ETHICAL CHALLENGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION AND TEACHING

Special focus on gender and multicultural issues

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Abstract

The publication is a product of the research group, which studies education and multicultural issues from an ethical viewpoint. The group members especially analyse various justice-, equity- and growth-hindering constructions in pedagogical relationships and processes. In this report the group particularly discusses the challenges of diversity, inequity and injustice from three perspectives: 1) ethnicity, 2) spirituality/worldviews and 3) gender and sexuality. Two additional and current discussion topics - information technology and ability-disability dimension - have also been included in the selection of articles. The themes have been analysed in varied settings but special attention has been paid to teacher education, which is considered an important means to change the course of education.

The articles are very different as to their nature: some are introductions to the researcher's research theme, others philosophical discussions or presentations of results. As a whole, the articles introduce the research themes of the group and the stage where various people are in their study. Many common concepts emerge; either to describe the inequitable structures and processes or the way out towards a more just and equal school and society. Diversity, otherness, monoacculturation, hegemony, ethnocentrism, androcentrism, marginalisation, emancipation, and human rights and responsibilities are examples of such concepts. As to pedagogy, the concepts are more theme-specific; one, however, is shared by the group members. That is transformative pedagogy.

Keywords: otherness, sexism, transformative pedagogy, human rights, human responsibilities.
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Introduction

The research group, which studies education and multicultural issues from an ethical viewpoint, was originated at the Teacher Education Department of the University of Oulu in autumn 1994. The group works under the subtitle "Breaking Barriers as a Prerequisite for Encountering each other and for Mutual Growth". Subsequently, the group focuses its research on pedagogical and other human relations and on conceptions of oneself and others, and assumes them to be socially constructed, de- and reconstructed.

According to their ethical research orientation, the group members especially analyse various justice-, equity- and growth-hindering constructions in pedagogical relationships and processes. Diversity, injustice, increasing inequity and wide-spread commercialisation are considered central ethical challenges on individual, local and global levels. The aim is to conceptualise the issues, to focus discussion on them and to seek means for just and equal life on individual, group and institutional levels.

The research group first worked together according to an umbrella principle. It means that each member of the group studied his/her own research theme within the common frame of reference. Theoretical bases and presuppositions between the group members differed which is visible in the first two joint publications "Irti arvotyhjön harhasta?" (1994) and “Challenges for Growth within Boundaries” (1997). Over the years, however, the work has concentrated more on two sub-themes and an increasing number of common assumptions and concepts have emerged. The first theme area focused on is intercultural relations in education with special emphasis on ethnicity and spirituality/worldviews; the second one is gender issues and sexuality in educational institutions. Both of the themes are almost non-existent in the mainstream educational discussion, especially in teacher education.

One basic challenge for the whole group has been to search for ethical principles that would guide encounters with others. UN’s Human rights documents have been considered as such a value basis, but they are seen as a process to be developed rather than as the final answer.

The purpose of this report is to discuss the challenges of diversity, inequity and injustice from the perspectives of ethnicity and spirituality/worldviews and from the perspectives of gender and sexuality. Two additional and current discussion topics - information technology and ability-disability – have also been included in the selection of
articles. The themes have been analysed in varied settings but special attention has been paid to teacher education, which is considered an important means to change the course of education.

The report is divided into two sections with the following titles:
1. Challenges of Diversity and Injustice in Education
2. Pedagogical Reflections.

The discussion about the challenges is started with an analysis of the Finnish “Master Narrative”, Kalevala. Kaarina Kailo, Professor in Women Studies, has titled her article on Kalevala “Monoculture, Gender and Nationalism: Kalevala as a Tool of Acculturation”. The purpose of her article is to initiate discussion about a topic that is of increasing educational importance as Finland is becoming more multicultural: the mechanisms of mono-acculturation. She claims that Kalevala is an influential “master narrative” of Finnish monoculture which needs to be taught and approached from various perspectives. Kailo claims that Kalevala provides an excellent opportunity to analyse the politics of self and other in terms of nationalism, patriarchy, ethnicity and gender. The article also discusses some of the ways in which marginalised groups can reclaim the centre from their marginal positions, by taking control of representations, and by exposing the conscious and subliminal discourses of othering among other strategies of self-empowerment.

The next three articles introduce three minority groups and the challenges they present to the mainstream ideologies and practices in education. These groups are Romani, autistic and Laestadian people. Tanja Lamminmäki-Kärkkäinen begins this discussion. She concentrates on the construction of otherness in a Laestadian religious setting basing her interpretation on the group’s discourses in an educational children’s magazine. Tanja Lamminmäki-Kärkkäinen has distinguished several representations of otherness, and has pointed out the complexity of the terms minority and majority in this religious context. The educational challenge she discusses is how to advance dialogue between religions at school.

Henna Murtomäki, the writer of the next article is one of the students in the MEd International Programme which focuses on intercultural aspects in teacher education in Oulu. The purpose of her article is to discuss school education and teacher education from the perspective of a Finnish minority, the Romani people. She analyses the need for multicultural education from their viewpoint, the present situation of the Romani children at schools, and teacher education as an important possibility for change.

The topic of the article, written by Anna-Kaisa Sipilä, MEd., is “Autism as a Challenge for Teacher Education”. In her article she states that the history of autistic behaviour is probably as long as the history of human civilisation. Problems with communication, social understanding and fixations to routines characterise this disorder, writes Sipilä, who has long experience of working with autistic students. Teaching people with autism has been a challenge for the modern school system and teacher education and will be increasingly so because of the new inclusion politics in the Finnish educational system. The article consists of historical points of view, current scientific facts and some characteristics about autism defined by researchers and by people with autism as well. Listening to autistic people gives a new approach to this educational dilemma and intercultural discussion.
The next three articles concentrate on gender. Vappu Sunnari, DEd., Assistant Professor in Women Studies, has written two articles concerning the topic. Her first article is entitled “Co-educated to be the Responsible Other”. The article discusses primary teacher education in Finland from the perspective of female student teachers. Sunnari states that Finnish female teachers have been and are educated to be the Responsible Other and to be marginalised. She justifies the statement and describes the gendered herstory of Finnish primary teacher education in her article.

Vappu Sunnari’s second article deals with a challenge connected with violence in school. She emphasises that school violence is an increasing problem, especially its very brutal forms. Violence has also been a much discussed topic in Finland and internationally, in recent years. From the perspective of schools, the discussions and the research on this area have, however, mainly concentrated on the individual level, and they have been gender blind. For example the following questions have not been included: are there particular gender relations that are connected with violence in school and is sexuality a component in it. These issues are central in this article.

Timothy Bedford, MA, a teacher in the International Baccalaureate School in Oulu, has entitled his article “Challenges of Sexual Diversity, Homophobia and Heterosexism for Teacher Education”. This article focuses on the injustices of homophobia and heterosexism and the ways in which teacher education can rise to the challenge of affirming sexual diversity. After considering the ways in which homophobia and heterosexism manifest themselves in school and societal contexts, attention is given to multicultural education as a philosophy to transform attitudes. Two examples of rising to the challenge are taken from the writer’s own work. The first one is the GLEE project—a teacher training initiative to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, and the second one is the Theory of Knowledge course that he teaches in a high school. The pedagogical approach of both is similar with the aim of perspective transformation through critical analysis and an understanding of the social process of mindset construction.

The last article of the first part differs from the main thematic of the publication, but it is included because of its actuality and the challenges it presents for equity on individual, institutional and global levels. The title of the article is “Politics, Gender and Technology”, Maria Järvelä, DEd., Assistant Professor in Education, examines in her article the triangle of politics, technology and gender. She begins by looking back at the modern project as it appears in the German anthropologist and philosopher Arnold Gehlen’s ideas of the origin and nature of man’s relation to technique and technology. Present and future views of egalitarian and sustainable technological policies are introduced with some practical examples of successful projects with women-centred, indigenous technologies in developing countries.

The second part of the report concentrates on pedagogical approaches to encountering otherness. It starts with the article “The Global Village as a Challenge for Teacher Education” by Rauni Räsänen, DEd. The article discusses the changes and trends in present society with a special focus on the versatile interrelatedness of the different parts of the world. It considers the challenges set for teacher education by increasing diversity and internationalisation and how education should be changed to respond to and influence the tendencies. It deals with teachers’ competencies and the process of becoming
interculturally and globally more sensitive. Finally it introduces the M.Ed. Programme in Oulu and the preliminary results of its multicultural approach. Rauni Räsänen co-ordinates the programme.

The writer of the next article, Satu Haapanen, MEd., works as an assistant of education in Oulu, and is responsible for several courses on multicultural education. The purpose of her article is to outline some philosophical foundations for intercultural competency requirements set for teachers’ profession. These requirements derive from the changes in society and the surrounding world. Consequently, these requirements have an impact on teacher education, which has to find the means to respond to the changes and new challenges of the profession. Competency requirements are viewed from three perspectives: from the general characteristics of education, the contextuality of educational situations and the philosophy of multicultural education. At the end, an effort is made to sketch some categories of competencies which would characterise the work of a multiculturally oriented teacher in present society.

Next, Maria Järvelä discusses the pedagogical aspect in her article “Engaged Pedagogy”. The article is an introduction to bell hooks’ educational philosophy. Järvelä justifies her own challenges to study hooks’ writings in the following way: “In our courses (teacher education) dealing with global ethical problems we try to see beyond the Euro-centrism that we have grown into as Finns and as Europeans. We want to problematise the trendy concept of internationalisation by asking questions like: to what extent is the internationalising policy of education in Finland, Scandinavia or Europe built on promoting students’ and teachers’ intercultural competencies and anti-racist educational skills? On the personal level, how can we as teachers contribute to diminishing racial, sexual, and class boundaries in our own country, in our own school or university, in our own classrooms?”

The publication continues by analysing the United Nations’ human rights documents. The analysis focuses on their validity to offer a base for teachers to organise the social sphere and values education in their classes. Vappu Sunnari, the writer of the article considers the United Nations the most important international discussion forum of human rights and its human rights documents an important basis for that work. She defends her statement with the fact that the area of human rights work has belonged to the United Nations’ activity since its foundation 55 years ago. The organisation also represents nearly all of the world’s states.

“Teachers’ ethics, teacher education and changing horizons” is the title of the last article in this publication. It is written by Rauni Räsänen and it discusses the role of ethics and values in people's lives with a special focus on the role of teachers and education in value orientation and ethical discussion. It is pointed out that from many perspectives teachers' work can be considered an ethical profession with its own tasks in society and values to support and cherish. Teachers are also supposed to participate in the young generation's ethical upbringing. Teacher education should prepare teachers for the ethical challenges of their profession, which is not easy in a versatile and changing reality.

The articles are very different as to their nature: some are introductions to the researcher’s research theme, others philosophical discussions or presentations of results. As a whole, the articles introduce the research themes of the group and the stage where various people are in their study. Many common concepts emerge: either to describe the inequitable structures and processes or the way out towards a more just and equal school
and society. Diversity, otherness, monoacculturation, hegemony, ethnocentrism, androcentrism, marginalisation, emancipation, and human rights and responsibilities are examples of such concepts. As to pedagogy, the concepts are more theme-specific. However, the need to develop transformative pedagogy is shared by the group members.
Challenges of Diversity in Education
1 Monoculture, Gender and Nationalism:
the Kalevala as a Tool of Acculturation

Kaarina Kailo

Abstract
The purpose of this paper is to initiate a discussion about a topic that is of increasing educational importance in Finland as it is becoming more multicultural: the mechanisms of mono-acculturation that contribute to conditioning Finns regarding the sex/gender system and ethnic stereotypes. I claim that Kalevala is an influential “master narrative” of Finnish monoculture which needs to be taught and approached also from a woman-friendly and postcolonial perspective. After all, women across the global village are becoming more aware and insistent of their needs for spiritual, psychological and cultural equality and self-determination.

After outlining the techniques and strategies of mono-acculturation, I discuss as a case study the pictorial and textual representations of Aino and other female figures as they pertain to the Kalevala’s sexual-textual and ethnic politics. My approach overlaps theoretically and methodologically with post-modern and postcolonial epistemologies and practices.

The Kalevala provides an excellent opportunity for analysing the politics of self and other in terms of nationalism, patriarchy, ethnicity and gender to mention just some of the issues related to social relations that have not been analysed sufficiently. The paper discusses some of the ways in which marginalised groups can reclaim the centre from their marginal positions, by taking control of representations, and by exposing the conscious and subliminal discourses of othing among other strategies of self-empowerment.

1. I delivered an earlier version of this paper initially as my sample lecture at the University of Oulu, Faculty of Education, in February 1999 when applying for my current position as Professor of women's studies and multiculturalism. This is an expanded and a more detailed version of the talk, also with a much more extensive bibliography.
Introduction

“Is there any hint at a real or historical fact at the bottom of this most important adventure of the Finnic eepos, the rape of the Sampo? Is there a rivalry in wealth, present or past, between the Finns and Lapps? There is certainly none. The Finns at present despise the Lapps as barbarous and savage. Wealth could never been attributed to the Lapp, the lean lad (laiha poika), either by himself or by anyone else; the mere thought of it makes any one who knows what the Lapps are, smile. The Finns consider them as rich in nothing but magic; although their reindeer or furs may have been an incitement to predatory raids which are still remembered by them.” (Domenico Comparetti 1898, 258.)

As has been widely documented, Finnish folklore and particularly its culmination in the Kalevala became a tool used both by the Finnish left and right to advance their causes. My intention is to show how it has, through the mythic discourse, contributed to forming Finland's patriarchal and ethnocentric monoculture; something that needs to be deconstructed and rethought if we wish to create the conditions in Finland for multiculturalism and respect for difference in all areas. It is through the educational channels that one can affect changes most effectively as they are the primary conduits of conditioning and transmittal of values. It is worth remembering the words of Zachrias Topelius, who set the tone for a patriotic Finnish monoculture with the following words:

"One people! One land! One tongue! One song and wisdom!” (1) (Wilson 1976, 42)²

The purpose of this article then is to initiate a discussion among laypeople, educators and researchers about the overt and subliminal agendas and value systems that the educational system transmits and through which children are acculturated during their formal schooling. Also, women and minority cultures across the global village are becoming more aware and insistent of their needs for spiritual, psychological and cultural self-determination; the so-called third wave of feminism focuses increasingly on such issues as the symbolic processes and representations that are in the service of hegemonic socio-political forces. These forces are the basis for unequal power relations in all other areas of life from economics, politics, health and religion to the arts.

My decision to focus on the politics of representation and on discursive strategies of othering in the Kalevala is motivated by my view that the Kalevala occupies a far-reaching and central role as the primary "Master Narrative" of Finnish culture. It provides a good illustration of the monocultural biases which have functioned to rob women and marginalised groups of their "Sampo," their self-definitions, representational agency and cultural equality. I have decided to focus on one marginalised character in the Kalevala, the proto-Finnic maiden, Aino. By analysing the way Aino has been interpreted and/or represented in selected representative texts and works of art, I will give an example of feminist textual-sexual practices which aim at exposing some of the dysfunctional mechanisms of mono-acculturation, and which have the potential to displace and alter the dualistic and hierarchical politics. Of course, I will situate the Aino representations in the

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² With the Kalevala, Finland could say: “I too have a history!” and to a people who for years had been taught that they were a somewhat inferior part of Sweden with no history independent of the mother country, Topelius' words had great significance.
general patriarchal context of the Finnish epic, to show how sexism and ethnocentrism as forms of othering work together. I see class relations, heterosexism and other markers of difference as yet another set of important issues to study. However, I have limited myself to ethnicity and gender in this article, for practical purposes.

My definition of monoculture and my term mono-acculturation are in part modelled on and inspired by Simone de Beauvoir's writings regarding the politics of self and other. I will first elaborate on monoculture as it touches on gender relations and then on its links with postcolonial critiques of ethnocentricity. It is important to note, however, that it is artificial to separate sexism, heterosexism, racism, classism and other politics of marginalisation – after all, they are interconnected and all derive from the same root – dysfunctional, hierarchical, dualistic and self-interested Western male body politics. Jurgen Kremer refers to this as “dissociative schismogenesis” – the evolutionary trajectory of the so-called civilising process in the West (Kremer 1997, 10). He sees it as the end product of the progressively and addictively increasing split from participation in one’s origins (Ibid. 29). In my view, it refers above all to the epistemological bias predominantly of Western mainstream men. As regards the impact on human, cultural and biological diversity of the global corporate monoculture, the writings of Mies and Shiva, particularly in Ecofeminism (1993) have likewise alerted me to the ways in which the expanding free market philosophy, corporate capitalism threatens not only diverse cultural expression but also the biodiversity of our species life.

Monoculture and Androcentric Philosophy

Simone de Beauvoir's landmark description of the asymmetrical gender relations marking the dominant Western sex/gender systems can be fruitfully applied also to Finnic mythic and cultural discourses. Her main ideas, as they relate to my theoretical framework, are as follows, de Beauvoir (1949) notes that “One is not born but rather becomes, a woman.” de Beauvoir claims that the Sartrean conditions of existence, Being-in-itself and Being-for-itself do not apply symmetrically to men and women. Woman is seen by men as the relative being, while they perceive themselves as the absolute. Being-in-itself refers to the constant, material existence that humans share with animals, vegetables, and minerals, whereas Being-for-Itself refers to the moving, conscious existence that humans share only with other humans. de Beauvoir finds woman's oppression mysterious and unique: First, unlike the oppression of race and class, the oppression of woman is not a contingent historical fact, an event in time which has sometimes been contested or reversed. Woman has always been subordinate to man. Second, women have internalised the alien point of view that man is the essential, woman the inessential. (Qtd. in Tong 1989, 202.)

Man sees woman as other but most incredibly, woman sees herself as other. The reasons have to do, among other things, with the formative power of cultural discourses. The parallel between representation and construction of sex-gender systems cannot therefore be ignored by focusing on biological determinants; men create the world from their own point of view, which then becomes the truth to be described.³
All the traditional philosophical ideas which have helped form the academic consciousness include in themselves the masculinist idea of man as self, or normative, and woman as other, or deviant, naturally affirming his interpretation. But a feminist critic cannot apply these ideas to any text without first challenging the basic masculinist assumptions behind them; in other words, challenging the weight of Western tradition.

The fact that de Beauvoir generalises from white middle-class women to all women has been contested among her other historically contingent claims. However, for my purposes in analysing the monocultural trends in the Finnish epic, her insights about man as the norm, the essential, and about woman as the relational, inessential other are useful. As I will show, the hierarchical and dualistic politics of self and other lead, in the Finnish epic, to the other being eroticised and objectified from the point of view of the controlling and desiring male gaze. However, in the so-called third wave of feminisms it has become increasingly more obvious that women in dominant positions can also occupy a privileged position vis-à-vis marginalised groups and have their own internal hierarchies of self and other. Therefore the term "monoculture" refers in my paper to any hegemonic system, set of beliefs or political effects that are grounded in such politics and practices, although nationalistic patriarchy will be my focus in this paper.4

It is typical of nationalistic states to define and mask their monocultural moral regulation as the only possible version of truth and to treat divergent views and values as the political, ideological agenda of a "special interest group," as if any discourse could be ideologically neutral. I would like to elaborate on the socio-political and theoretical context in which I situate my own postcolonial and feminist approach.

The Context of Monoculture and Postcolonialism

Recent years have witnessed an increasing interest particularly in North America in the so-called emerging literatures, voices and cultures neglected, disparaged or ignored by hegemonic social forces and institutions. Postmodernism, feminism and postcolonialism as key academic trends have overlapped in several ways, despite obvious differences of emphasis and the great diversity within the various schools of thought. They have in common a certain suspicion over the worst aspects of the dominant Western intellectual legacy; its dualism and tendency to ground its truth claims and methods rather uncritically in ethnocentric biases and unified notions.5 There is for that reason much agreement among scholars that Western thought and philosophies are undergoing a crisis

3. In Feminist Theory, Rosemary Tong speculates on the reasons why woman is perceived by Sartrean existentialism to be the subordinate other. Quoting Spelman: "On the biological level a species is maintained only by creating itself anew; but this creation results only in repeating the same Life in more individuals. But man assures the repetition of Life while transcending Life through Existence; by this transcendence he creates values that deprive pure repetition of all value." (Spelman 1994, 200.)

4. I have already written about the need for self-reflexive and anti-hegemonic methodologies and approaches in the Finnish women’s studies context in Integratioterinismen ihanteet (Kaito 1994).

