the field of languages and culture at school and university levels in Sweden and abroad, including numerous visiting lecturer assignments at universities and colleges and other shorter and longer periods of stay in Finland, Germany, Austria, USA, England, and Costa Rica. Per has been involved in several school-university cooperation initiatives and other European projects, including Erasmus Intensive Programmes, Comenius Regio and Erasmus+ projects. He is currently head of Swedish Studies for foreign students and a member of the committee for international affairs at the Faculty of Educational Sciences at Linköping University.