5. Obviously there is no unified, homogenous West and any talk of "its" tendencies is itself already based on a dualism and a new reverse hierarchy between the neglected margins and the canonized center. However, despite the diversity present in the very notion of "Western traditions", it is necessary to posit a strategic difference between the trends that have been more if not fully dominant and those that have definitely not had equal press and power – women and non-eurocentric groups.
of legitimacy as scholars are busy dismantling and deconstructing unified subjects, identities, monolithic truths and accounts of history, god, religion, mythology, culture etc. While the subject of postmodern theorising has been predominantly the fragmented human subject, that of the postcolonial theories is, in contrast, specifically the colonised subject, whose fragmentation results from deeper political issues than merely existential fractures of the individualistic self. Postcolonial theories foreground the multicultural rather than unified identity of the nation-state and insist on locally articulated criticisms of the globalisation of relations of power/knowledge. National epics have been, precisely, in the service of a monocultural agenda whereby minority points of view would have to be sacrificed to the “greater” cause of national unity and the illusion of a unified, solid, national subject. The Finnish Kalevala has been appropriated by different political groups for their ideological agendas regarding the “true” nature of Finnishness, whether we talk about the Left or the Right Wing groups (Wilson 1976). However, they have in common their exclusion, precisely, of the local diversity in the matter of Finnish ethnicity, and their blindness to the role of gender in identity politics. The illusion of a unified Finnish subject has meant, however, that it is the elite male that is being referred to, not the woman, native, other.

Mechanisms of Mono-acculturation

I have designed a list of items for consideration when exposing textual and contextual/sexual politics and the overall politics of representation as the typical mechanisms of mono-acculturation.6 It is worth noting that the various strategies overlap and intersect; still, by specifying them I hope to render these mechanisms more visible. It is not always clear whether they are conscious or unconscious and subliminal. Hence, to expose the political uses of monocultural strategies is always a subtle judgement call. The strategies are in an order characterised by increasingly exclusionary and monocultural impact.

Omission and Silencing

As textual practices, omission and silencing are the most obvious ways of reinforcing the mainstream male norm. Leaving out relevant information of equal potential value in the form of conscious or unconscious exclusion of the other is often accompanied by the following: disembodiment, appropriation, misnaming or renaming. This is further linked

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6. I have adopted some of the items from a list of ten aspects of content analysis used by the Textbook Evaluation and Revision Committee of the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood for analyzing the content of grade six Social Studies textbooks in the early 1970s. I do not have a more precise reference for their work as the list I received at an anti-racism workshop at the Boston Theological School, in 1993, did not contain a full bibliography. The study is also based in part on David Pratt’s How to Find and Measure Bias in Textbooks (1972). Another useful list of representations to look for in children’s books is provided by Judith Stinton (1979), Racism and Sexism in Children’s Books which contains practical hints for identifying monocultural biases. I have been introduced to many of the strategies of mono-acculturation in the various anti-racism workshops I attended or organized and moderated at Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University (Canada) between 1994 and 1996.
with the "subject’s" tendency to name and identify himself while she/he relegates the
other to anonymity and disembodiment, or depersonalises him/her. A particular example
is omitting information that reflects negatively on self while including it for the other.
This is also linked with biases by obliteration: omitting or ignoring positive information
about the other, when that information is readily available. Obliteration implies that the
omission is conscious and the information is fairly readily available. Advocates of
monoculture are often also guilty of silencing by censoring and denying the validity of
diverse other values and views. This may result in the conscious appropriation of the
other's voice, symbolic discourses and representations, which in its most extreme form
results form the active destruction of the other's psychological, mental and spiritual
resources. Closely related to this is also the psychological mechanism of incorporation.
This can take place individually or communally by taking aspects of the culture one
assimilates and claiming it as belonging to one's own.7 Omission is often justified under
the guise of missing information ("there are no female philosophers, writers, goddesses
worth mentioning"). We are dealing with a so-called chill factor also when cultural or
gender-related insensitivity is further linked with negative evaluations ("including the
female perspective threatens cultural expression, waters down the hard sciences, means
adding on something trivial and unimportant)".8

**Tokenism**

Unlike the above actions of excluding the other's perspective and self-representations, or
simply omitting anything to do with him/her, tokenism refers to the politics of superficial
and often meaningless inclusion. A woman or minority member might thus be included in
an otherwise all-male or all-white group or text but merely as an add-on, often for exotic
overlay. Women of colour have pointed out increasingly in recent years that white,
mainstream women have themselves given evidence of this mechanism of "add colour
and stir" although this is what they accuse dominant men of. Tokenism at its most typical
does not in any way displace the asymmetrical relations linked with representations but
creates an illusion of multiculturalism or of gender balance. Multicultural events often
operate on this premise. Events are organised by the main group to "celebrate" local
diversity in the form of exotic dances, foods and activities. However, true
multiculturalism consists in all ethnic groups having, ideally, equal POWER in managing
economic, cultural, political resources, not just in being an exotic "add on" to the main
society’s unchanged structures.

7. A modern example of this is the appropriative use of Sami costumes in Finnish events; a more historically
distant example of the ancient appropriation of goddess cultures is the male reverends using long robes
imitating pre-Christian goddess cultures, and again, today, the New Age industry producing Native ritual
items without respect for their contextual, specific, idiosyncratic, spiritual meaning.
8. Bernice Sandler with Roberta M. Hall have published a book called The Campus Climate Revisited: Chilly
for Women Faculty, Administration, and Graduate Students (1986). They list several "chill factors" allowing
female faculty to identify biases in evaluation and behavior on page 5.
Dualistic Portrayal and Stereotyping

Dualistic portrayal or stereotyping is manifested as idealisation or defamation (distortion, denigration and the unconscious uses of projection to displace or divert attention from the Self to the other). Denigration of the other often accompanies polarised representations with the Self inscribing positive associations to its own, and inferior ones to the other's characteristics. This tendency also has to do with establishing double standards, a differential evaluation of behaviour as a function of sex or ethnic traits.

Bias by Defamation

We are dealing with bias by defamation when attention is paid to the "other’s" faults, failings and shortcomings by attacking his or her, or the entire group’s reputation or public image. This is often accomplished via projection and displacement of the Self's own fantasies, fears and aggressions onto the Other. Scapegoating and racism have been linked since time immemorial.

For Kremer, the roots of stereotyping and dualistic projections lie in “dissociative schismogenesis”. He notes:

"Postmodernity helps us to think about issues like ‘tribal’ or thinking ‘them’. Despite the increasing breakdown of the grand narratives and the increasing multivocality in discourses, postmodernity is but yet another advance within the game of dissociative epistemologies. Even though post-modern epistemologies have split Truth into truths and we can conceive of an increasing number of epistemologies, the politics remain the same; it is eurocentered thinking as the game master, even as the margins increasingly encroach. Postmodernity can easily be interpreted as the yearning to regain participation in the phenomena. The concern with tribal epistemologies is part of this yearning. And historical need.”
(Kremer 1997, 32.)

Kremer adds that dissociative schismogenesis leading to such phenomena as the various strategies of mono-acculturation can also be resolved through the integration of those aspects of living and knowing from which the eurocentered discourses split Eurocentered epistemologies – to a greater or lesser degree – explain and justify the dissociative split which makes projective identification possible. According to Kremer, Indigenous peoples carry those parts of the process of knowing, which the eurocentered ways of knowing have "left behind" as primitive, inexplicable, unscientific, religious, spiritual, etc. In this sense they carry the shadow of eurocentered scientific knowing (Kremer 1997, 13). Because the split subject needs the “other” to embody that which he has denied or repressed, he vehemently opposes the dismantling of the prevailing asymmetrical sex-gender system (he needs the woman as his projected “feminine other”). He also needs the exotic Native other to embody his split, denied longings for the Noble Savage in himself. However, denigration consists in projecting one’s negative traits on the other, resulting in denial of one’s role in creating or reinforcing the asymmetrical relations.
For example, in Kalevala the dominant and most memorable representations of both women and the Sami/Lapps in the epic are linked to images of victimhood or selfishness, greed and arrogance. Although the southern men of Kalevala are the ones who commit rapes and murders, it is women and the Sami/Lapps that are made to carry many of the projections of evildoing. This bias can be enhanced by cumulative implication: constantly creating and accumulating positive impressions about self and negative impressions about other. This is often accompanied by mockery and trivialisation of the other, and through crude or subtle humour as a tool of subordination. Often the uses (or rather, abuses) of humour are linked with condescension and trivialisation of female efforts at self-determination.9

Exploitation of Half-truths and Ambivalence

Exploitation of half-truths or ambivalence; of neutral information that is not so neutral further reinforces the mainstream male-as-the-norm agenda. This involves setting the self up also as the “good” model and standard for everyone to follow. It involves regulating moral and cultural behaviour and values by claiming the ways of the dominant group are objective and neutral, and, again, setting up and treating the other as subjective, biased, ideological. This strategy can be most harmful precisely because it is so subtle and hard to prove or to detect. It allows for denial of representational responsibility with the excuse of semiotic overdetermination and slippages of meaning. Hybrid ethnic representations are a good example; one can at least attack clear misrepresentations and stereotypes while it is more difficult to render visible the power of subliminal messages that are reinforced intertextually and contextually by other social institutions of meaning creation.

The above techniques of mono-acculturation could of course be applied to any group positioned as an Other in the Finnish context, although there are gradations of otherness along the spectrum of privilege and oppression. For a more extensive treatment now,

9. Here we witness yet another mechanism of patriarchal, and nationalistic control, something that may have unconscious or conscious roots: projection and reversal of negative traits and acts. For Domenico Comparetti, “the additions which, as Lönnrot confesses (...) he made in his own words are, according to Krohn, the incident of the making of a false sun and false moon, and the rape of the celestial luminaries by the Lady of Pohjola” (Comparetti 1898, 135-37). Thus in the process of rounding out his story Lönnrot further justifies the men's aggression against Louhi by making her appear cruel and vengeful. If the Italian folklorist refers to the loss of the Sampo as a "rape," is this not a curious reversal of what really happens in the epic to women? It is women that the heroes, such as Lemminkäinen or Kullervo either rape, abduct or seduce, and yet that loaded term is used about the wronged people and about women as victims of sexual aggression. This strategy continues to be used in the courts dealing with cases of sexual harassment and rape where the tendency continues to be strong to blame the victim by focusing on her clothes, the claim that "she was in the wrong place at the wrong time" etc., all strategies for diverting attention from the act and the perpetrator of violence. Also, the Sami woman continues to be blamed for negative actions to do with the Sampo in the science fiction novels by a Finnish-American Emil Petaja (1966, 1967) showing the persistant mythic power of Kalevala representations. This is all the more ironic that it is precisely Northern Indigenous women that are the prime victims of such anti-ecological activity as that which culminated in the Tsoymoby accident and which destroyed masses of reindeer in Samiland. In Petaja’s novels the evil witch of the North (Louhi) is responsible for making the Sampo grind goods in reverse, i.e., she is the root of the ecological destruction the book dramatizes. This is one more striking example of a reversal where the primary victim is made to carry the blame for something she is in actuality the least likely to bring about. See Ethel Johnston Phelps (1981) for more ambivalent and hybrid representations of Sami (Lapp?) women in children’s fiction.
however, I will focus on the representational relations between the Finns and the Sami/Lapps, for the othering of Aino cannot be understood in separation from this broader context.

**Mono-acculturation in the Kalevala**

From the point of view of the epic’s interpretations and reception alone, *Kalevala* is beyond any debate the monocultural centre of the Finnish epic with Pohjola as the polarised other and margin, periphery. This polarised other is represented as “the land of women”, Pohjola, which in contrast to the land of the southerners is shrouded in associations of evil and the forces of death and darkness. In the polarised representation, Pohjola, the North, is referred to as “the man-eating village” and it has a population of women who are referred to as “drowners of heroes.” The *Kalevala*’s hero-centred and predominantly epic “main” plot predictably foregrounds the history of the male shamans and heroes and represents women and the Lapps (Sami) as followers or helpers of men or as men’s enemies in the margins – literally, in the Pohja, Pohjola, the bottom, the fringe of the world. The male heroes are mostly viewed and interpreted as the Self with women and the ethnically overlapping, ambiguous Sami/Lapps as the Other.

The epic opens with the Finnic genesis and the birth of Väinämöinen, followed by his encounter and epistemic/shamanic duel with the ethnically ambiguous Joukahainen. The episode where we are introduced to Aino is intimately linked with this shamanistic duel. The episode about the creation of the world can easily be seen as an allegory about Finnish nation creation. The two “heroes” are pitted against each other, evoking the ancient shamanistic contests of the Finnic peoples. For Finns magic and power consisted in knowing the origins of phenomena, a recipe which allowed them to have control over them. The old patriarch shows himself more powerful and knowledgeable, and claims to have presided at the creation of the world. He finally sings the “Lapp” youth to a swamp, humbling him to admit his defeat. To save his life, Joukahainen promises his own sister in marriage to Väinämöinen. This treatment of women as currency of exchange then prepares us for the dramatic episode featuring Aino, the sister of the “slit-eyed Lapp” – an attribute that immediately brands Joukahainen as a “non-Finn”, an other among the dominant men.

The above episodes contain many of the above strategies of othering as a precondition for mono-acculturation. Lönnrot has managed to create characters and episodes from the multilayered and overlapping Finnic historical-mythological past that can be interpreted in endless ways because of the mythical and mystical ambiguity of distant times and of ethnic overlap. I do not question the creativity, skill and subtlety with which Lönnrot put together the Finnish epic. It is a testimony to the power of his text that it yields constantly new possibilities of interpretation and allows for such a multiplicity of interpretations. However, his selection and combination of narratives and other literary decisions derive from personal motives. In this regard I cannot agree with Pekka Liski who claims that “unlike other epics, “Kalevala is particularly significant because it was born rather than fabricated and thus it became the cultural history of an entire nation(...)” (Liski 1986, 157).
The patriarchal-nationalistic and monocultural bias that I am concerned with is also the cumulative product of the weight of Kalevala's long patriarchal history of reception, teaching and interpretation. In my own postcolonial interpretation, the episode is less about ancient shamanistic duels (Pentikäinen, 1987) than about the patriarchal and nationalistic appropriation of women's and the Sami/Lapps' resources and knowledge. First of all, the episode omits information, mythic or historic, about the non-Finns, the Sami foremost, that would reflect positively on their Selfhood, "nation", self-defined cultural idioms and ways of knowing and even ordering reality. Patricia Sawin in "Lönnrot's Brainchildren: the Representation of Women in Finland's Kalevala" believes that

"The most profitable and inspiring account he (Lönnröt, KK) could create from the available materials was one in which the forefathers of the nation earn the right to the land and ensure its continued well-being by defeating a perfidious enemy. The characters that he created, both male and female, are different in many ways from those found in the source poems, but it is the images of women that he most obviously distorted in the service of his larger goals". (Sawin 1988, 194.)

The Kalevala's representation of the Finnic origins is not innocent, however, for it reinforces negative views about the historical relations between the main culture and minorities, such as the Sami. To Finnish patriots, the fact that the old patriarch Väinämöinen triumphs over the young Joukahainen is no doubt subliminally the epic victory of the Finnish ancestors over the Lapps, the Sami, although the word "Lapp" could also refer to Finns living in Lapland. The very ambiguity, however, renders the power relations between the two ethnic groups invisible, intangible, and hence, politically neutral. But of course, in the context of asymmetrical power relations, there is no space that is neutral; any ambiguity plays into the hands of those with power. The "neutral" is always the space of the Self, the Subject. The very fact the Finnic ancestor/shaman is older and wiser seems to suggest that the Finns represent the older nation, the First Nation. This would then apparently justify subjugating, literally singing the Sami into a subordinate status—something that is believed to have happened historically, and which culminated in the Sami's dispossession under Finnish rule and under the other independent neighbouring states. In today's landclaim issues the dominant group continues to exploit historical ambiguity regarding the earliest inhabitants of Fennoscandia and to blur ethnopolitical boundaries to their own advantage.

As Comparetti's quotation suggests at the beginning of this article, to the Finns themselves, the Lapps were "more primitive," less amenable to Christian influence, and for much longer, more versed in shamanistic knowledge. Not only does the epic's representation of the young Lapp as less competent go against prevailing ideas about the Samis' shamanistic powers and knowledge but it mocks their status. The episode provides an example then of the silencing and mockery of both women and the Sami. The Finnish

10. Property relations, as well as views on moral regulation are closely connected with myths, from which they seem to get their legitimation. Such representations of what is "natural" thus divert attention from historical conditions of economic disparity and the fact that it is those with property and rights who have the power to control the creation of myths and representations serving their agendas. While Joukahainen's class relations appear to be determined ostensibly by issues of shamanistic knowledge and property through which he can redeem himself from "hot water," it is obvious in his treatment of his sister that her relations to property are to be mediated by her sexual relationships to men.
shaman triumphs over a competing knowledge base which, as I already mentioned, is assumed to be inferior all the more so that it is qualified as "woman's knowledge." The representation of Väinämöinen as the worthier and more knowledgeable shaman could then be seen as a historically dubious manipulation of Finnic cultural facts, motivated by patriotic self-interest.

The fourth poem of the *Kalevala*, the Song of Aino, begins with Aino, "the young or matchless maiden" going out for twigs in a grove. The initial set-up introducing Väinämöinen's direct attempt to take possession of what he considers rightfully his own – the young Aino – sets the tone for the entire epic's treatment of women and – implicitly of Lapland. It is illustrative of the male scholars' monocultural philosophy of the same (a term used by Luce Irigaray) to consider how Aino has been analysed. In a theosophical study of the epic, *Kalevalan Avain* (1916), Pekka Ervast for example looks upon Aino as the epic icon of Finnish womanhood and the epitome of tragic, passive femininity. His dualistic interpretation of Aino reflects a somewhat typical Romantic male understanding of women as either victims or witches who must die for their resistance. Ervast provides a good example also of the mechanisms of incorporation and disembodiment when he interprets Aino as "that tangible proof of the developed matured sense of beauty of the Finnish people, [which] is looking for its equal in world literature (1916, 230). Totally oblivious to Aino's kinship with a "Laplander," he looks upon her as the personification of the beauty of wisdom, beauty in Joukahainen, wisdom in Väinämöinen (1916, 232). As the sister of Joukahainen, are we to assume that Aino is NOT necessarily the blond prototypical Finnish maiden – what she is generally depicted as – but a Sami/Lapp? Ervast looks even upon Joukahainen's and Aino's mother as merely a personification of the male consciousness. She is not only a piece of currency of exchange between men but even in terms of the interpretation, she is merely a psychological personification of something in the male hero's self and psyche. Other scholars have interpreted Aino's unwillingness to marry the old patriarch as her fear of sexuality, echoing the infamous Freudian assumption in the Dora case study, that women should be willing to embrace any male's sexual advances to qualify as sexually normal. Aino has also been idealised as the passive female victim silenced to the point that she disappears into the sea (and is assumed dead), while Louhi as a counter stereotype, has been dehumanised as the "pushy broad" who will not bend under patriarchal rule, who returns the colonial Male Gaze. These examples attest to the way in which women, and also the ethnic other are made to enhance the transcendence of the male subject, his Sartrean "being-for-itself" while the

11. As Michael Branch, Matti Kuusi, Keith Bosley note in *Finnish Folkpoetry Epic* (1977), Lönnrot's version of the Aino story is a literary retelling of motifs that appear in the folklore he collected in Ingria and Karelia, and parts of Estonia. This does not mean, however, that the representation itself is ambiguously linked with the Sami.

12. "If the mother rejoices," he writes, "it is because the collective maternal body rejoices" (Ervast 1916, 233). According to Ervast, "it knows instinctly that spiritual growth through the espousal of wisdom would be a great relief. The body is in dialogue with the soul: "what are you afraid of, what are in grief over?" (Ervast 1916, 233).

13. In Ervast's interpretation Aino's refusal to marry wisdom in the form of Väinämöinen betokens her inner emptiness and the distance from truth and godliness that such a state symbolizes. Such a "spiritual" reading is an insult to any woman who has experienced the reality of sexual harassment or violence, and who can hardly be expected to identify with Ervast's allegorical reading.

14. See my article (1989) for an analysis of how the representation of Louhi as "evil" is perpetuated in the Finnish-American science Fiction stories by Emil Petäjä.
other cannot even be said to represent a "being-in-itself." In Ervast's analysis we see that both Joukahainen, the male Sami/Lapp and the woman are incorporated into the Kalevala male's psyche.

Aino and the Pictorial Politics of Representation

I will now elaborate on pictorial representations of the Aino episode. The educational system is complicit in reinforcing sex/gender stereotypes if it transmits the values of the Kalevala as somehow natural, essentialist and universal. It is therefore important to consider that most interpretations of Aino reflect monocultural, i.e. patriarchal androcentric biases: they either idealise her resistance to the old patriarch, or treat her as a victim. The dualistic portrayal of women in Kalevala leave women with static and unreal role models, with a weak set of mythic foremothers as possible role models.

The Aino Triptych by A. G.-Kallela

I will begin with the famous Aino triptych by Akseli Gallén-Kallela. The centerpiece sums up the representation of woman as the other, helpless before the objectifying male gaze. The naked Aino can be seen to condense the overdetermined woman, native and other, who has been literally robbed and divested of her protection, her cultural clothing, the resources of her self-determination, and who can only appear eroticised and naked under the projective scrutiny of the Male Gaze, the hegemonic power of patriarchal nationalism and monoculture. The "gaze" refers to Lacanian psychoanalytic theories and condenses the ways in which male desire has the power to control both the direction of any discursive and epistemic inquiry and to determine the object/subject positions. The fact that Aino's and the Sami/Lapps' perspective is drowned out by the epic's structure and plot is evident in that she disappears under water; goes, metaphorically, underground with her traditions and ways of being/knowing. The third section of the triptych depicts Aino swimming to join three mysterious maidens on a boulder. The dominant interpretation of the end of the poem is simply that Aino drowns. However, is it not possible to interpret Aino's disappearance into the sea as the suppression of the gynocentric, woman-positive perspective, or symbolically as the loss to the sea of women's and Samis' self-defined selfhood, the Sampo? On the other hand, the pathos of young women dying because of cruel men is a motif that has been pointed out by feminists to suit sentimental men more than agentic, self-determining women. In my view, to suggest that Aino is reborn at the end of Kalevala as Marjatta, the Finnic Virgin Mary, mother of a male child is even more problematic. It reinforces the Christian role of woman as a being-for-the other, with an identity entirely subject to being defined in relation to reproduction and male desire. The story of the three maidens on the boulder remains unwritten. Who are they in the sisterhood of Finnic women? The three norns, the Sami goddesses, Juksakka, Uksakka, Sarakka? Or are they the three maidens, Luonnotars, who according to John Abercromby "are sitting as they sob and weep where three roads
part, four rivers flow; they gather pains, torments they cram into a speckled chest, a copper box; they bark their hands, they tear their breasts, their annoyance they bewail, if pains perchance should not be brought" (Abercromby 1898, 81).

At any rate, they are a telling example of the omission, on the level of both the "epic" and its interpretations, of a woman-centred mythic perspective.

![Picture 1. The Aino Triptych by A. G.-Kallela.](image)

Pictures of passive, whiny, victimised Ainos are legion among the numerous illustrations of the Kalevala. The tragic fate of Aino as a mere victim is hardly empowering, either for women or the Sami. The German philosopher Herder, whom the elite Finnish nationalistic men read and imitated, believed that the nation should be modelled after the family in which (according to his conception) the father "naturally" and universally holds absolute authority (Sawin 1987). This may well explain the need to mythically punish any woman threatening the traditional family values as defined by 19th century nationalistic men. Herder also regarded cultural traditions, which should serve as the focus of a national identity and the backbone of a proper education, as masculine in their essence, the sole property of the fathers, who would pass them along only to their sons [sic!] (Herder 1987, 567). The omission of alternative, woman-positive information has an obvious goal: the creation of a single voice, monoculture (patriarchy). This omission has been reinforced by the school system which, at least in my experience, taught little if anything empowering about either the Sami-Lapps or Finnish women's prechristian sisters and philosophies. The omission of positive perspectives from the Other's perspective is often accompanied by and manifests itself as a dualistic depiction: the noble savage/depraved primitive or the

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15. For example, Niilo Lehikoinen’s representations of Aino.
16. Consider the view of Aino expressed by Aku Siikaniemi in 1908: “Ainon tahdon riihtumus on onnuttoman rikkauden tarina. Se syöppy syvälle muorten sydämiin, se opettaa heille, että lemmen lait ovat rikkomattoman pyhä. Lemmentunteiden rikkominen tuottaa ihmisselun kuoleman.” (Siikaniemi 1908, 158.)
true, ideal woman/castrating bitch/witch, or any other dualistic pair.\textsuperscript{17} This is true also of the Aino poem, particularly if we consider Louhi, another mythic inhabitant of the (Sami?) North as Aino's relative and negative counterpart. As Patricia Sawin has noted:

Only virgins and mothers, women who act to reproduce the patriarchy and remain fully under the men's control, are evaluated positively. Women who want to retain control over their own sexuality and alternative knowledge are condemned as whores, witches, or monsters. (Sawin 1988, 199.)

This explains why Louhi, the truly agentic, self-determining woman of the epic is couched in associations of evil, ensuring that Finnish women will not easily identify with either the Sami matriarchs or with any other strong independent woman; after all, as in fairytales, there is a subliminal equation of old age, foul appearance, wisdom, power and being the enemy of heroes; no wonder so many women find it hard to identify with feminists who, likewise, are represented by the media as ugly, desperate, sex-deprived or promiscuous, i.e. threatening because of their rebellion against the dominant patriarchal gender scripts. The epic provides no positive role model of shape-shifting, self-determining women. Ageism, sexism and racism are all interconnected and converge in the image of Louhi as the ugly old hag (Kailo 1994, Lyons 1978).

As has been noted in many postcolonial studies, the subject, the Self will tend to ascribe the highly valorised traits to itself, while reserving less honorific labels for the other, accompanied by a dualistic overcompensation of this bias. The denigration/idealisation dualism is harmful to the Other because human beings and cultures are not amenable to static stereotypes and monolithic descriptions through which the human and ethnic diversity of being, experience and values is merely lost. By being treated as a "being-for-the other," the other's existential freedom is curtailed or denied. At worst, being conditioned to see herself in this light, the other internalises the dualistic gender script or ethnic stereotype which then risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. This evokes de Beauvoir's question as to why women among other subordinate groups have internalised being the other and have seen their condition as "natural". Modern psychoanalysts explain it through such terms as "internalised sexism", "self-hatred", incorporation of the culture's dominant gendered ideals. The reasons involve complex socio-economic, political and philosophical issues. For the purposes of this paper, however, I wish to stress the deep impact of education and of the dominant representations that make the representations appear natural rather than constructed. As Ward Churchill notes: "Literature and the stereotyping of culture establishes complete control over truth and knowledge. It finally replaces troops and guns as the relevant tool of colonisation" (Churchill 1992, 2). The monocultural male version of gendered relations has become so ingrained in men and women through educational and other institutions that it has taken on the quality of the true, the norm, the natural. According to Pratibha Parmar, "the deeply ideological nature of imagery determines not only how other people think about us but how we think about ourselves" (Qtd. in hooks, 1992, 5).

\textsuperscript{17} Since the historical male view insisted on a woman's oppositeness and was disturbed by any blurring of clearly defined differences, the 'civilized' male eye perceived the Lapp woman as a spectacularly masculine type rather than a well-developed human being, able to come to terms with the demands of her environment (Paddon 1987, 8).
There is no "pure", "authentic" Finnic self that the epic or any other folk material might reveal. Through conscious manipulation of the representations, however, more positive connotative evaluations are linked with the "Finnish heroes" of Kalevala than with the polarised opposites, the Lapp/Sami women of the North. The Sami have precisely been made to embody the idealised and denigrated Other of the mainstream male hero, of the national subject and legitimate citizen, considered both alien to the male Self and a much-desired fantasised female Other, a romanticised anima. The stereotyping in folklore materials persists today in many forms, for example in the dictum, "lapp skall vara lapp" (Swedish); "the Lapp should remain a Lapp" (The Sami People 1990, 71) and for women of "true womanhood", the opposite of those male-bashing, braburning feminists who refuse to be patriarchy's doormats. The patriotic perspective then has functioned to prevent exploration of matriotism – women's pride in their mythic foremothers, of whom I don’t personally remember having read or heard anything during my school years.

What then is Pohjola's perspective? What do women want? As the following examples will show, there are many Kalevala-related pictorial representations of the “woman’s perspective” which, under close scrutiny, are merely reactive to patriarchy, or serve to reinforce it.

**The Aino Triptych Revisited – Punk Aino**

I will now comment on some representations of the Kalevala’s key incidents of women from the point of view of Pohjola. As I will show, we are still far from having at our disposal truly women-positive representations of Finnish mythology.

By repainting the Aino triptych immortalised by Gallén-Kallela, a Lappish artist Sirpa Ala-Lääkkölä is no doubt seeking to revert the colonising male gaze. In her interpretation of the Aino episode, Aino is not a blond Proto-Finnish maiden in a national costume, but a scantily clad modern punk-woman with a shaved head and an assertive posture. In the parodied center piece of the triptych, she and the lake are covered in spikes. The third section of the triptych shows all female characters as covered with spikes that protrude out of their bodies like a massive porcupine skin. Is Ala-Lääkkölä not embodying one of the goals of feminist fury, overwriting the Phallus? Ala-Lääkkölä's reinterpretation of the motif disrupts the male gaze by returning it through a strong alternative bodylanguage. The spikes coming out of the "innocent, idealised" virgin suggest anything but passive innocence and victimhood. Whatever the initial shock value of the triptych with its foregrounding of Aino's feelings and the impact of sexual harassment, this version of

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18. For the feminist postcolonial writer, Trinh T. Minh-ha: "Identity as understood in the context of a certain ideology of dominance has long been a notion that relies on the concept of an essential, authentic core that remains hidden to one's consciousness and that requires the elimination of all that is considered foreign or not true to the self, (... the not-I, other. In such a concept the other is almost unavoidably either opposed to the self or submitted to the self's dominance. It is always condemned to remain its shadow while attempting at being its equal. The search for an identity is, therefore, usually a search for that lost, pure, true, real, genuine, original, authentic self, often situated within a process of elimination of all that is considered other, superfluous, fake, corrupted or Westernized". (Minh-ha 1990, 371.)
Aino is in my view no more empowering for women than the ones by G.-Kallela. Still, it is a kind of transgressive interpretation of mythology by a northern Finnish woman, from the woman's point of view.

The picture both reinforces and challenges the Freudian view of women as passive and masochistic, and of men as sadistic and active. Despite its strong rebellious stance, it is not really a counter-hegemonic discourse for it is merely reactive to patriarchy; its reference point continues to be the prevailing system, it does not manage to break out of the patriarchal mold and its politics of desire. From a psychoanalytic perspective, it seems to depict a resisting woman whose traumas manifest themselves as inscriptions on the body; as the spikes of inverted aggression, most often aggression turned against the self. Much could be made of the spikes as the voice of the internalised wound, the sexual trauma, the loss of innocence.

One might analyse the picture as an artistic expression of the post-traumatic stress disorder, the long-term consequences of sexual violence that include a defensive withdrawal into the self, a going psychologically under water, underground. The spikes can be interpreted as defiance of the patriarchal acculturation attempts, a refusal to accept male definitions of femininity and female desire, or worse, the self-alienation that leads to self-hatred, self-abuse/mutilation. It evokes also the psychological finding that often victims of violence incorporate the abuse and become themselves aggressive, abusive, sadistic or sado-masochistic, even violent. Often victims of violence internalise abuse to the point that they begin to inflict injuries on themselves, wearing their wounds as their harness against further exploitation. Aggression becomes their identity and by embodying violence they adopt the position of the violence-prone subject. The victim and the victimiser become One in a psychological cycle that needs intervention from politically and woman positive trauma counsellors. Rather than depicting what "Pohjola" wants, this interpretation attests to the power of representations to freeze the other's imagination, to block the other visions of "otherness." They attest to the impact of epistemic violence. Still, these kinds of counter-portrayals of Aino have a pedagogical potential; they allow students to explore the imagery according to their own identity themes and experiences, and to invent a meaning to suit their desires, fantasies, assumptions regarding the sex/gender systems. To juxtapose patriarchal, nationalistic and feminist imagery further allows teachers to expose the relative and constructed nature of all versions, and to create the conditions for debates where no one perspective can dominate, where the very notion of a monolithic truth is exploded. In terms of the politics of marginalisation and mono-acculturation, the picture allows one to discuss internalised self-hatred or self-abuse as the effects of patriarchal practices of othering. They can be pinpointed as the root cause among other causes of women's eating disorders and self-destructive impulses. Of course, mere blaming of patriarchy is also oversimplifying women's issues of (un)well-being.

After all, many women find ways of negotiating their strict gender roles and of avoiding limiting self-definitions provided by education and media. Women are not just hapless victims of patriarchy but survivors of their collective conditioning. However, without political awareness and an understanding of the power of gender scripts and social acculturation, many women do not have the tools necessary for resisting strict gender scripts.
Reverse Sexism and the Aino Triptych

A particular advertisement in the Finnish women's magazine, Me Naiset likewise exploits the strong subliminal power of the Aino Triptych. In this reversal of subject and object, self and other, one apparently finds a new identity theme for women (Anttonen & Kuusi 1999, 229). The editors are not critical of the ways in which the reversal of sexism conceals power relations, however. Sexual harassment or sexual pursuit by a woman of a man, particularly a younger man, is not rooted in similar structural and social contexts and possibilities. The sexual double standard means that people are more critical of women in this position but statistics also reveal that sexual pursuit by women of men with harmful intentions are the exception, not the rule. Aino is being pursued by Väinämöinen in a patriarchal ideology where women are objects of exchange in a way men never are.

Sexism is part of institutionalised, officially condoned and structured systems of moral and economic regulation, not a matter of individuals chasing each other with sexual motives. This is the level that the ad from Me Naiset conceals from sight. Once again, it also conceals Aino's ambiguous ethnicity as the sister of a "slit-eyed Lapp" by perpetuating her representation as the prototypical blond, blue-eyed Finnish woman.20

This is an example of a strategy of mono-acculturation under the guise of reversal. It is further linked with trivialisation and subtle mockery. On the surface, the image purports to be about equality but by concealing the unequal terms of reference, it merely questions the value of “equality.” Women may even further resist “equality” since it is perceived to lead to these kinds of questionable and barely tolerated forms of mimicry of patriarchy. It

Picture 2. ME NAISET, Aino reaching out for a male19.

19. The picture is part of “Me Naiset” –magazine’s series of brand advertisement.
20. In The Kalevala, Epic of the Finnish People, translated by Eino Friberg, the illustrations by Björn Landström are a refreshing variation on the dominant representations; Aino for example is depicted as having dark hair although the rest of her appearance evokes Finnish cultural traditions.
is possibly also a symptom of the other's own inability to imagine other orderings of reality than the patriarchal sex/gender system, or to be critical of the possibilities and viability of a reversal of roles. Of course, one need not interpret the picture as a representation of women "harassing" younger, more vulnerable boys. It could simply be seen as female initiative or self-assertion. The fact still remains, however, that the representation does little to reveal the existing asymmetries of the sexes and can therefore serve aims that do not forward women's equality. If it reinforces the myth of equality which has not yet been reached either in politics or the cultural arena, it can in fact work against the advancement of women's socio-economic and discursive freedom and self-determination.

As we have seen, humour and mockery are also subtle but serious mechanisms that can be used to trivialise the other's efforts at attaining subjecthood. This is also linked with double standards, for the other's protests against these strategies are often dismissed as a "lack of a sense of humour" while the Self is often quick to use his resources to take action against any mockery directed at him.\(^{21}\)

The Aino Triptych and the Canine Kalevala

In the Canine Kalevala by Tarmo and Tarja Kunnas (1992) echoing the depiction of Aino in Me Naiset, Aino is portrayed as a dog with a halo over its head, pursuing Väinämöinen as the "oppressed cat." The humour and the parodic aspect of the depiction do not alter the power relations which are a contingent aspect of the apparently innocent cartoon. One could argue that this representation exploits the media stereotype and caricature that feminists are just the reverse of machomen. The halo over Aino's head, however humorous the cartoon is meant to be, suggests that those objecting to women's (Aino's) objectification are prude and hypocritical, that given the opportunity, they would do the same. It is really poor old Väinämöinen that is the "victim". The reversal is not harmless for it transmits, subliminally, the myth that a reverse situation is either possible or "what women really want." The Oulu student journal, "Ööpinen", has produced a very similar version of the episode, entitled "what really happened".

\(^{21}\) The fact that mainstream Finns do not themselves have a sense of humour about being mocked is attested by the news item in Ilta-Sanomat, 27th Sept. 1999 where it is reported: “Taas Suomelle irvaillaan. Suuren brittipankin tv-mainoksessa irvaillaan Suomen ja suomalaisen kustannuksella, mikä on suruttanut monet Britanniassa asuvat suomalaiset. Herään mielestään mainos luo Suomesta kuvan tylsänä paikkana, jossa ei ole minkäänlaisia nähtävyyksii ja jossa ei voi harrastaa mitään muuta kuin keskipitkänmatkan juoksua. Brititkoimikon viersää istuva mies antaa kaiken lisäksi kuvan suomalaisista ulostoivat irlantilakin idiootteina (...)’. The news item mentions that a Finnish couple had complained to a British media watch because of the different derogatory aspects of the program. This shows that it is always easier to laugh at the other than at oneself.
Conclusion

In my view, POHJOLA's perspective does not yet exist. Sami women, for sure, have their own mythic writings and traditions and probably do not wish to be associated with the Kalevala or even the idea of the one and only nationalistic epic. Pohjola's perspective can be retrieved in different writings in the past and present and one must, of course, first define what such a perspective consists in. As an advocate of multicultural self-expression, I will refrain from defining it. Its very richness consists in its multiplicity and diversity. The one determining feature of significance to me is, however, that it present new material on women's prechristian beliefs, mythic discourses and representations instead of merely adding variations on the male-defined paradigms. Vandana Shiva provides a useful definition of diversity as more than a human rights value:

“Gender and diversity are linked in many ways. The construction of women as the second sex is linked to the same inability to cope with difference as is the development paradigm that leads to the displacement and extinction of diversity in the biological world. The patriarchal world view sees man as the measure of all value, with no space for diversity, only for hierarchy. Woman, being different, is treated as unequal and inferior. Nature's diversity is seen as not intrinsically valuable in itself, its value is conferred only through economic exploitation for commercial gain. This criterion of commercial value thus reduces diversity to a problem, a deficiency. Destruction of diversity and the creation of monocultures becomes an imperative for capitalist patriarchy.” (Shiva & Mies 1993, 164.)

The multiple female sets of perspectives can be unearthed, invented, created, rediscovered only by going underground, or joining the three maidens of whom little if anything has been written. Gynesis, herstory as the space including rather than excluding women from their point of view needs to be theorised and embodied and this requires that we resurrect the gynocentric Finnish goddesses and beings that are the least known, because excluded from our education.

What then of the three maidens that Aino joins? Could they not be a lesbian continuum (Rich 1997, 322) which does not necessarily refer to lesbian genital sexuality but rather to women's mutual support groups and networks, the female underground. This is simply another space, a space of woman's own, of which we don't know because throughout history, ethnography, anthropology, the women's realities, rituals, spiritual beliefs and roles have been neglected, left out, trivialised or distorted in favour of patriarchal agendas and research subjects? For Juha Pentikäinen in Kalevala Mythology, Aino is reborn as Marjatta, the mother of the male child who betokens the arrival of Christianity at the end of the epic. Marjatta, the Finnish equivalent of Virgin Mary is the prototype of monoculture for this monotheistic figure has been superimposed on the multitude of female mythic beings, haltias, goddesses and spirits in Finnish pre-Christian mythology. The polytheistic diversity of female beings, like Aino, have been submerged in the dominant mythic discourse but they need not be lost forever. Like the Sampo, they are scattered in bits and pieces in various sources: Agricola's list of Finnish (Häme or Hämäläiset) divinities, the collection of Finnish Folk Poetry Collections, treatises on Finnish mythology (Abercromby 1898, Harva 1914, 1964, Haavio 1967, Honko 1985,
Huurre 1995, Kemppainen 1960, Krohn 1928, Pieta et al. 1999, Stalo 1995), various folklore archives, children's books. Time is right for reappropriating these figures who have been incorporated and rendered invisible over the centuries.

One of the aims of postcolonial consciousness-raising is to introduce the wholly other scene; other ways of ordering reality and society, other lenses of perception. Monoculture has led to the creation of a monotonous, unified, static Mono-Mary, Euro-Mary. The unified imagery of “Christ's little handmaiden” (a typical reference to the goddesses incorporated into the Finnic Virgin Mary figure) needs to be exploded so that her incorporated multitude can re-emerge, so we can discover the wealth of female haltias and goddesses that have been sacrificed out of a fear of female-specific polytheism, the animistic richness of ancient Finnic life.

The world-wide push towards globalisation is unfortunately a push for increased monoculture. Now it is not based as much on nationalism as on the globalisation and homogenisation of all local tastes, traditions, myths; we are dealing with an increasingly global control of local diversity both in terms of nature and culture (themselves already cultural constructs) and in terms of biological and ethnic diversity. The controllers are, it is well-known, multinational corporations who fund and promote local cultures only to the extent that they reflect their Mcvalues; disguised by exotic spicing and the appearance of multicultural diversity. Nationalistic mono-acculturation, then, has given way in a postcolonial fashion to McColonialism, my term for the undercurrent that is not as much “post” anything as it is merely a rebirth of hegemonic power and control-only on a more dangerous and far-reaching level.

What, then does a woman want, what do marginalised groups want? The assumption often made by proponents of monoculturalism is that the other wants the same as they, if only they had power. Thus the stereotypes of the aggressive feminists who want more rights than men, or of people of colour wanting special rights. What multiculturalism at its best has taught me is that diversity is precisely not about reverse discrimination – itself a very problematic term – nor about redistribution of discomfort, but it is as important and useful as biodiversity in nature. Ecofeminists have among others exposed the limits of monocultural science and Indigenous peoples are increasingly being consulted because of the knowledge they have, not just because of abstract human/woman rights interests. Some are beginning to realise that the West's dysfunctional planetary politics are a threat to all life and species, including that of dominant white males. More and more people are also beginning to understand the importance of the kinds of sustainable modes of living that Native peoples have traditionally been the best at promoting and practising. The reply to my rhetorical question then, is: let the woman and the minorities answer for themselves what they want. That is the true meaning of equality, and the only true conditions for it consists in having educational systems among other institutional forces of power facilitate this process through inclusivity and a radical openness to self-scrutiny.

As white women have been exposed and made to face their own monocultural biases, the awareness has been reached in many circles that the enemies are both within and in the society. On the other hand, it is important to consider that privilege does not guarantee abuse; members of any group, regardless of their privileges or disadvantaged location can be either part of the problem or part of the solution. Multiculturalism and equality stand a
chance only when people are willing to take action in favour of human/woman rights and begin to advocate policies based on difference and respect for diversity, whether they are white dead males or oppressed black women with disabilities.

I wish to end with a few glimpses of the possibilities that such a task opens up. I will conclude by listing, alphabetically, some of the female goddesses, haltias, spirit beings that I have found submerged with the broken pieces of the women’s Sampo. The list includes Sami goddesses as well, not in an effort to incorporate them into a Finnish mythology where, ethnically, they do not belong, but in order to render visible what the Finnish educational system has neglected, ignored, left unfocussed. This is the emerging voice of the other as she is coming out of hiding, in an effort to BE-for-ForSelf. I hope to hear from you:

Aallotar
Ainikki
Aino
Ajatar
Akka
Annikki
Annukka
Auterinen
Auteretar
Berit
Barbmo-Akka
Biewe
Bieve-neida
Eine
Elina
Etelätär
Helka
Hermikki
Hikutukka
Hiisi
Hongas
Hongatar
Höykenys
Huldra
Ilma
Ilmatar
Ilpotar
Jabmeakka
Juksakka
Jumi
Juonetar
Kalevatar
Kakahatar
Karehetar
Kasaritar
Katajatar
Katrinatar
Kapo
Kaunotar
Kave
Kiputytö
Kirsti
Kivutar
Kuitua
Kunnatar
Kuullatar
Kulotar
Kuuritar
Kuurikki
Kuutar
Laugo-Edne
Louhi
Loddiu-edne
Loviatar
Lumikki
Luojatar
Lyylikki
Madderakka
Maanemo
Maarana
Maatar
Mairikki
Manalatar
Marjatta
Melator
Meletär
Merenneito
Metsänneito
Metsola
Mielikki
Mimerkki
Mikitiär
Numu
Näkki
Näkinneito
Näkinpiika
Osmotar
Otavatar
Panutar
Pihlajatar
Piltti
Porotytö
Päivätär
Pohjanakka
Posionakka
Radienakka
Radiankiedde
Rana Neide
Rauni
Raunikko
Saiva neida
Sarakka
Sinisirkku
Simanter
Sinetär
Sinvättär
Suonetar
Smutar
Suveter
Synnytär
Syöjätär
Taaria
Tapiotar
Tellervo
Terhetär
Tuometar
Tuonetar
Tuonentyttö
Tuorikki
Tuuletar
Tuulikki
Tuurikki
Tähetär
Udutar
Uksakka
Uldda
Ututyttö
Uutar
Vammatar
Varvutar
Veden emä
Veden emääntä
Vellamo
Viranakka
Vitsäri
Vuotar
Yabneakka
Äkätär

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2 Discourses of Otherness in a Religious Microcultural Community

Tanja Lamminmäki-Kärkkäinen

Abstract

The subject matter of this article is the construction of otherness within a minority group, and barriers built between a Finnish microcultural community and the macroculture of the society. The matter is examined particularly in the educational context and in relation to vicious circles constructed in the language-game of the Old-Laestadian revivalist movement of the Finnish Lutheran Church. In the discourse-analytical-oriented study the data were collected from the children's magazine of the community, Siionin keväät. There were two kinds of blockers of open communication found: firstly, mixing up the concepts of "faith" and "the way of life"; and secondly, the Inferiority discourses when speaking about one's own microculture in relation to otherness, the surrounding macroculture. In this article, these barrier-builders are regarded as challenges for educators: teachers and parents and the need for improved and more open communication between the micro- and macrocultural groups is seen as the goal.

Introduction

In this article I will discuss how the image of otherness is constructed in a minority culture and barriers are built between a religious microculture and Finnish macroculture in educational contexts. The interaction-barriers are seen from a discourse-analytical perspective as self-regulated social and language constructions. After becoming conscious of these constructions as a part of language games, communicating participants might be able to change them. I am grounding my reflections on my discourse analytical research of the image of otherness produced in Siionin keväät, the children's magazine of the Old-Laestadian movement (Lamminmäki-Kärkkäinen 1999). I will concentrate in this
article on the language-game of the microculture that is only one component in the interaction between the cultures.

Otherness is somehow familiar: we have preconceptions or vague ideas about it. Otherness can be placed somewhere outside ourselves; but it is unlike the totally alien about which we do not know what it is. When a child is socialised with his/her own family and the culture of the family, this familiar context becomes his/her primary world (Mead 1962, 140, 158). When she/he gets into contact with or realises the existence of something different from her/his own culture, she/he has met otherness. Often the otherness is evaluated. Something that is one's own feels better than the otherness outside of it. (See Berger & Luckmann 1967, 135, 140, 108.) Sometimes one may begin to wonder about one's own culture, too, and this experience causes otherness in one's own context, too.

Not only do we have a tendency to evaluate the otherness we meet; we may connect our own beliefs and images with it, making it the opposite of our own ideal self. The bad and unpleasant is projected to the other. We use otherness to get aware of our distinctive nature and ourselves. Especially the social, collective identity is grounded on what we are not – it is based on the stereotypical difference between the others and us. For religions it is typical to call themselves universal. Stereotyping the outsiders that follows from universalism makes interaction with them difficult.

Karmela Liebkind has classified different social communities into self-confident or uncertain minorities, and respective majorities according to their attitudes towards otherness. For a self-confident majority of the community there is no problem having different minorities inside it. The majority looks at the diversity of cultures as a positive phenomenon that enriches its own culture, too. In contrast to that, an uncertain majority takes all deviating from the mainstream, its own habits, as a threat. It attempts to make the existence of different minorities as difficult as possible. A self-confident minority considers its own culture as the best in the world, but has nothing against the existence of different cultures, either. It has no need to compare itself with the majority; the diversity is regarded as an enrichment of life. An uncertain minority compares itself with the majority and looks at its features as ideals for itself, too. (Liebkind 1988, 102—103.)

Even the pure language game (seen itself as an object) between the groups can make communication impossible or build walls of distrust and uncertainty between the persons in the situation. By these walls I mean the phenomenon in which the persons speak "past each other" getting all the time more certain about the prejudices that they have had before, or that are being constructed as a result of misunderstandings connected with the expressions in the language used by the other. The friction between people's different reference communities may be fatal, especially from the viewpoint of the mental and social growth of the children.

My goal is to search for practical means to help the development of positive intercultural communication between the Laestadians and non-Laestadians in the school life. I began with the presumption that co-operation and respect towards each other between diverse cultural groups have to be possible, and all the participants in the school life are obliged to take the starting points of the other into account.

Emancipation from the power of the language-games and other restricting social habits is needed before it is possible to examine critically and change the practical sets of behaviour. I search for the emancipation through teachers’ empowerment. That means
getting professional in one's own life and knowledgeable about the other group's specialities. For a teacher outside the Laestadianism it is of great importance to increase his/her professional skills and professional self-esteem in order to meet pupils and their parents without barriers.

**The Laestadian Revivalist Movement as a Finnish Microculture**

In Finland nearly all the people are Lutheran Christians, 85% of the people belonging to the Finnish Lutheran Church. From the 16th century until 1889 the Lutheran Church was closely tied up with the State, and all the people were automatically members of the Church. After that it has been possible to belong to some other religious denominations, too. Not until year 1923 has it been possible not to belong to any religious denomination at all.

Although statistically a religiously extremely homogenous people, the Finns have – because of their history – considered the religious sphere as one's private life and not a public affair. Ties between the members of the Finnish Lutheran Church are very loose, when compared with the usual feature of a Christian community. The Finnish church-bound society has been a very fertile ground for revivalist movements, which emphasise personal relation to faith, and the uniting power of faith between single members of small groups, instead of a membership in some institutions. The Laestadian movement is one of these revivalist movements emerging in the 18th and 19th century, having its roots in German Herrnhuntians. The Laestadian movement has been named after Lars Levi Laestadius, a very charismatic priest with whom the movement came to the Finnish side of the state of Sweden-Finland in the middle of the 19th century. The Laestadian movement is the largest revivalist movement of the Finnish Lutheran Church nowadays. (Lohi 1998.)

The culture of the Laestadian revivalist movement is characterised by some emphases of its own that deviate from the way of life of mainstream society. The best-known differences are the rejection of birth control, television and some forms of cultural presentations. One distinctive feature is also the tendency to form clearly defined social groups. The exclusive and self-sufficient view of the congregation has hurt the feelings of the clergy as well as "the ordinary" members of the church. The Laestadian movement is usually seen as a patriarchal centrally led society. In spite of its "out of date nature" the movement is a revivalist movement of the youth, too. Although it is called "the revivalist movement of the North" in Finland, it has nowadays spread all over the country and also abroad.

In many schools in Northern Finland, the Laestadian movement is one of the main dividers of the social groups. Differences between the cultures of the homes and the learning community raise problems, which sometimes seem to be unsolvable. It is possible that children coming from different religious backgrounds do not play or work with each other. (See Lotvonen 1999, 66—67.) They may refuse to attend lessons because of the contents or methods. In these open conflicts, the prejudices and difficulties to understand each other’s thinking and worldview have become visible.
Even a bigger problem than these visible conflicts can be the stress and fear in the minds of individual children. This can be the result if the world around a child seems to present contradictory demands and expectations and one's skills of self-expression or self-esteem are not strong enough for a conversation in which the things would be sorted out. The worst consequence is that children have to divide their identity into several worldviews to get on with their own everyday lives (See Rauste-von Wright 1979, 21—22, Borgström 1998, 166—167). The school may become even a splitting agent for one's personality, which should not happen because the school is meant to support the harmonious growth of a child's personality.

The Three-dimensional Image of Otherness in the Language Games of a Laestadian Children's Magazine

The discourse analytical viewpoint to the language-game was applied in my research. I studied the Laestadian way of speaking about the persons and the whole world outside their own community; I characterised this with one word: otherness. My research data consisted of the children's magazine of the movement, *Siionin kevät*¹, from the years 1996 to 1998. I constructed a theoretical model of the image of the otherness presented in the magazine through an analysing method grounded on discourse analysis.

The image of otherness is not coherent in the magazine but is produced in the texts with three different dimensions. Two of those dimensions present otherness as the world outside one's own society by describing how different the ways of life are. The third dimension presents otherness grounding the argumentation on the identity of oneself and the outsiders, basing the difference on the concept of faith. These three dimensions are characterised by 21 different discourses of otherness. Each of the discourses is coherent within itself; each part of it implies the core of the discourse. I have tried to include this core in the name of each discourse.

There are great contradictions between several of the discourses. This is no new or untypical phenomenon in human language-games. Logical and coherent speech is not natural in human and free way of speaking. In my material, for example, an overall coherence would have indicated the existence of an extreme censorship somewhere in the background.

One single discourse may also present two different dimensions of otherness, depending on the other factors. By these contextual factors I mean for instance the textual surroundings of the extract in the speech which orientates the reader. Even the reader's own orientation, frame of reference, can direct the reading process. Dimensions could even be called “the ways of reading a discourse”.

The view of otherness is three-dimensional. First of all, the material contained discourses where the difference was presented as a neutral even a positive thing. These discourses constructed a dimension called The Dimension of presenting the cultures neutrally. In the cases where the culture outside one's own was evaluated, it was done in a positive manner. The main principle in this dimension is that the cultures are purely

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¹ Literally translated: The Spring of Zion.
cultures. This does not mean the same as cultural relativism, even if some features of it are present in some of the discourses. Instead, it presents a universalistic good will, in which the perspective of one's own culture is the self-evident basis for all observation. It is essential in this dimension that there are no confrontations in relation to the world outside one's own culture.

The second dimension was called The Dimension of confronting cultures. It was constructed from discourses producing opposition between the cultures, discourses that can be thought of preserving (even aggressively) one's own culture. The otherness presented by this contradiction is black-and-white, stereotypical, and often includes reversals of the ideal features of the culture of one's own.

The third dimension was named The Dimension of defining identities by faith. It forms the image of otherness with the borders, which cannot be observed by the human senses and where the difference lies in what your relation with God is. When forming a picture of the essence of the faith, the discourses begin by defining the concept itself. At the same time the identity of one's own and that of otherness is defined on the basis of the concept of faith. While otherness is presented in the two previous cultural dimensions by describing otherness itself, it is presented in the third dimension through definitions of the essence of faith.

Barriers to intercultural communication were found in The Dimension of confronting cultures. There were two kinds of barriers and the both blockers of open communication occur in the texts identified as The Dimension of confronting cultures in Siionin kevät. The two barrier-builders are 1) the confusion between the concepts "faith" and "the way of life", and 2) the inferiority discourse. The inferiority discourse usually implies that one's own religious group might be considered lower in status, and it was interpreted to constitute the dimension only where cultures are confronting as is seen in the following table. The confusion between the concepts "faith" and "the way of life" usually occurs when the definitions "believer" and "non-believer" are used in the same dimension. This mixing up of the concepts occurs in extracts from several discourses whilst the Inferiority discourse is a coherent entity itself.

The reconstruction of the 21 discourses from the texts of Siionin kevät (see Table 1) was used as a methodological tool when the image of otherness of the magazine was construed in my study (Lamminmäki-Kärkkäinen 1999).

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2. The essence of faith is to be taken as a linguistic construction when we are using the discourse-analytical, constructivist view of social reality.
Table 1. The three dimensions of the image of otherness produced by 21 discourses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The dimension of presenting cultures neutrally</th>
<th>The dimension of confronting cultures</th>
<th>The dimension of defining the identities by faith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universal neighbourliness</td>
<td>Familiar/ strange</td>
<td>The world does not know us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universality of humanity</td>
<td>Misery of the non-believers</td>
<td>Mutual love of the believers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-believers are respecting our conviction</td>
<td>Inferiority</td>
<td>Meaning of the boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two shells as a shelter</td>
<td>Stereotypical non-believer</td>
<td>Repent!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural difference</td>
<td>We are better</td>
<td>Joy of the faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar/ strange</td>
<td>Appreciation of the faith</td>
<td>As salt and light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bad influence of the non-believers</td>
<td>Childhood faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child's faith</td>
<td>Faith is a present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The world does not know us</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual love of the believers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meaning of the boundary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repent!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three dimensions have different functions. The view of otherness in Siionin keväť has got features of not only a self-confident minority, but also of an insecure minority and an insecure majority. The Dimension of presenting cultures neutrally is the one giving an impression of an others-accepting, self-confident minority that feels secure and welcomes cultural differences. The Dimension of confronting cultures is a product of an insecure group feeling its existence endangered. An interesting observation is that it has more features of an insecure majority because it does not have the characteristic of admiring otherness, as has the model of insecure minority. In the Inferiority discourse, aspects of this are present as a possibility, not as a reality. So it seems that in the midst of their own group, the Laestadians may consider themselves as a majority.

The characteristics usually typical of a majority may get an explanation from the fact that the members of the Laestadian microculture do not form a psychological minority in the midst of the Finnish macroculture. The members of a psychological minority are supposed to share some common characteristics valued lower than those of the majority. According to this explanation the Laestadians feel that the existence and culture of their own group are justified. In that sense they would be a psychological majority even when being a quantitative minority at the same time. The characteristics presenting insecurity would be connected with what the outsiders are supposed to think about the group. Insecurity would be experienced only in relation to the world outside one’s own. On the other hand, The Dimension of confronting cultures emphasises the differences while a clear insecure majority avoids all comparisons with different cultures. An alternative interpretation would be that The Dimension of confronting cultures would be admiration.

3. Notice that some of the discourses are constructing two kinds of dimensions.
turned into the defence of an insecure minority. Otherness or its characteristics are seen as ideals, but because they are known to be unreachable, protection is begun by an attack. The dimension also includes characteristics of a self-confident minority in that it returns to the justified existence and rights of one's own culture in all the discourses. However, the occasionally even aggressive protection of the group tells that full self-esteem has not been reached.

The Dimension of defining the identities by faith differs radically from the two dimensions presented earlier. In it otherness is seen as an unavoidable consequence of the essence of faith. Its existence is not visible at the first glance, but in some situations it is perceptible to the human senses. The dimension gives a clear impression of a self-confident minority. This also explains one interpretation of The Dimension of confronting cultures presented before. The faith may be the core of the Laestadian identity: in relation to that the group is self-confident. Insecurity in relation to the cultural aspects can be explained as a secondary matter in the collective self-esteem of the group.

The concept of faith fulfils the criteria of abstractivity required from a symbol of collective identity described by Kaunismaa (1998). Even when defined in the discourses it stays invisible. Therefore the constructed image can overcome the differences in the thinking patterns of the members of the different microcultures within the Laestadians. One of the uniting forces about the faith is its invisibility.

As you can read from the table presented before, there are many common discourses in The Dimension of defining the identities by faith and The Dimension of confronting cultures. This may be surprising because the functions of the dimensions are very dissimilar. This contradiction can be solved by the supposition that the dimensions are operating on different levels of abstraction. The self-confidence in The Dimension of defining the identities by faith is grounded on the certainty about one's collective identity and its core, the faith. Otherness is presented only as an unavoidable by-product of difference in identity. This certainty about the core of the collective identity is in the background even when the discourses are parts of The Dimension of confronting cultures. The insecurity found in this dimension is uncertainty only in relation to otherness, which is presented on a more concrete level than in the other dimension.

The human tendency to simplify reality, which is particularly typical for popular culture, could explain The Dimension of confronting cultures. For this tendency it is typical to see things as opposites: good or bad and black or white. Relation with otherness can be only harmful. This simplifying tendency could also make understandable the strong reaction of the outsiders who become defined as otherness. (See Bennett 1993, Kylmänen 1994.) Ethnocentrism is natural not only in a person’s own orientation but also when making sense out of somebody else's orientation.

Otherness – Classified or evaluated?

The division of people into "us" and "others" is quite clear in Siitonin keväit. The fact that everybody has been classified or could be classified can be grounded only on the differences in the social or cultural features. The faith is not an entity possible to be observed by senses. To argue the opposite would mean, "taking God's point of view". It is
true that one can notice changes in persons’ actions as a consequence of the faith, but details of one's actions cannot be interpreted as a result or lack of the faith.

Even difference that is classified as otherness is not always evaluated in Siionin kevät. The Dimension of presenting cultures neutrally produces otherness, which is clearly located outside one's own and known world, but it is otherness that could be treated with friendly hospitality when encountered.

Experiencing otherness in oneself and in one's own culture is introduced by The world does not know us -discourse. It means that one's own community is presented as "the unknown and strange" in this world, as the Laestadians have traditionally been described by their rival. Observing otherness and wondering about it outside one's own world is described in cultural difference and Familiar/strange discourses in the stories of Siionin kevät.

An interesting aspect in the Cultural difference discourse is the respect for one's own community without denigrating outsiders. For example, life has been characterised as simpler among friends belonging to one's own culture, because there is no need to give reasons for exceptional practices. The same phenomenon becomes visible in Non-believers are respecting our conviction discourse, the traditional life style of one's own community is supposed to get respect from outsiders.

In numbers, however, the most discourses have built the image of otherness with The Dimension of confronting cultures, which clearly opposes and evaluates otherness. This dimension is presenting the ethnocentrically determined otherness, which the whole "Western" culture is accused of. In this dimension, the negative projection that makes otherness the opposite of the ideal of the collective self is particularly visible in the discourses Bad influence of non-believers and Misery of non-believers. (See Hall 1992.)

In Stereotypical non-believer discourse, it seems that the mere knowledge of the religious membership of a person is telling everything about his/her personality. This tendency is visible also in the study about the social identities of Laestadians made by Tervo (Tervo 1997, 82—83). This discourse does not really encourage personal friendships with representatives of otherness. Even if something in common could be found, it would not be possible to break down the wall of the bias created by this discourse.

I have interpreted the We are better discourse as a continuation of the Stereotypical non-believer discourse. The appearing latent comparison with the outsiders can be explained by the concepts of micro- and macrocultures. When describing what "believers" are like, the microculture of one's own community is interpreted as a separate group. The characteristics are automatically related to the outsiders of one's own microculture, to the other members of the Finnish macroculture. This generalisation is unfair, however, because people outside of the Laestadian movement do not usually have very strong joint group identification.

Similarities among the outsiders are created through stereotyping, which is used as a means of indicating borders between the groups. Negative stereotypes maintain the problematic relations between the groups in spite of increased contacts or cultural approaches.

Repent! and Childhood faith discourses included the same stories, where principal characters are girls outside the Lestadian community. The extracts can be interpreted to belong to different discourses depending on the points of view. When a discourse
changes, the described otherness changes, too. The *Childhood faith* discourse describes cultural otherness, while the *Repent!* discourse includes an assumed difference in the relation to God. Variations in the contents of the theme about infants' faith could be explained by the agelimits set for the universal faith of the infant. There has been discussion about when the period of child’s faith ends, and these limits have been estimated since Luther's times. Presenting estimations like that may make the concept of childhood faith clearer, but it may also indicate a tendency to "take" the viewpoint of God.

### Confusing the Concepts of "the Way of Life" and "Faith"

Both of the concepts, "faith" and "the way of life", are used to define otherness. But those concepts cause confusion when they are used to refer to the same things. This happens often when the words "believer" and "non-believer" are used. Not only are the concepts mixed up, but also the power to define one's identity and faith is used, although often unintentionally. The mixing up of the concepts may explain the inconsistency of the two discourses about childhood faith. These discourses are *A child's faith* and *Childhood faith* discourses. The former produces *The Dimension of confronting cultures* and the latter *The Dimension of defining identities by faith*.

I interpret this contradiction to refer to two different ways of producing otherness in the Laestadian community. Firstly, it is pointing to the difference in the culture or the way of life, and secondly to the difference in the relation to God or the faith. Keeping these two concepts apart is difficult, because differences in culture are visible, but relation to God is unreachable for the human senses.

Even if the concepts of faith and the way of life are difficult to define, and confusion is understandable, the practical consequences of the ambiguous use may be disastrous. When one uses the words "believer" and "non-believer", one comes to use religious power, if both or one of the participants is/are taking the words as religious concepts, even though the word in the context is used about the way of life.

A person who presents her/himself as capable of defining another’s religious status when using the words "believer" and "non-believer" uses religious power. This mistake may be fatal for communication because the other partner in the conversation often realises the usage of power even if the speaker her/himself does not. The realisation stops motivation, good will and openness in the discussion, because the participants are no more equal: one of them has defined the other.

In the school, a teacher informed about the different references of the words and possible confusion can avoid misunderstandings in the situation by looking behind the words. A Laestadian parent aware of the contradictions in the language-game could avoid these undefined concepts in her/his own repertoire. In that way also the children would be given a constructive model for dialogue.

Being aware of the contradictory meanings included in the words in use, we can choose the exact terms according to the context. In that way we could also avoid using power when it is not needed or controlled. The better the Laestadian language-game and its effects are known both inside and outside the community, the easier it is to make a
conversation between a non-Laestadian teacher and a Laestadian parent in the subject matter and avoid unnecessary tensions.

**Inferiority Discourse as a Creator of Vicious Circles in the Language-game**

*The Inferiority discourse* is a serious challenge for open communication. The desperate, sometimes even painful-sounding doubts about the others’ acceptance included in the discourse may lead to fearful silence both from the part of a pupil and her/his parents. Although the inferiority discourse is not statistically most frequent, the whole *Dimension of confronting cultures* can be explained by this single discourse.

When a person coming from a Laestadian community has a continuous worry about not being accepted in the school or at work, he/she might try to become visible through attempts to raise his/her self-awareness at the expense of others. Interpreted like this, the whole *Dimension of confronting cultures* could be seen as a coping strategy of the uncertain Laestadian community.

On the other hand the *Inferiority* discourse can be seen as aggressive defence of one’s own culture. Perhaps the others have not accepted a Laestadian demonstrating superiority in her/his own way of life and are reciprocally pointing out her/his differences by excluding and blaming her/him. So the Laestadian has become afraid of being deserted and is feeling inferior in relation to otherness. All this may also tell about the uncertainty of the Finnish macroculture, which is also seen in relation with other Finnish minorities.

Taking into account all the interpretations we end up in a vicious circle. Whichever the reason, the circle holds both the Laestadians and the non-Laestadians prisoners. The macroculture outside the Laestadian movement can take part in the *Inferiority* discourse in many ways. For example, a teacher of the English language may let a Laestadian pupil legitimate her/his low skills in English by the Laestadian culture, which forbids the use of television at homes. Being “the ones not used to hearing the language” may be an excuse for not getting experience about the language by some other means. So the incapability to learn English may become a part of the *Inferiority* discourse of being Laestadian.

For the personal self-esteem of a child, the uncertainty indicated by *Inferiority* – discourse might be dangerous. *The inferiority* discourse prevents the construction of empowered identity and the feeling of control of life. In the school circumstances, the vicious circle may influence all the participants by blocking the real freedom of expressing one’s opinions. According to Siitonen, the Human Rights are endangered in that situation, too. As a solution he suggests teacher education where students are empowered. A teacher with professional self-esteem and inner feeling of empowerment is able to help also the pupils towards an empowered life. (Siitonen 1999, 190—191.)
Some Means for Empowerment

According to my understanding, a child of the Laestadian home can be at risk of creating a divided system of concepts because of the special Laestadian language-game. Partly this danger is very real; partly the contradictory discourse can be overemphasised. The confusion between the concepts “faith” and “the way of living” can cause conflicts and contradictions for example.

With some extra work and thorough discussions between teachers and parents, there are possibilities to find "a common language", common aims, and if wanted – common means of reaching the educational objectives. This kind of co-operation between the home and the school demands some will and skills for open discussion. Both participants have to be able to overcome possible prejudices so that they are capable of finding common values.

Two shells sheltering discourse describes the loyalty towards both state officials and one’s own Lutheran congregation. It shows that according to Laestadian culture every teacher has to be respected. This discourse gives a right to a non-Laestadian teacher to serve as a grown-up educator of Laestadian children. A pupil or a teacher that has democratic discussion as a goal does not naturally use the demand for respect as a reason for unfair behaviour or does not demand understanding for unjustified authority.

For a teacher, the awareness of the mixing up of the concepts of "faith" and the "way of life" in the Laestadian language-game is a challenging chance to overcome the problems in intercultural communication. There are doors opening both to the inner life of a child coming from a Laestadian home and the cross-cultural conversations in the classroom. Because the mentioned concepts are not kept apart in Laestadian speech, they may not be clear to the children of the Laestadian movement, either. The teacher may help the child to be more precise and help her/him get more confident with the identity of his/her own. By being careful with the words used in conversations about Laestadian microculture and the respective macroculture, the teacher can help all the pupils to be careful with their discourses and analyse the language used around them.

Sharing the personal experiences of pupils may be an empowering principle for the educational practices in order to learn intercultural understanding and communication. For that, an atmosphere of respect and trust is required in the classroom community. When that kind of pedagogy is practised, it would be the responsibility of the teacher to take care of preventing confusion like the one with the concepts of faith and culture in the conversation.

The main goal may be to learn to appreciate the different cultures of the homes and to make these differences visible in the school, too. Despite of being visible the differences must not be excuses for teasing, discriminating or favouring anyone or feelings of superiority or inferiority based on these matters. Children and teachers have to get used to working in different groups and to respect the differences in various cultural backgrounds.

Each child should have a subjective right to a curriculum that serves her/his chances to a holistic worldview. A situation where a child or a young person has to build up two systems of conceptions, one for the school and another for the world outside, is undesirable. The construction of a double system of views is likely when the cognitive

4. The Laestadians are members of the Lutheran Church in Finland.
constructions used in the school are totally different from those used by the pupils before and the integration of these two systems is not supported. (See Rauste-von Wright 1979, 21—22.)

Reflections

It is difficult to say which came first: The pressure from the outside towards the Laestadians, or the unavoidable role of the outside world to save as the otherness in relation to the Laestadians. Those two poles are generating tension which creates a continuous vicious circle. Only breaking this circle somehow will make us capable of cooperating and making common plans for the future.

The Laestadian discourse and tradition demand respect towards the teacher, which means consideration to teachers' occupational and working conditions. If there are parts in the teaching that a pupil/student does not participate because of his/her conviction, the issue should be presented to the teacher in a constructive way. Based on the Two shells as a shelter discourse wishes by parents should also be made in negotiative tone. In this discourse I see excellent foundations for teachers’ and parents’ discussions about the curriculum in an atmosphere of reciprocal respect.

When a teacher has some kind of an idea about the discourses of a child from a Laestadian home, it is easier to bear the responsibility of the adult and of the educator without losing the feeling of inner empowerment. On the other hand, these kinds of reflections may encourage teachers to support the Laestadian families towards more open communication and sometimes to be more self-confident in relation to the world outside the community. If otherness is not considered threatening in the school, the fear diminishes also among the Laestadian group. The vicious circle can be broken.

Teachers should be encouraged to take responsibility for their job – and the parents for theirs. In communication, they should be supported to respect each other and also show appreciation for each other. For the teachers, it is a question of professional ethics and reaching the goal concerning co-operation between the school and the home. For the parents, it is a matter of taking charge of supporting the mental development of their own children. For the children, it is a question of the possibility to whole and balanced identity and the right to empowered life in this world.

References


3 Towards Recognition and Respect – Active Steps in Developing Romani Children’s Equal Opportunities in the Finnish Educational System

Henna Murtomäki

Abstract

The article discusses the present situation of the Romani-people in Finland, the position of Romani-children at school and the possibilities of teacher education to change the situation. Correct and unbiased knowledge about other cultures is considered important in the dialogue. Bicultural people are valuable in these dialogues because they can work as mediators between the cultures. Presenting the Romani perspective at school and in teacher education breaks monoculturalism and forces to consider the mainstream culture as only one of the alternatives to be studied.

Introduction

In numbers the Romani minority is the biggest of all the Finnish ethnic minority groups but the implementation of their full and effective equality in the economic, social, political and cultural areas is still halfway. This is the case although efforts for equal opportunities have been made by legislation through the reform of constitution and international conventions (Suonoja 1999). Due to their low educational levels, regional dispersion, discrimination and prejudice the Romani people have been excluded almost entirely from both municipal and state decision-making. Therefore the Romani people’s opportunities to influence their own circumstances have been very limited. Although the state has made an effort to secure the Romani population equal opportunities to participate in social life and to promote the realisation of civil rights the chances of this succeeding are still scarce.
However, the equality between citizens and parts of the population must stay as one of the main objectives of the Finnish society. In the future this requires that the state and the people must pay increasing attention to the protection of national minorities. The state, through its social, cultural and educational policy, is in a continuous contact with the members of the Romani minority, but the policy becomes visible in the ways the schools and teachers function at the grass-root level. The combination of the different state governed policies towards the Romani minority can be called Romanipolitics. The way one sees and analyses the Romanipolitics is greatly influenced by the fact whether or not s/he is a member of the Romani group her/himself and how thorough her/his knowledge of Romani culture is. For many outsiders, the situation of Finland’s Romani people might look quite “equal” according to the Code of Law but a closer look reveals that this is not the case in practice. Unfortunately, both the European and the Finnish Romanipolitics have for decades been limited to the necessary but passive action of law-making – outlawing discrimination and racism – instead of reaching further and introducing active, intensified measures directed straight at the causes of these phenomena – measures that inevitably place the school system and the individual schools on the focus of the changes.

The Position of Romani Children at School

Several small studies performed in the 1990’s have revealed alarming facts about the educational level of Finland’s Romani minority. The 1990 account in the provinces of Turku and Pori in the south-west of Finland provided information that only one fourth of all the Romani children in the region attained the comprehensive school leaving certificate and many of those who did, studied in special schools and classes (Lillberg & Eronen 1990). It is obvious that the Finnish school system does not favour Romani children because so many of them drop out or do badly at school all around Finland. Obviously, in most schools the situation has changed only little or not at all since 1990. This is no surprise since there has been no notable investment in the Romani education, despite of the striking findings. The current situation in the whole of Finland is uncertain due to the lack of surveys, which reveal a vital need for basic research in this field.

The schools have given up their responsibilities in developing the educational environments of the Romani children by explaining their failure at school to be caused solely by the resentment of the Romani culture towards education. Still, the actual hostility towards schooling is very rare nowadays since the Romanis start to realise the value of education in protecting the vitality of the Romani culture.

As for the Romani parents, they often criticise the schools because their children do not receive enough opportunities to cultivate and celebrate their own culture at school. Moreover, they are taught only a little or nothing about the history of their tribe in Finland. Unfortunately, many teachers suffer from personal prejudice and lack of knowledge on the Romani culture and the educational needs of the Romani children. Teachers do not possess the knowledge needed for adjusting their teaching and supporting the children, and creating a learning environment suitable for the actual needs of the children. In addition to the teachers’ lack of knowledge, there are many other factors that can hinder the learning process of the children. Often the problems do not originate from
the school or the culture of the Romani family but from other social and economical circumstances, which the school has no influence upon. In spite of this the schools should not avoid their responsibilities for the education of the Romanis.

The most effective way to influence teacher’s attitudes and information of the Romani culture is to include the theme in the educational studies of teacher training programmes. Teacher training should emphasise the fact that the realisation of the government educational policies lies in the hands of individual teachers who therefore have responsibility and influence on the improvement of the educational standards of the Romani children. The challenge of developing a better, supportive learning environment for the Romani children provides a real chance for teachers to work as agents of social change. Moreover, it is an obligation that schools can no longer escape. Good and supportive learning environments are rights that belong to all Romani children, all children in fact.

The theory of multicultural education has no practical value nor can the change in pedagogical practice take place without proper knowledge of different minorities. According to practical experience most primary school teachers do not consider Romani children bilingual for the simple reason that the teachers often lack knowledge of the existence of the Romani languages or have improper understanding of the vital role of language in minority cultures. The Romani children’s right to study their own minority language is not reality for most of the Finnish Romani children, but has become a luxury that only a few can enjoy. The teaching of the Finnish Romani language is still in infancy, although the Romani language has been part of the school life for as long as Romani children have received some kind of schooling, i.e. the foundation of the whole school system. In 1998 only 220 out of the 1500—1700 compulsory-school-aged Romani children attended Romani language lessons in Finland (Suomen 1999). One of the biggest hindrances of teaching the Romani language is the insufficient amount of professional language teachers. University-level Romani language studies is not available in Finland at present, and teachers have to rely on short and irregular training courses. Another big problem is the lack of Romani language teaching material.

There are many different reasons for the lack of information, from which both the school and the Romani minority suffers. The Romani minority has earlier withdrawn from most social connections with the majority population in order to protect its culture from the negative influences of the majority culture. They have tried to limit the interaction with the majority to the economical field. Fearing possible intolerance and persecution, the Romanis have also kept some special features of their culture hidden from the majority. Many Romanis still have reservations about informing the members of the majority about the cleanliness system, customs and moral conventions which all is part of the Romani culture. The relationship between the Romani minority and different communal institutions like schools and justice system has been very complex: on the other hand Romanis have always needed the communal services, but at the same time it has been for them difficult to trust the institutions. The attitudes towards the Romanis have varied greatly from the reserved and prejudiced ignorance to the enthusiasm to control and assimilate them – from the open hostility to indifference. Many conflicting patterns of interaction between individual pupils and teachers have been based on these conflicting attitudes.
The Romani Culture and Teacher Education

The very fact that the Romani representation among the teacher trainees and professors within the departments of education at the universities has been almost non-existent has increased the lack of knowledge of the Romani culture within the educational system. Therefore it is very important to secure the Romani representation in teacher education by the quota system like for the Sami. In addition, special courses which would further both the development of the competent and qualified Romani language teachers and the production of the new teaching material should be encouraged. New informative material on the Finnish Romani culture should be produced and distributed among the teaching staff of the schools and universities. The best possible combination of different points of view in the production of this kind of material would undoubtedly be the one that views a variety of educational questions from the Romani minority’s point of view. The practical experience of those teachers who have been working with the Romani children is very valuable. Furthermore, it is worth remembering that there are also people who have grown in multicultural homes and have developed a healthy double identity composed of both the Romani minority and the Finnish majority cultures. These people’s skills in viewing things simultaneously from several perspectives and naturally mediating knowledge and values between members of the different groups should be valued and utilised. By combining perspectives it is possible to create a balanced, vivid and subtle educational environment for the Romani.

Teacher trainees of the University of Oulu have had the possibility to study the Romani culture as one part of their multicultural education studies, and their experiences of including this topic in their studies have been positive. According to the survey performed in the beginning of those courses, the students are primarily interested in learning why and how the majority's stereotypes and prejudices against the Romani develop and what are the differences between the customs and values of the Finnish Romani culture and the majority culture. In addition to those questions, the course included the issues of the process of a diasporic minority identity, history of the Romani people, Romani children's special needs at schools and the forms of social control among the Romani. For many students, the encounter with their own lack of knowledge, stereotypes and prejudice was rewarding but also painful. However, this became also a constructive process of reconciling the old knowledge with new, often surprising knowledge of the Romani people. The correct knowledge can inspire and enable teachers to actively develop children's understanding towards recognition and respect of the Romani culture. The Romani experience provides a paradigm with much to offer to other minorities, and, indeed, all school-related issues (Liégeois 1998), because it compels to consider the environment from a new perspective and more as a whole. Therefore, studies of the Romani culture in relation to the Finnish educational system should be an essential part of the multicultural education in all the universities of Finland.
References

4 Autism as a Challenge for Teacher Education

Anna-Kaisa Sipilä

Abstract

As long as human life has existed, autistic behaviour has probably existed as well. Problems with communication, social understanding, and fixations to routines characterise this disorder. Teaching people with autism has been a challenge for the modern school system and teacher education because the spectrum of this disorder is so wide from mild to severe autism. Also cognitive ability varies from severe retardation to superior intelligence among these people. Research and knowledge in this field has expanded rapidly in recent years. This article consists of historical points of view, current scientific facts and some characteristics about autism defined by researchers and also by people with autism. Theories and teaching strategies related to autism are developing constantly. Listening to people with autism gives a new approach to this educational dilemma and intercultural discussion. The family approach is central to the process of responding to the needs of all students as well as to ethical standpoints concerning the creation of flexible school systems for all.

Introduction

In this article I want to make some comments about autism. I have two main sources; scientists and people with autism themselves. With the help of these I try to give brief information about autism and find answers to two questions.

The first question is does teacher education need new perspectives to encounter pupils special needs related to autism or autistic-like behaviour? In recent years the expansion of knowledge has been huge in the area of autism. Until now the knowledge and pedagogy dealing with autism has predominantly been concerned with special needs pedagogy. The idea and also demand for integration and even inclusion has been raised lately. Now it should be an important area in pedagogical and rehabilitational discussion in teacher education.
The second question concerns whether people with autism give a new perspective to intercultural discussion in teacher education generally, or is it still something that ought to stay in special needs pedagogical part of teacher education.

So what kind of people are people with autism? It can be said that they have problems with social understanding, communication and they have the need to adhere to fixed routines. So, who is autistic? All of us? We all can find some autistic traits in ourselves, but most of us are not aware of them. In most cases the traits never overwhelm the living of our everyday life.

The situation is different for those who have been diagnosed as autistic or as having autistic traits. They have special kinds of challenges in their lives that are stemming from their neurobiological state of existence – challenges that only autism can cause. It is important to remember and perceive that it affects also people around these persons and vice versa. When we think about a child, autism offers a particular challenge to the whole social environment. The school and the teacher are always in a very special place in a child’s life – and even more so when we think about a child with autism. The whole family approach is essential when teaching a child with autism.

The Historical Background

The word autism is derived from the Greek word autos, self, own. Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler first used the term autistic in 1908 to describe the social withdrawal seen in people suffering from schizophrenia (Happe 1994, 107). As a phenomenon autism was known far earlier than it came in to the scientific literature at the beginning of the 19th century (Timonen 1991,1). This disorder itself has probably always existed in every culture and a great deal has been learnt about it since it first received a name (Happe 1994, 7—13).

Both Leo Kanner and Hans Asperger described autism almost simultaneously and independently in the 1940s. Kanner did it first in 1943 working in Baltimore when he introduced the term early childhood autism. Kanner’s description pointed out the isolated play, unusual language traits, ritual behaviour and resistance to change. These all continue to be regarded as central traits of autism, but there are some other current views that differ sharply with Kanner’s observations. The most famous one is Kanner’s perspective that parent behaviour caused the autistic condition. Now there is complete agreement on that it is not a question of bad parenting, but a neurobiological problem.

Asperger worked in Vienna and published his paper about autism in German during the Second World War in 1944. Asperger’s definition of autism or, as he called it, autistic psychopathy is wider than Kanner’s. Asperger included cases that showed severe organic damage and those close to normality. Nowadays the label Asperger syndrome tends to be reserved for highly verbal, near-normal autistic persons. (Frith 1990, 8.) Sometimes they are called high functioning autistic people (HFA).

According to Oliver Sacks, Kanner saw autism as an unmitigated disaster, whereas Asperger felt that it might have certain positive or compensating features: "A particular originality of thought and experience, which may well lead to exceptional achievements
in later life” (Sacks 1995, 234). In my opinion Asperger’s interpretation of autism is highly appreciable and essential.

Autism is not a modern phenomenon, and it has probably always attracted people’s attention. Perhaps it has engendered some mythical figures like the alien or the changeling. Uta Frith distinguishes the so-called feral children who grew up in the wild, outside human contact of any kind, had no language and were so different from ordinary folk that they were classified in the Linnaean system as a different species, Homo ferus. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century there are two well-documented cases: “Victor, the wild boy of Aveyron” and the mysterious case of Kaspar Houser. If they were autistic or not, we can hardly answer, but the fact is that they have attracted people’s minds. Frith’s opinion is that in Victor’s case, autism may have been the cause of abandonment, rather than the other way round.

In ancient Russia the blessed fools were venerated for centuries. According to Frith, Natalia Challis and Horace W. Dewey have made explicit the extraordinary similarities between holy fools and the modern diagnosis of autism. (Frith 1990, 16—50.) Frith also focuses on The Little Flowers of St Francis, a collection of legends written down in the thirteenth century. A whole section in this collection contains the most charming and curious stories of one Brother Juniper. From Frith’s perspective these stories seem not so curious, and indeed make complete sense, if one assumes that they were in fact based on the life of an autistic individual among the early followers of St Francis. (Frith 1990, 40—43.)

Frith has also examples from the twentieth-century literature. She wonders about some detectives of classic mysteries like Sherlock Holmes written by Conan Doyle or Nero Wolf written by Rex Stout. They both have their oddnesses, obsessions and peculiar fixations. In addition to Holmes and Wolf, Frith has found frankly obsessional characteristics also evident in Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot. He insisted on neatness and rectangularity in every aspect. With Donna Williams’s words, nobody has the copyright on autism – neither scientists nor storytellers (Williams 1996). If anybody knows that, it would be Williams because she herself has autism.

From the historical point of view many autistic people have been misdiagnosed as idiots, lunatics or schizophrenics like Edgar Schneider, whose ideas and thoughts be very valuable when writing this article. Quite often these persons were, and still are, placed in institutions, which is neither cheap nor appropriate. Here raises the issue of our values. It is essential to discuss whether we can afford to lose their capacity as potential members of society. In addition to that it is significant to remember, that misdiagnosing causes mistreatment, which is always a personal disaster.

There are many famous persons in history, which in today’s light of knowledge are assumed to have autistic traits. Among these are Einstein, Wittgenstein, Bartok, Bruckner, Satie and van Gogh (Gillberg 1997, Grandin 1995, Sacks 1995). They all lived exceptional lives. In the words of Grandin we can wonder, if genius is an abnormality? Nature takes many forms and in that way it is always more powerful.
Current scientific facts

Autism is a biologically based disorder. There is something different in the brains of individuals with autism that gives them the difficulty and difference they have as well as the talents they have. Probably in many cases autism has a genetic component. There can also be congenital, prenatal and postnatal factors contributing towards autism. Currently autism is viewed as a disorder that exists on a spectrum from mild to severe.

The commonly used current definitions and diagnostic classification systems are DSM-IV\(^1\) and ICD-10\(^2\). These systems are based on three fundamental impairments, which capture the so-called Wing’s triad:

1. Qualitative impairment in reciprocal social interaction.
2. Qualitative impairment in verbal and non-verbal communication and in imaginative activity.
3. Markedly restricted repertoire of activities and interests.

The diagnosis of autism is based on behaviour. According to Norwegian Anne Margrethe Rostad identifying autism for very young children, less than 24 months, is difficult, but absolutely possible (Rostad 1999, 75). First of all early identification and intervention are very important. They give the opportunity for parents and professionals working with the child to receive needed advice and support.

Differences between autism and its’ spectrum disorders such as Asperger syndrome, Rett syndrome and Childhood disintegrative disorder may be very slight (Olley & Gutentag 1999, 7). It seems that autism and its spectrum disorders are more common than previously estimated. The total rate is 0.6—1.0 \% of the general population of school-age children (Gillberg & Peeters 1995, Gillberg 1999, 5).

What causes autism is not known, but it is clear that it is a behavioural expression of a neurobiological disorder (Gillberg & Peeters 1995, 42). Autism starts to be noticed in childhood, but it is not a disorder of childhood. Instead it is a disorder of development. Nobody grows out of autism. The pattern of difficulty changes, but autism doesn’t go away.

There is variation between people with autism, when we focus on their intellectual ability that can be tested. The variation is from severe mental retardation to superior intelligence. A rough estimate is that about 75\% of people with autism are mentally retarded. Autism is usually reported to be at least three times more common among males than females. (Gillberg & Peeters 1995, 38—41.)

Some Characteristics of Autism

You can’t meet any typical person with autism. They come from different countries, have different races and social and cultural circumstances, functional and intellectual levels and personalities. According to Gillberg and Peeters it can be said that all people with

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1. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders made by the American Psychiatric Association.
autism are affected by the same disorder but that does not make them blueprints of each other. (Gillberg & Peeters 1994, 18.)

Some people with autism avoid social contact; others are merely passive or even actively sociable in a peculiar fashion. Lorna Wing and her colleagues identified three distinctive types, labelled as aloof, passive and odd. The same person might show each of these types of behaviour in different situations and it was also possible to characterise a particular person in terms of its predominant behaviour. (Frith 1990, 59.)

"Child in a glass cage" is a typical image people convey, when they meet a child Frith calls the aloof. Very often he does not speak at all. He seems to avoid eye contact – or to put it more exact – it can be difficult to recognise if he uses it. This kind of person likes to be alone and does not respond to social overtures or speech. Sometimes even his parents can wonder whether he recognises them or not. He will not seek to be comforted when distressed, but approaches to people for simple needs, for instance to obtain food or drink. Rough-and-tumble play can be the contact these persons like a lot.

According to Frith the passive child indifferently accepts social approaches made by other. He does what he is told, and his parents and teachers have to watch constantly that he is not led into mischief by his compliance. Social contact with other children is part of the daily routine but not something to look forward to or to be done with pleasure. Changes in routine and new situations are difficult for them, and can lead to temper tantrums.

The odd child likes being with people. He can go up to total strangers and ask, "How old are you?", "What is your name?" Very often he is obviously not able to judge when it is appropriate to approach persons to ask questions and the questions are often irrelevant. Some of these people like to touch people – even those they do not know at all. When they have speech, they can speak about their main interests for hours without thinking if the other person is interested in their subjects or not.

Wing’s three groups distinguished above include some kind of labelling. We can raise a question, if it is a good or bad way of thinking about autism. My perspective is that these descriptions of subgroups are useful for the clinicians and some other professionals, but not very important for all the people living and working with autistic persons because each and every one of them is an individual.

Most of the people with autism have sometimes repetitive or automatic movements. It can be rocking, spinning, finger play or flapping of the hands. Every now and then some of these individuals have difficulties starting a new function, the so-called initiating movements. It can also be difficult to stop doing something, for example concluding a speech.

Some of them have nearly obsessionnal hobbies. Even those who manage well in society may need their moments with some automatic movements or peculiar hobbies and interests. In her book Emergence, labelled autistic, Temple Grandin, a person with autism, tells about her fixations. For example in the fourth grade at school she almost drove her family crazy: She talked constantly about election posters, buttons and bumper stickers. She was fixated on the election of their state governor. (Grandin 1989, 35.)

In the book “Yhden asian mies” Liisa Laukkanen tells about her son Marius’s hobbies. Marius was diagnosed as having Asperger syndrome when he was twenty years old. Before that nobody really knew what were the reasons for his difference. As Temple, Marius also had rather odd hobbies. For example before school age Marius loved to
collect rubbish everywhere he went. His life was overwhelmed by this passionate hobby. Marius himself tells that he has always had his interests in phases. After collecting rubbish, he had a period when he was only interested in animals and dinosaurs, then animations and Donald Duck, cars and specially their registration numbers, Alice in Wonderland, wrestling, street-children and poverty, to name some of his hobbies. (Laukkarinen & Rufenacht 1998.)

Both Temple and Marius be in regular schools, Temple in USA and Marius in Finland – and it have not been easy – but they have managed with the help of their families and some excellent teachers.

**Autism Defined by People with Personal Experiences**

It is very valuable that people with autism have given new information about their experiences related to autism in narrative books and other writings and even lectures in recent years. This information is important for non-autistic people, or should we say, for Neurologically Typical people, as some persons with autism appropriately call people without autism (Andrews 1999, Schneider 1999). This fresh standpoint allows a possibility to catch a glimpse into quite an other sort of mind and world. It provides a bridge between the non-autistic and the autistic world and hopefully makes people understand each other in a new way. In addition to the importance of the bridge people with autism have found their connections to each others.

In the last chapter I mentioned Temple Grandin who wrote the first “inside narrative” of autism. Until this point it had been a medical dogma for more than forty years that there was neither “inside“, nor inner life in people with autism, or that if there was it would be difficult to access or describe. Sacks says that Grandin’s voice came from a place which had never had a voice. (Grandin 1995, 11.)

**Visual Thinkers**

Grandin tells about herself and how she thinks in pictures. It means that words are like a second language to her. She translates both spoken and written words into full-colour movies, complete with sound, which runs like videotape in her head. When somebody speaks to her, his words are instantly translated into pictures. Until late teenage years she thought everybody thinks in pictures. As an adult she now assumes that language-based thinkers often find this phenomenon difficult to understand. (Grandin 1995, 19—20.)

Even now Grandin continues to visualise everything and the first memory that any single word triggers is almost always a childhood memory. For example, a spatial word such as *over* and *under* had no meaning for her until she had a visual image to fix them in her memory. Even now, when Grandin hears the word *under* by itself, she automatically pictures herself getting under the cafeteria tables at school during an air-raid drill, a common occurrence on the East Coast during the early fifties. Grandins thoughts move from videolike, specific images to generalisation and concepts. For example, her concepts of dogs are inextricably linked to every dog she has ever known. It is as if she has a card
catalogue of dogs she has seen, complete with pictures, which continually grows as she
adds more examples to her video library. However, Grandin thinks that not all people with
autism are highly visual thinkers, nor do they all process information this way. (Grandin
1995, 27—28.)

**Diversity of Sense-perception**

Grandin distinguishes differences in sense perception when comparing people with and
without autism. According to her there is a defect in the systems which process incoming
sensory information and this causes the autistic person to over-react to some stimuli and
under-react to others. For example, a child with autism often withdraws from her
environment and the people in it block out an onslaught of incoming stimulation. She
does not reach out and explore the world around her. Instead of that she stays in her own
inner world being separated from interpersonal relationships. (Grandin 1986, 13.)
Grandin herself as an adult faces almost every day extreme variations from over-response
in her own sensory system (Sacks 1995, 277). For Grandin autism is a spectrum of
autism; at one end of the spectrum autism is primarily a cognitive disorder, at the other
end it is primarily a sensory processing disorder. (Grandin 1995, 58.)

Pertti Tapola has approached this issue in his lectures dealing with sensory integration
and Asperger syndrome. He also argues that there are people whose problems are mostly
on the sensory level. Among these can be, for example, difficulties to identify faces so
called prosopagnosia or face-blindness. We can only imagine what kind of everyday
problems one would have if it would be difficult for example to recognise neighbours,
coworkers or employer. Tapola has also mentioned over-reactions to sensory stimulus,
motor problems and difficulties to hear words clearly, so called word deafness. All these
difficulties have their effects on identity, social and emotional life and welfare. (Tapola
1999.)

For Donna Williams autism means, shortly, having trouble with connections. Having
trouble with connections also causes her to have trouble with tolerance and trouble with
control. (The following quotation marks are by Williams.) Problems of control include
compulsion, obsession and acute anxiety. These problems are about being able to respond
with intention to the world and/or oneself. Problems of tolerance include sensory
hypersensitivity and emotional hypersensitivity. These problems are about being able to
stand the world and/or oneself. Problems of connections include attention problems,
perceptual problems, systems integration problems and left-right hemisphere-integration
problems. This is about being able to make sense of the world and/or oneself. (Williams
1996, 25.)

According to Williams, there are combinations of systems forfeiting. It may mean that,
for example, auditory processing is switched off while visual or tactile processing is
switched on. It may also mean that auditory processing is switched on but the processing
of all body messages (such as need to use the toilet, hunger, cold, etc.) are put on hold.
Someone may have difficulties holding awareness of two things at the same time, such as
internal and external. This kind of a person may switch awareness to one or the other but
be unable to make sense of or interact at functional level when required by the
environment to use both internal and external awareness at the same time. It is easy to agree with Williams when she assumes that these systems forfeiting are almost unimaginable to people without autism. (Williams 1994.)

**Social Jungle and Emotions**

People with autism have problems in social functioning. They have poor integration of social, emotional and communicative behaviour within an interpersonal context. Problems lie in the understanding of social rules, in the ability to comprehend why others behave as they do, and the interpretation or even the simplest of social situations. (Howlin 1997, 59.) We can only wonder, how people with autism manage then – life is full of emotions and social situations? They can give the best answers themselves!

Schneider, for example, tells that he has had to develop a list of thou-shalt-nots and thou-musts. He as a mathematician calls this a cookbook approach (Schneider 1999, 95). Schneider also describes that he just cannot read “other peoples signals”. He has no built-in signal decoder. This has had both good and bad ramifications for him. For example, when a woman told him ”No” once, he did not ask her a second time. However, when a person says, ”I’ll be all right”, Schneider has been known to understand that this may be code for, ”I need help”. He supposes that his inability to tell the difference causes him to be thought of as being without compassion. (Schneider 1999, 26—27.)

For Grandin the proper behaviour during all social interactions had to be learnt by intellect. Throughout her life understanding teachers and mentors has helped her. Grandin thinks people with autism desperately need guides to instruct and educate them so they will survive in the social jungle. (Grandin 1995, 95.) According to Howlin, Therese Jolliffe notes that set routines, times; particular routes and rituals all help to get order into an unbearable chaotic life. She has emphasised that trying to keep everything the same reduces some of the terrible fear. (Howlin 1997, 98.)

Schneider says that as far as being able to connect with other human beings, male or female, he is an emotional idiot. It seems that, just as some people have an important component missing (eyes, limbs, etc.), people with autism have an important psychic component missing the ability to connect emotionally with other human beings. This does not mean that people with autism are totally devoid of all feeling. Schneider, for example, finds himself as having experienced what he calls survival emotions: fear and anger. Like Jolliffe also Schneider thinks that fear of uncertainty is a great and terrible fear. For Schneider it means that he has to have a plan for where he is going and if circumstances change, he can change his plan, but he needs a plan to change from. (Schneider 1999, 25—26.)

In her forties Grandin tells how she realised that other people are guided by their emotions during most social interactions. In recent years Grandin has become more aware of electricity that goes on between people which is much subtler than overt anger, happiness or fear. Emotional nuances are still incomprehensible to her. She values concrete evidence of accomplishment and appreciation. For example, it pleases her to look at her collection of hats that clients have given to her, because they are physical evidence that clients liked her work. (Grandin 1995, 90—95.)
Conclusions

Pupils’ Needs and Teacher Education

As mentioned before some children with autistic behaviour have always been taught in regular schools. This situation will continue specially in the demand of integration and inclusion. Now ongoing discussion stems from the expansion of knowledge about autism. This cognitive diversity is a real challenge for teacher education.

Heta Pukki, an educated woman and also autistic, have told about her experiences at school in Finland. She has stated briefly, that school did not teach her much. She learnt – but with the help of her own means. It is more than decade ago when Pukki left school. So it is clear that nobody really knew how Heta would be taught, neither when she started her school nor when she left it. (Pukki 1999.) Today situation is different.

Ecological and ecocultural orientations are significant in today’s educational discussion. The holistic approach is also the basic point in all-successful teaching programs for pupils with autistic behaviour. They all emphasise the importance of the family. The parents are the central unit of structured teaching and rehabilitation. They know their children best and every day collaboration with them is essential for the schoolwork. Kyllikki Kerola has brought the concept of family-based early intervention into use in her doctoral thesis, which have had an effect on teaching pupils with autism also at schools. (Kerola 1997.)

Recent educational and psychological research has illuminated the cognitive structure of human brain. This has given us concepts of cognitive and learning styles. Research and practical work among persons with autism have shown that autism has it’s own cognitive influences. People with autism have different cognitive and learning styles, and therefore good assessment is the starting point of education. With the help of this, it is possible to adapt the teaching strategies, which include – above all – a structure. Structuring begins very often from the environment, to make it clear and predictable.

Teaching people with autism is a question of support in the areas they find difficult, such as social interaction. Very often the most difficult times for children are times like breaking time, playing time and lunchtime which are not structured. Pupils with autism just don’t know what to do then. It can be better to give them a game that they can play with a classmate than a usual sort of free play. For somebody it can be too stressful to be in the playground because of it’s chaos and noise. A better solution for them is for example to work in a school library.

Many pupils with autism benefit from visual support. When things are made visual, it is easier for them to orientate in life and to study. For example understanding time can be difficult. So we have to take into consideration the concept of time by structuring it. We can make time visible by means of diaries, calendars, clocks, daily timetables, work schedules and task organisations. Objects, pictures and written words can give a visual answer to the questions “when will something happen”, ”what will happen”, ”where will it happen”, ”how long will it last”, ”what is next” and ”with whom will it happen”. All this makes things more concrete and predictable. At least parts of this can be incorporated into most schools. As Theo Peeters, trainer for professionals and parents, has said: ”Clarity is the best reward for autistic children.”
David Andrews, a person with Asperger syndrome, has emphasised that her kind of people is detail-orientated. They build up a big picture from details and from concrete to abstract. This has to be taken into consideration when planning teaching. (Andrews 1999.) It is also important to remember that in different points of development people need different things. This means that assessment and follows up have to be regular and versatile.

In today’s school life teachers have many kinds of demands and challenges to cope with. Both in regular and special schools there are pupils with special needs and one of them is autistic behaviour. Research in this field is quite young. There are many theories about autism, and it is clear, that as much is known, is also unknown. It means that teaching strategy and pedagogical tools are developing all the time. It would be beneficial for everybody if the discussion about issues concerning autism would be held in teacher education in general. Research, teacher education and every day school life having flexible connections to each others and continual dialogue together are the best guarantees for responding to the needs of pupils with autism.

Some Perspectives to Intercultural Discussion

As an ethical point of view it is important to discuss what are we ready to accept and deal with. What kind of “abnormalities” or differences can we tolerate and live with – generally – and at schools and university level? Or can we even enjoy the diversity of human beings and learn from each other?

Multicultural education is an idea, an educational movement and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic and cultural groups will have an equal opportunity to learn in school (Banks 1997, 1—3). People with autism are exceptional students so they belong to this international movement and continuing process of multicultural education. At the same time they belong to groups like gender, nationality, race, religion and social class.

Having worked among people with autism as a teacher, consultant and a trainer for about ten years makes me believe that it is not exaggeration to say that people with autism have also their own subculture. Their way of looking at the world is quite different bringing new insights and perspectives. With the help of people who belong to the autistic spectrum we have a possibility to learn more about human beings generally, our own cultures and ourselves. I am sure that society can benefit enormously from these people if we can be accommodative, imaginative and open minded enough.

In recent years people with autism have found their connections to each others. Internet has been an important implement in that process. According to Pukki people with autism are often network-persons. They have their own strong focuses in lives and with the help of internet and other networks they meet each other every now and then. (Pukki 1999.) The connections have made for example Williams to say that only people with autism have spoken her language well. These meetings have caused a realisation that some features she has thought to be part of her personality are not that. Instead they are Williams’s own adaptations of autism and it’s traits. (Williams 1992, 205.)
Pukki has also told that she is all the time examining herself. The point is what is common to persons with autism generally or what features belong only to her personal existence. Diversity of abilities among people with autism has been impressive to Pukki. She has emphasised that she wants to be one of people with autism. (Pukki 1999.) Also Grandin feels that autism is a part of herself. According to Sacks, Grandin has ended one of her lectures by saying:

"If I could snap my fingers and be non-autistic, I would not – because then I would not be me. Autism is a part of myself.” (Sacks 1995, 278.)

Autism can be seen as a handicap or difference like visual or auditive impairment, which nowadays are seen as socially acceptable disorders. It has taken a century to create strong subculture among blind and deaf people. For example, at first it was not allowed to use the sign language in schools for deaf pupils. Educational culture tried to make everybody the same through processes of assimilation and denied their rights to communicate with their own language. Hopefully it won’t take so long to create strong, supportive and empowering autistic subculture and good, flexible school systems that can meet the needs of pupils with autism. This belongs to the issue of educational equity and the process of creating educational system reaching all society.

References


Other readings

5 Co-educated to be the Responsible Other – Primary Teacher Education in Finland from the Perspective of Women

Vappu Sunnari

Abstract

A project for promoting equity between the sexes in primary teacher education and in primary schools was conducted in the Nordic countries in 1992—1994. The project was entitled Nord-Lilia (See Arnesen 1995). The department of teacher education at the University of Oulu participated in the project and it was one of the main reasons for me to start researching the history and the contemporary situation of primary teacher education in Finland from gender perspective. Basing on the research (Sunnari 1996, 1997a, b, c, d, 1999) I will state that Finnish female teachers have been and are educated to be the responsible Other and to be marginalised. I will argue this and describe the gendered herstory of Finnish primary teacher education in the following article.

Citizens: the Subjects and the Others

It seems to be a common feature of western people to divide ourselves into in-groups and out-groups. In psychology, this kind of divisions are, in a positive sense, connected with the formation of one’s personal identity. In order to have a sense of who I am, I need to have some concomitant idea of who I am not. This tendency to divide the world into categories of me and not-me is not, however, just a simple question of personal identity. Rather the tendency to build in-groups and out-groups seems to be a question of producing, reproducing and maintaining certain social and societal power and subordination structures and processes. (Paechter 1998, 5.)

The key issue in the creation of in-groups and out-groups is an asymmetrical power relation between them. The in-group members are in the position to behave as if their
The persons excluded from the in-group are the Others. The state of affairs can be taken so much for granted that neither the Subjects nor the Others are able to recognise the asymmetrical nature of the relations. (Paechter 1998, 5.) Especially the values, beliefs and preconceptions that are culturally shared and adopted, can endure the kind of invisible power constructions. (Komter 1989, 207.)

In addition to the in-group – out-group divisions there are asymmetrical divisions inside the groups based on different positions as group members. The positions are the status of subjects and of more or less marginalised people. The subjects are in the position of power and action, whereas the marginalised members have limited power and their actions are restricted; they are controlled by those who are more fully subjects.

There are lots of situation-specific factors determining the positions of the individuals of any group. In spite of the situation specificity characterising the positions, many of the factors bound with marginality are not occasional but historically constructed and maintained. For example gender, social class, ethnicity, age, "disability", and sexual orientation tend to produce otherness and marginality.

Primary education is one of the environments reproducing and maintaining the above-mentioned distinctions. Tuula Gordon (1996, 35) considers this to be connected with the task of primary education to prepare pupils for citizenship. That means the same as to train one to take her/his place in a structurally and culturally framed adulthood. Formally, Gordon states, the processes are characterised by egalitarianism but as they are bound with individualistic doctrines and asymmetry reproducing structures, they in reality reproduce and maintain inequality. The individualistic idea of developing citizenship requires the construction of "individuals" abstracted out of their social locations and contracted to maximise their own self-interest. The contract is supposed to be voluntary and equally possible for everyone. But to maximise one's self-interest in the context of differential statuses, is not equally accessible for all. (Gordon 1996, 35, 37.)

From an Outsider Position to a Marginal Insider-outsider Position: the Education of Women before the Time of Primary Teacher Education in Finland

The beginning of primary teacher education in Finland dates back to the middle of the 19th century – whether looking it from the perspective of women or of men. The time was described by societal transitions which characterised both the state financed education and women’s education as a part of it.

Just before the establishment of the first teacher seminar, the tensions connected with women’s education were most visible in secondary education. That is why I will give a brief review of that.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Finland was a part of Sweden, and society was strictly divided into separate social classes. The people of the highest classes spoke Swedish, and all political activity was conducted in that language. The majority of the people lived in the countryside, however, and spoke Finnish. The real citizens were the
men of the upper social classes. The citizenship of men of lower social classes was more limited than that of the upper classes and women gained citizenship only through men: through the husband, father, or some other male relative. (Manninen 1984, 48.)

All higher education was exclusively the privilege of boys born into upper social classes. The education of upper class girls had mainly relied on private education. The education of lower social classes – both boys and girls – was organised by the Church; it was co-educational and it was meant to teach the poor people only to read and to remember certain parts of Christian Doctrine.

Finland’s detachment from Sweden as a result of the war between Sweden and Russia (1808—1809) and becoming an independent Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire created an interesting problem in the state-financed school system of Finland. The Vyborg province, which belonged to Russia, was incorporated into Finland in 1811. Since the last decades of the 18th century, there had been lower-level secondary school education for girls in the Vyborg province due to the Russian female monarch Catherine The Second. There was no such education for girls in the other parts of Finland. (Ketonen 1977, 10, 32.) After 30 years of debates the situation was changed in the school regulations of 1841 and 1843: three secondary level girls’ schools were allowed to be established in Finland financed partly by the state.

The education of boys and girls in the secondary school system included strict separation of the sexes. The boys’ secondary education included upper and lower grammar schools. Both of these schools gave qualification for university education. According to the self-understanding of this system, intellectual development was highly valued. This was achieved by using texts with a major emphasis on classical languages.

The three new girls’ schools were equal to the lower secondary schools of boys without any possibility to qualify for academic studies. While languages and textual intelligence were the central focus in the boys’ secondary schools, handicraft was the main subject in the girls’ schools. It was possible that its proportion of the weekly school work was over 40 per cent. (see Ketonen 1977, 32—33.) Education for other household duties was also emphasised in the girls’ schools. These aspects were excluded from the boys’ secondary school, because they were not regarded as valuable subjects in intellectual education. Their inclusion in the curriculum for women was justified by the discourse of women’s calling. Their task was to be a mother, a wife and a homemaker. The girls’ school was to give the knowledge, skills and virtues – such as modesty, diligence, thrift and patience – which were supposed to be needed in their tasks at home.

There were other distinctions between the secondary level education for girls and boys. One of them was that education in girls’ schools was more expensive than in the corresponding boys’ schools (Ketonen 1977, 24). This difference was justified by two different forms of protection-discourses. Higher fees were needed to “protect” the state from spending too much money for girls’ education and to “protect” the girls of the lower social classes from a “wrong direction in life”. High fees prevented the girls of the lower

1. In 1850 there were 8 towns in Finland with a population of over 3 000 inhabitants, two of them had over 10 000 inhabitants and only about 5 per cent of Finnish population lived in towns (Heikkinen 1989, 98).
2. In 1860 there were about 1 750 000 inhabitants in Finland, of which about 3 per cent belonged to the three upper classes and spoke Swedish (Heikkinen 1989, 98).
3. There was one university in Finland at that time, but it was possible to study in international universities (Iisalo 1979).
social classes from entering the girls’ schools, and thus efficiently “protected” them from “a wrong direction in life”.

The years the girls were allowed to have entrance to the school were also more limited than for boys. The age limit for starting the school was 8 years for both sexes, but girls further had an upper age limit of 12 years. Boys in the corresponding secondary schools did not have any upper age limit for entrance. (Ketonen 1977, 24.) The limitation was connected with the need to control that girls stay in private life while reaching adolescence and adulthood.

One special form of controlling girls’ everyday life was the presence of a female guardian during the lessons given by male teachers (Ketonen 1977, 25). This had been the custom in the girls’ schools in Vyborg, too, and the studies of Tekla Hultin (1892, 540) showed that it had derived from the German girls’ schools of the 18th century. According to Liisa Ketonen (1977, 25), this practice, although not included in the regulations, was continued until the 1870s in girls’ secondary schools. There is good reason to suspect that this practice was due to women being considered the property of men: of husbands and families. Especially the girls who were valued as future wives of upper class men, were under such special “protection”. This practice was also in line with the contemporary philosophical discourses of women being morally more limited and less developed than men. Corresponding discourses were to be found in religious discourses as well.

Towards a Position Characterised by In-group Otherness: the Education of the First Female Primary Teachers

The first primary teacher seminar in Finland opened its doors in 1863, at the same time for both sexes. The fact that primary teacher education began simultaneously for both sexes represented a significant rupture in the contemporary mainstream thinking because it presented the first proper forum for women to become educated to a public vocation in Finland (Sunnari 1997a, 39, 62, Heikkinen 1995, 268).

The education programme was planned to cover four years. The institute was made a boarding-school, and separate departments for male and female students in different buildings were established. There was also a primary school, called a model school, attached to the seminar. The model school included a higher primary school, a lower primary school and a kindergarten. Some children of nursery age were included in the model school system, too. The lower school and the kindergarten were co-educational and they were meant for boys and girls aged 5—9. The higher primary school was for children of 10–15 years, and it included separate sections for girls and boys.

The ordinary primary school system outside the seminar consisted of two parts: of higher primary schools for boys and for girls. Lower primary education with its very limited programme continued to be organised by the Church.

Like in girls’ schools, the education of female teachers was connected with women’s duties at home. Additionally it was linked to the goal to raise citizens for the new

4. See Asetus 1866.
5. Some kind of education of midwives had, however, started before that, in the 1850s (See Räisänen 1995).
bourgeois society. The notions of enterprise, upward development, and common education as important means of achieving the aimed development were emphasised. Women’s special task in the upbringing of children was to instil the basic values needed for the new societal orientation, as especially Uno Cygnaeus, "the father of Finnish primary education", emphasised. The fact that the future female teachers were envisioned to come from the upper social classes was compatible with these aims.

As to male teachers, it was pointed out that men of upper social classes would not be suitable. They would not be interested in teaching children. If they were interested, they would be too far away from the world of common people or they would have failed in their lives. Because of these reasons they would be questionable as teachers. Consequently countryside men who had served in the army became suitable male primary teachers. The special educational task of male teachers was to encourage boys to grow up brave fighters for their homes and the native land and to shape their identities in this direction. (Sunnari 1997, 52—53.)

Because of different backgrounds, most of the male students were Finnish speaking and without prior schooling, whereas almost all the female students spoke Swedish and were educated in girls’ schools (Raitio 1913, 219—247).

The language used in the teacher seminar was Finnish. This issue also represented a rupture in the contemporary thinking. Finnish language had been considered a language of the common people who were regarded as non-intellectual and non-powerful. The choice of language was political: Finnish language was chosen to strengthen Finnish national identity.

In addition to the different personal growth objectives and educational tasks, the most visible sex-related differences in the curriculum were the following:
- contents of subjects studied; especially physical education, handicraft and pedagogy
- division of female and male student as to which age groups they should teach
- everyday chores of the students
- control and norm systems.

There were lots of subjects to study in the seminar. They were mainly the same as nowadays in Finnish primary teacher education and primary schools, and nearly the same for both sexes. So was their extent although the model which had been taken from secondary education was different. But although the subjects studied were relatively similar, there were some differences in their contents. The differences clearly illustrate what was considered important in women’s and men’s personal and intellectual growth.

It has been stated and argued in several feminist writings that there are culturally shared hidden objectives in educating girls and women, and they differ from the educational aims of boys and men. The differences indicate that girls and women are educated for the Others whereas the boys and the men are rather educated for themselves and over the Others. (cf. Riddell 1992, Spender 1992, Thorne 1993, Kaarninen 1994, Mayer 1996a, b, Paechter 1998.) Differences parallel to these assumptions were included in the aims and contents of handicraft and physical education.

It was Uno Cygnaeus who demanded handicraft to be included in the teacher seminar curriculum and in the curriculum of both sexes. Cygnaeus wanted to break down the traditional knowledge – manual work distinction and the supremacy of abstract knowledge in intellectual education. Basing on Froebel’s learning theory, he emphasised that handicraft should have a special developmental task in education and in human
development. To fulfil the developmental task, handicraft was to be “intellectually stimulating” and “mentally satisfying”. On the other hand, Cygnaeus wanted the ordinary Finnish men and boys to learn to use their hands better in their everyday life. (Cygnaeus 1861.)

To include handicraft in women’s seminar programme was in line with the educational programmes in girls’ schools’, it did not raise any problems, but having handicraft in men’s education prompted strong opposition. The opposition emerged from the value difference between abstract knowledge and the knowledge and abilities needed in everyday life. The result, however, was that handicraft was included in both curricula. In the curriculum of men’s handicraft, the emphasis was on technical skills and learning how to use technical equipment. In the curriculum of women’s handicraft these aims were not mentioned. Women were supposed to make various textile products for Others; for the family – just as it was aimed at in the programme of girls’ schools, too.

When planning primary teacher education, Cygnaeus (1861) pointed out the importance of educational gymnastics; the purpose was to contribute to the harmony of human growth, to eliminate sluggishness and to develop bravery and fearlessness. The emphasis in men’s physical education curriculum was to become superior to the Others in competition, in strength and quickness needed for that. As to women, the emphasis was on suppleness, rhythm and agility needed to be beautiful for the Other’s gaze.

The different positioning of the future female and male teachers was most visible in the tasks which they were to do outside the subject studies: in the duties with children and in the so-called everyday duties for the boarding school.

The programme included a training period in the seminar’s model school. The curriculum for the school training period was similar for both sexes and the practice took place in the last seminar year. But in addition to the school teaching period, female students had to work with the children of kindergarten and nursery age throughout their first three seminar years. They even had to share their rooms with the small children over the nights.

Other tasks performed outside the lessons also represented the different status of men and women. Among other things, women had to clean not only their own quarters, but also in the men’s quarters the parts which were not regarded as suitable for men.

As to the moral code, the students’ lives in the seminar were strictly controlled. A special field of moral control was manifested by the fact that both sexes studied in the same seminar. The female and the male students were allowed to operate in a co-educational setting only on Sundays during an evening gathering organised by Cygnaeus and his wife. Additionally, the female students had to be protected against situations which were considered to include a possibility to be “wanton” – the situations which were shared by the opposite sex: like when female students were taught by a male teacher, there had to be a female guardian controlling the female students.

The question why the seminar was organised as a twin-seminar, is interesting, too. One reason for the fact was economic. It was cheaper to organise a twin-seminar than to organise two separate ones. Had it been a single-sex seminar, it would have been a seminar for men, because of the strong opinions against educating female teachers. One more reason for a twin-seminar may have been connected with Cygnaeus’ comprehension that the school and the teacher seminar should be like homes. Cygnaeus wanted to show
everyone’s "natural" place and duties at home while bringing up the new society and its citizens.

The idea of a twin-seminar may also be connected with the fact that while living in Sitka, Cygnaeus became acquainted with contemporary American feminist writings. Cygnaeus himself emphasised that his ideas of educating women dated back to his living in Sitka. Ideas of co-education were discussed in America at that time, and – although twin-seminars were rare – there was a twin-seminar in Pitsburg in Pennsylvania at that time (Nurmi 1988, 25, Wilkama 1938, 317).

In-group Otherness in Process: Looking Further into the Herstory of Finnish Primary Teacher Education

The guidelines established for the primary teacher seminar in the 1860s remained almost the same for a hundred years. The first law and statute which considerably changed the guidelines were not given until 1958 (L 5/1958). As to basic education, it continued to be segregated to three differently valued parts: to lower level primary education organised by the Church, to proper primary education called upper primary education and to secondary education, and there was a clear hierarchy between the three educational forums. The social class was the most central issue to influence the educational choices.

State level regulating began very soon after the establishment of the first teacher seminar, and since the turn of the 19th and 20s centuries, the idea of developing new educational culture through teacher education was changed to the idea of educating the future teachers to fulfil the qualities of the existing school system.

The boarding school system disappeared gradually and first and foremost through the establishment of teacher high school system since the 1940s. When the teacher seminar was founded in Kemijärvi at the beginning of the 1950s, boarding school groups were, however, included in it.

A central topic of dispute at the time when the first teacher seminar was established in Finland was the question of whether it was morally right to have male and female students studying in the same seminar. The later history of primary teacher seminars was mainly a history of separate female and male seminars over a hundred years.

A teacher seminar like the one in Jyväskylä was established in Sortavalä in 1880, but the next coeducational seminar was not established until 87 years later. For instance, all the teacher seminars in Northern Finland have been either totally or at least partly segregated institutions: in 1895, a teacher seminar for women was founded in Raabe, in 1900 for men in Kajaani, and in 1923 a lower primary teacher seminar for women in Tornio. The teacher seminar founded in Kemijärvi in 1950 included a coeducational department. It was the northernmost and first teacher seminar to give coeducational teacher education in Finland.

Additionally, when the law about compulsory education was passed in Finland in 1921, lower primary education run by the Church was included in the state financed

education system. At the same time a separate lower primary school teacher seminar financed by the state was established in Finland. The duration of this education was shorter than that of other primary teachers and it was almost only for women. This was due to the fact that sex-related division between the teachers of the lower and higher primary school was very strict. Teaching the small children was not considered to be the task of men. Risto Rinne (1989, 85) has also found out that the students of the lower primary school seminar had lower societal background status than those in other primary teacher seminars.

The issues discussed above can hardly be explained with moral reasons. They can rather be explained through two other issues connected with socially constructed divisions between women and men. First, almost all of the single-sex seminars established in Finland were founded during the time when co-education was accepted in Finland: primary education moved step by step to be coeducational since the 1860s (Hakaste 1992, 177), the first coeducational secondary schools were established in the 1880s (Hakaste 1992, 217) and since 1901 women got an official entrance to the universities (Mustakallio 1988, 45) to be educated in coeducational settings.

There is a reason to suppose that later decisions to establish single-sex seminars have been connected with the need to ensure the entrance of men into teacher seminars. The primary teacher profession has been much more popular among females than among males, and female teacher education candidates have had higher level educational background and higher grades in the final reports of their background education7 than the male candidates (Rinne 1989, 193, Lahdes 1987, 48—49, Halila 1963). In addition to the differences in educational background, women have had better study performance than men also in teacher seminars (Rinne 1989, 193, Lahdes 1987, 48–49, Halila 1963).

The discussions connected with prior schooling needed for entrance have also been within the framework of safeguarding the entrance of men to teacher education. The entrance conditions were discussed several times. The starting point was that no prior schooling was required. Since 1886 the enrolment criterion was the upper primary school level qualification. This remained the basic criterion up to year 1958, although the issue was discussed in the 1920s and also in the 1940s. In clear contrast to this issue is the fact that since the 1890s part of the student teachers were secondary school graduates, that their proportion grew during the years, and that almost all of them were women (Kangas 1992, 88, Nurmi, 1990).

There was even a committee established in the 1940s to discuss the entrance criteria. The committee considered it important to raise the educational background criterion for entrance, but it did not suggest it, because the committee members doubted whether there might be enough men at the secondary school level who would be interested in primary teachers’ job. (Kom. 1945, 47.) According to the law and statute which were given in 1958, the basic entrance requirement was lower secondary level education.

At the beginning of the 1970s, all primary teacher education in Finland got the university status and the enrolment requirements presupposed upper secondary school

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7. Despite their generally higher background education, female students applying for entrance to teacher education may have had to take various additional courses to guarantee admission. This seems to have been the case as early as the 1890s (Sysiharju 1985, 131, Halila 1963).
graduation. The protection of men’s entrance continued with the help of a quota system till the last years of the 1980s.

The curricular sex-related differences in the descriptions of handicraft and technical work and of physical education for women and for men remained almost the same for over 100 years since the first seminar programme (Sunnari 1997, 76—78). An interesting detail is that when teacher education began in Oulu in 1953, home economics was included in the curriculum. Its background seems to be in the duties ordered to be done outside the lessons in the curriculum of the first Finnish teacher seminar. One of the duties of women had been housekeeping. Now home economics was taught for both sexes. This new subject included home craft, home economy, and nutrition, but the extent of the subject to be studied was half a credit for men and five and a half credits for women. (Sunnari 1997, 77.) Men had to know a little about the issues to be able to control their wives on this area, women had to be able to work with the help of the knowledge gained.

**From Open towards Invisible Otherness: Present Primary Teacher Education from the Perspective of Women**

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Finnish teacher seminar system was terminated and so was the basic education for children in the two separate, differently valued systems. All primary teacher education was now organised to be university education, and basic education for school age children was included in the same comprehensive primary school system.

The time was characterised by public discussions on equality between varied social classes and between sexes. Maybe because of that or because teacher education was now academic, the curricula were formally gender-neutral and coeducational. The only sex-related difference in the curricula of primary teacher education at the university of Oulu was in the content descriptions of handicraft. In line with the differences discussed earlier, creativity and personal growth were emphasised in the description of men’s handicraft. The emphasis in the women’s handicraft continued to be more on the students’ duties needed for the Other. But now the Other for whom to study handicraft was not mentioned to be the family but school children. And, because the terms used about the subject were no more men’s handicraft and women’s handicraft but textile work and technical work, the differences caused no problem as to formal neutrality. In practice the situation was different. I will return to this question a little later.

The description of physical education was the same for both sexes, although this subject was still studied in single-sex groups. This fact challenged me to check what had happened to the content areas, which had earlier been gender-specific. But, on the basis of the written curriculum, it was not possible to answer the question. The content descriptions were on a more abstract level than they had been earlier, and the content areas which earlier included gender-specificity had disappeared from the descriptions.

There is reason to summarise that the academic curricula proved to be formally gender-neutral. But as many other research results and results of several development projects have also shown, formal neutrality does not eliminate gendered institutionalised
features, nor gendered perspectives for personal and/or professional development (see e.g. Tarmo 1991, Lahelma 1992, Lampela & Lahelma 1996). The analysis of the degree certificates of primary teachers graduating from the Oulu Department of Teacher Education (Sunnari 1996) and the action research and ethnographic studies which were carried out in the same department (Sunnari 1997a, 96 – 118, b, 22 – 57, c) showed that:

– Female students orient themselves rather to be teachers of small children, girls and boys, and male students to be teachers of bigger pupils, especially boys.\(^8\)

– Female students want to be qualified in various subjects taught in primary school. Male students rather develop their qualifications according to their more personal orientation.

– There was a tendency among student teachers to notice boys differently from girls and to experience boys as more challenging and to interpret pupils’ school success in sex-related ways.

As far as the research material suggested sex-related differences in norm control, they concerned study actions. The typical message female and male student teachers gave when they were asked about issues they had perceived as gendering in primary teacher education was that ”male students are allowed to proceed with less work.”\(^9\) There seems to be a tendency to suppose that female student teachers study more conscientiously than male students are supposed to do. And many male and female students also think that especially in the subjects which are mainly studied by women the regulation is especially strict and one must work especially hard: in textile work, education of the first two grades and in gymnastics and women’s sports.

As to the minor subjects, the differences in the choices do not only represent the hidden gendered constructions of students or/and teacher education. The primary schools want to employ male teachers, and they prefer to have men teachers qualified especially in physical education and in technical work. Presently they have also asked for male teachers qualified in information technology, indicating the sex although there are nowadays lots of female teachers, too, who are qualified in this area, and although it is emphasised that it is girls who need more special support in this area at school than boys do.

In addition, the studies suggested that there was a tendency among male and female student teachers to interpret the activities of a boy on the basis of his personality and a girl on the basis of her position as a pupil, and to give a more central position to boys than to girls during the classes. (Sunnari 1997d.)

If we reflect, thus, on the basis of the curricular documents, upon the change of the special societal tasks included in female teacherhood from the 1860s to the present day, the change seems to be from the task of the societal mother of a modern nation state towards a professionally qualified educator free from a gendered division of tasks. But when the processes of everyday studies are included in the observation, the picture changes. The idea of motherhood seems to be included in female teacherhood even at the present time. It is, however, rather institutionalised motherhood: serving the Others in as qualified a way as possible in school.

\(^8\) Five new male primary teachers and one hundred and six new female primary teachers that had studied the education of the first two grades as their minor subject graduated from the Department of Teacher Education in the University of Oulu during the years 1988—1994 (Sunnari 1996).

\(^9\) This was the typical answer in the cases the students answered to have perceived the issues asked about.
Conclusion

At the beginning of the article I stated that Finnish female teachers have been and are educated to be the responsible Other and for the Other – like mothers in homes. If we look at the special societal tasks included historically in female teacherhood, we can see that the female primary teacher was first in a position of a societal mother of a modern nation state. She was to educate the small children and the future mothers and she was to provide a mother’s model for the girls. The idea intertwined with motherhood seems to be included in female teacherhood even at the present time. It is, however, rather institutionalised motherhood: serving the Others in as qualified a way as possible in school. A more personal position has been available and more personal development emphasised in male student teacher’s education.

The otherness has characterised the education of female student teachers also otherwise, as compared with the position of male student teachers. They have been more controlled and their education time has been more regulated and more filled with different duties than that of male student teachers. Although it is obvious that the female students have been intellectually more qualified and moor deeply committed with their studies than the male students, as measured with the qualities the educational institutions themselves use, these aspects have remained less important than the need to get teachers who are male by their sex. The question is about power and authority, and at the same time about culturally, structurally and individually produced, reproduced and maintained images of one’s abilities to be powerful and to have authority. And of course these frames also influence one’s authority and powerfulness and the processes to construct them in educational settings. The question is whether you are listened to and valued as an educator and whether you reach confidence as a valuable and capable teacher.

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6 Challenges of Sexual Diversity, Homophobia and Heterosexism for Teacher Education

Timothy Bedford

Abstract

This article focuses on the injustices of homophobia and heterosexism and the ways in which teacher education can rise to the challenge of affirming sexual diversity. Having considered the ways in which homophobia and heterosexism manifest themselves in school and societal contexts, attention is given to multicultural education as a philosophy to transform attitudes.

Two examples of rising to the challenge are taken from my own work. The first is the GLEE project – a teacher training initiative to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The second is the Theory of Knowledge course that I teach in a high school. The pedagogical approach of both is similar with the aim of perspective transformation through critical analysis and an understanding of the social process of mindset construction.

Introduction

Schools to a large extent mirror the dominant views, perspectives and values of the broader society, acting as agents for the social reproduction of the status quo. As such they mirror pervasive heterosexism and homophobia prevalent in almost all societies, where heterosexuality is produced and maintained as normative and the only form of sexuality.

A school culture of silence often exists around non-heterosexuality which according to Epstein and Johnson (1994, 198) discriminates by failing to recognise differences. It posits a totally and unambiguously heterosexual world in much the same way as certain forms of racism posit the universality of whiteness. In this way the dominant form is made to appear normal and natural and the subordinate form perverse, remarkable and dangerous.
Furthermore an invisible system of heterosexual privilege operates. In her paper “White Privilege and Male Privilege” McIntosh (1988) analyses the daily ways in which heterosexual privilege makes married persons comfortable or powerful, providing supports, assets, approvals, and rewards to those who live or expect to live in heterosexual pairs. She starts her analysis by considering her own experience:

“The fact that I live under the same roof with a man triggers all kinds of assumptions about my worth, politics, life and values, and triggers a host of unearned advantages and powers: 1) My children do not have to answer questions about why I live with my partner (my husband). 2) I have no difficulty finding neighbours where people approve of our household. 3) My children are given texts and classes which implicitly support our kind of family unit, and do not turn them against my choice of domestic partnership. 4) I can travel alone or with my husband without expecting embarrassment or hostility in those who deal with us. 5) Most people I meet will see my marital arrangements as an asset to my life or as a favourable comment on my likability, my competence, or my mental health. 6) I can talk about the social events of a weekend without fearing most listeners’ reactions. 7) I will feel welcomed and normal in the usual walks of public life, institutional, and social. 8) In many contexts, I am seen as ‘all right’ in daily work on women because I do not live chiefly with women.” (McIntosh 1988, 17—18.)

Heterosexual privilege and the invisibility of non-heterosexuals have destructive effects on both a personal and societal level. Rich (1986, 199) describes invisibility as a “dangerous and painful condition” and adds:

“When those who have the power to name and socially construct reality and choose not to see you or hear you, whether you are dark skinned, old, disabled, female, or speak with a different accent or dialect than theirs, when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked in a mirror and saw nothing. Yet you know you exist and others like you, that it is a game with mirrors. It takes some strength of soul – and not just individual strength, but collective understanding – to resist this void, this non-being, into which you are thrust, and to stand up, demanding to be seen and heard, and to make yourself visible, to claim that your experience is just as real and normative as any other.”

Prejudice against lesbians, bisexuals, gays, along with the belief in the superiority of heterosexuality are learned attitudes and cultural constructions. As such education lies at the heart of combating homophobia and heterosexism, and faces the challenge of breaking the culture of silence. This challenge is twofold and involves how to 1) uncover the system of compulsory heterosexuality and heterosexual privilege, and 2) transform heterosexist perspectives into ones which are accepting of the diversity of sexual identities – rather in the same one may work towards transforming ethnocentrism within the tradition of multicultural education. I will consider this twofold challenge in the context of being a teacher in both teacher education and high school.

The first part of the article considers how multicultural education can be an instrument for the social deconstruction of heterosexism. The remaining parts consider the processes of reconstruction towards affirming the diversity of sexual identities. They include two examples from my current work. Firstly the teacher education GLEE project of initiatives to combat homophobia and heterosexism, and secondly the International Baccalaureate high school Theory of Knowledge -course.
Multicultural Education, Social Change and Sexuality

Multicultural education has often been described as an instrument to transform schools and society. It has been an instrument which sees schools as sites for social change, equity and justice. Multiculturalism plays a role in enabling individuals and institutions to function within a pluralistic society where diversity is cherished. It is part of a process of redressing inequities arising from a system where difference is ranked – giving privilege to certain groups based on sex, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation etc.

Confronting issues of power and power relations (compulsory heterosexuality being one of these) is central to multicultural education and plays an important role in creating just and equitable schools and societies. Furthermore multiculturalism is an ideology and an orientation, a way of viewing the world. As David Abalos (1989, 67) says:

“Multiculturalism is an attitude; it's a spirit of openness and celebration; of inclusion that honours the history and cultures of all peoples. It's not just tolerance; it's not begrudging acceptance; it's not stony silence or expedient allowances. It's not the lie of behaviour modification.”

In the context of this paper this means being open to persons who do not identify themselves as heterosexual – whether gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. It means inclusion of these sexual minorities in the curricula, policies and practices of schools, and redressing the invisibility of their experience. It is about uncovering a system of compulsory heterosexuality that reinforces the notion that either everyone is heterosexual or should be heterosexual i.e. pervasive heterosexism. It is about ending a system of heterosexual privilege. It is about valuing difference as a source of learning and not a source of division and inequity. It is about redressing injustices and above all it is the affirmation of the diversity of sexual identities.

While recognising the plurality of views on multiculturalism I believe there are four core values: 1) affirmation of diversity, 2) human rights, 3) human dignity and 4) equity/equality. It may seem surprising that too many that seemingly embrace the multicultural philosophy find sexuality and especially non-heterosexuality problematic. I believe this can be said of gender too. Programs within multicultural education have often been heterosexist or sexist, especially when the focus is ethnicity and everyone is implicitly assumed to be male and straight. It can be likened to discrimination that lesbian women of colour have faced in both the civil rights movements and women's movements in the United States of America. If multicultural education is serious about being a counter-oppression tool then it has to recognise that in the words of Martin Luther King there can be “no end to oppression without an end to all forms of oppression”.

During the month of April 1999 there were three bombs planted in London, England. The bomber was said to be targeting minorities and the first bomb went off in a predominantly West Indian neighbourhood. The second bomb went off in a Bangladeshi neighbourhood and the third was planted in a gay bar. How could one argue that any minority is more or less deserving of prejudice, discrimination and hate attacks? The institutionalised culture of silence around non-heterosexuality in all areas of society from schools to government bodies implicitly and sometimes explicitly argues just that i.e. diversity, equity, human rights and dignity for all – but not for non-heterosexuals. This
silence constitutes complicity and for this reason homophobia and heterosexism need to be addressed. In the words of Audre Lourde “silence will not save us”.

**The Challenge of Breaking the Silence**

Teacher education and schools face the challenge of being either seen as complicit in perpetuating homophobia and heterosexism or as institutions which strive to build a society free of prejudice, discrimination, injustice and hate. As Pharr (1988, 52) states:

“We must take a very hard look at our complicity with oppressions, all of them. We must see that to give no voice, to take no action to end them is to support their existence. Our options are two: to be racist, or anti-Semitic, or homophobic (or whatever the oppression may be), or to work actively against these attitudes. There is no middle ground. With an oppression such as homophobia where there is so much permission to sustain overt hatred and injustice, one must have the courage to take the risks that may end in loss of privilege. We must keep clearly in mind that privilege earned from oppression is conditional and is gained at the cost of freedom.”

Breaking the silence is therefore a challenge of making a break from the orthodox faith of heteronormativity. It is the challenge of becoming and being a heretic. However it should be noted that even when the silence is broken there can be an increase in homophobic discourse as a previously out of view target comes into sight. However this can be viewed as part of a developmental process. While the state of silence may seem to be a state of harmony, the homophobia stemming from visibility is a step in the direction towards the affirmation of sexual diversity. The work of Bennett (1986) on a developmental model of intercultural sensitivity supports this view. In this model he has developed an interactive continuum of stages to describe different ways of experiencing cultural difference, each stage representing a greater degree of development of intercultural sensitivity. The first stage represents the denial of difference, where one's own world view is unchallenged as central to all reality – this may occur when physical or social isolation precludes any contact with significant cultural differences. This is the position of heterosexism where one assumes everyone is heterosexual, oblivious to the existence of other sexual identities. Stage two represents the defence against difference and involves attempts to counter perceived threat to the centrality of one's (heterosexist) worldview. The usual response is the denigration of difference, and the belief in the superiority of one’s own culture and worldview. This equates to homophobia where there is now recognition of non-heterosexuals who are then disliked, feared or hated. Further stages include acceptance where individuals acknowledge and respect difference, and that difference is perceived as fundamental, necessary and preferable in human affairs. The final stage of integration represents the ability to adapt to difference and function in various cultural ways. It represents the multicultural human who experiences diversity as an essential and positive aspect of all life. In the context of this paper this is someone who has a positive view of their own sexual identity and other sexual identities.

Breaking the silence can be considered a first step to combating homophobia and heterosexism. I will now consider further steps to move the process forward towards the
affirmation of sexual diversity beginning with the GLEE project which I co-ordinate at the University of Oulu, Department of Teacher Education.

The Challenge of Combating Homophobia and Heterosexism – The GLEE Project

The GLEE project funded by the European Union is an educational response towards combating homophobia and heterosexism. In line with the Amsterdam Treaty which outlines the European Union’s commitment to combating all forms of discrimination, the project is developing an interactive network of teacher training, curriculum development and research initiatives to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

The first phase of the project focuses on pre-tertiary education with a leadership training course for teachers from primary and secondary schools. The main objective of the course is for participants to develop an action plan for establishing education initiatives within their own school communities to 1) raise awareness of the extent and destructive effects of homophobia and heterosexism on all members of the school community, 2) develop strategies to combat heterosexism and homophobia in school policies, practices and curricula to improve the learning environment for all and 3) work towards combating all forms of discrimination. These initiatives would be tailored by course participants to local needs and priorities to reflect the diverse cultural contexts in which participants work. Initiatives could include 1) teacher and/or student groups meeting on a regular basis, 2) workshops for teachers in schools and at conferences, 3) projects such as curriculum development and school counselling and 4) action research on a particular issue or theme.

During the course participants will learn to use an internet-based support network named GLEENET. This will provide a resource centre for use after the course as well as facilities for on-going communication between participant schools across Europe to share ideas and collectively develop materials for their own local initiatives. GLEENET has chat and mailing facilities, along with an environment for distance learning and collaborative work. This makes it possible to create further initiatives on a national and international level.

Educational transformation requires three key mutually supporting elements: research, training and curriculum development. The creation of a network of educational initiatives enables all these three elements to interact and be an effective model for change. In many situations the three elements are conducted independently resulting in growing shelves of unused research, and training and curriculum development by “experts” devoid of classroom experience. Change in the traditional model is top-down and prescriptive which can make implementation problematic. In contrast the GLEE model is bottom-up focussing on locally contextualised teacher-facilitated initiatives.

The project aims to provide a stimulus for more research to inform training and curriculum development. Research to date has highlighted how homophobia and heterosexism can negatively affect the lives of all members of society by 1) serving to enforce rigid gender roles inhibiting creativity and self-expression, 2) limiting the ability to form close, intimate relationships with one's own sex, 3) restricting communication and
relationships e.g. within families, 4) creating peer pressure to engage in sexual relationships just to prove one’s heterosexuality, 5) targeting and abusing all persons perceived as lesbian, bisexual or gay (lesbigay) and 6) pressurising gays and lesbians to go straight and result in failed heterosexual relationships.

Furthermore studies in the UK by Trenchard and Warren (1984) and Rivers (1995) show that lesbigay youth often face 1) verbal and physical harassment with lack of teacher support when it occurs, 2) lack of accurate information on sexuality and sexual identities, 3) inadequate support systems for dealing with the problems of lesbigay students and 4) schools where prejudice and discrimination against lesbigays is perpetuated through school policies and curricula.

What these studies show is the denial of fundamental educational rights of lesbigay youth. As a consequence lesbigay youth often experience 1) identity confusion, 2) guilt about their sexual orientation, 3) fear of being attacked or the consequences of being found out to be non-heterosexual, 4) marginalisation, especially when discourse is heterosexist and 5) low self-esteem resulting from negative societal norms toward non-heterosexuals resulting in the internalisation and integration of a stigmatised aspect of identity. As Davies and Neal (1996, 55) state:

“Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals spend every day of their lives knowing that some sections of society wish they did not exist. The hatred and prejudice experienced can in some people grow like a cancer and become ‘intra-psychically malignant’.”

This can result for lesbigay youth in academic under-achievement, substance abuse, depression and suicide. For example studies in the United States (U.S Department of Health and Human services, 1989) indicate that lesbigay youth are 4 times more likely to develop substance abuse problems and 6 more times likely to attempt suicide compared to heterosexuals.

Furthermore Sears (1991) found in a two year survey in USA that teachers generally avoid the subject of homosexuality and that 1) two out of three teachers feel uncomfortable discussing homosexuality, 2) 75% had negative attitudes towards homosexuals, 3) 52% of prospective teachers would feel uncomfortable working with an openly lesbian or gay colleague, 4) over 8 out of 10 oppose the integration of lesbigay themes into existing curricula and 5) two out of three guidance counsellors harbour negative feelings towards lesbians and only one in five have received any training on serving gay and lesbian students.

Although some counter-homophobia materials and lesbigay-inclusive curricula have been developed, they will only be used more extensively and effectively if teachers have the confidence and support to address sexuality issues. Studies such as Sears (1991) highlight the need not only for materials but also for teacher training to redress the detrimental effects of homophobia and heterosexism. The training needs to be focussed on engaging teachers in 1) reflecting on how they were schooled to deal with diversity, 2) gaining an understanding of the social construction of prejudice and 3) becoming familiar with ways to transform curricula to counter prejudice and affirm sexual diversity. The provision of safe space and on-going support are also essential components in the training programme, which the GLEE project aims to provide through the creation of a network of teacher-facilitated education initiatives.
The raising of awareness, the uncovering of invisible systems of privilege which confer unsought dominance on certain groups within society is instrumental to the pedagogical approach for the course. This approach is based partly on theories of transformative pedagogy such as Freire’s (1975) which aim to build a learning community which supports the individual growth of each member of the community while at the same time fostering solidarity and dialogue between all members within the community, and also with the wider society. This approach aims at creating critical consciousness and an analysis of the processes of mind-set construction. It is a methodology to address inequity and discrimination through a process of deconstructing stereotypes and prejudices.

The course is also based on participant-centred pedagogy as well as experiential learning. These approaches place emphasis on the sharing of personal experiences and opinions and are the main basis for creating a safe learning community where all voices are valued. This kind of community creates a climate for 1) raising awareness of issues, 2) developing understanding of diverse viewpoints, 3) giving theory personal meaning (connected knowing), and 4) supporting the critical exchange between the participants of the project and the surrounding community. Together these approaches aim to increase awareness and develop critical consciousness, providing the foundation for action to end discrimination.

In many ways this pedagogical approach is the basis of the Theory of Knowledge course I teach in high school. While I have only taught this course in high schools in Finland and Japan, in my view such a course has a role to play in teacher education.

**The Challenge of Perspective Transformation – The TOK Course**

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) is a course for high school students who are candidates for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. TOK is a course which gives students the opportunity to engage in an exploration and analysis of perceptions, attitudes, values and knowledge, and in particular, to enable students to gain an understanding of the social processes constructing their own and other mindsets/worldviews. The course can be a valuable tool for lessening ethnocentrism and transforming perspectives by unmasking the existing dominant beliefs, ideas and assumptions that shape the world, which often are taken for granted and go unnoticed or unquestioned.

The course can be seen in the words of Gray (1982) as a “struggle for liberation from a set of malignant mindsets” – which includes heterosexism and homophobia. As such it is therefore intimately related to the approach of the GLEE project course. Both TOK and the GLEE project course have an emphasis on shifting the focus of education to a radical critical analysis of the underlying values and systems of belief which guide actions, and a consideration of how to bring about social transformation. Both view education not as a passive onlooker but a shaper of a new order. Both recognise that education has often been an instrument for perpetuating heterosexism, playing a role in the social construction of homophobia and denying the intrinsic value of all humans. In some cases this has been covert in the biases and distortions taught about the other – e.g. sexual minorities. These omissions and silences systematically devalue the other. Creating a more inclusive
curriculum, welcoming into the curriculum a diversity of views and perspectives, is an important part of building partnership, unity and respect for all. Searching for an ethic which will bring about unity within diversity, gives intrinsic value to all forms of life and provides for the decent survival of all should be central to education.

The TOK course encourages students to put their own and other belief systems to the test. Are they systems that are compatible with the intrinsic value of all, e.g. a system such as compulsory heterosexuality. Are they systems of belief that respect the integrity and survival of all? Are they systems that systematically devalue otherness? Is it a belief system that respects and affirms diversity? I have noticed in this course that a student's dualistic world of black/white, right/wrong, gay/straight, without any apparent ambiguity soon blends to grey with evident uncertainty emerging. This is part of a process of students becoming more open-minded, who are able to live with ambiguity and who are active engaged knowers who recognise that they are an intimate part of what is and what is not known.

The ability to perceive and construe experiences from a variety of perspectives and empathise with a diversity of perspectives is an essential part of breaking down the borders of us and them and affirming diversity. Challenging homophobia, heterosexism and the invisibility of lesbigay voices in the curriculum is dealt with in the TOK course within the broader context of the politics of curriculum. This helps to illuminate connections between all forms of discrimination and to see the broader picture of the “Theory of Whose Knowledge”.

At the beginning of the course I ask students to name a scientist, a mathematician, an economist, a religious leader, a politician etc. We analyse this sample of responses by sex, race, social class etc. The realisation of the racial and gender imbalance in curriculum is an important issue that is addressed throughout the course. The fact that it went unnoticed by most students comes as a shock.

This usually leads into a discussion of the invisibility of voices in the curriculum. Typical questions that are raised by students and myself in the ensuing discussion are 1) ‘Where are the women in the history curriculum?’ 2) ‘Where are the Japanese economists in the economics classes?’ 3) ‘Where are the Indian voices in the British colonisation of India?’ 4) ‘Where are the female scientists?’ 5) ‘Where are gay voices?’ 6) ‘Why have so many been left out?’ 7) ‘What kind of worldview is the product of an ethno- and male-centric curriculum?’ 8) ‘What role does this play in the maintenance of Western hegemony and patriarchy?’ 9) ‘Does it play a role in the social construction of racism, sexism and homophobia?’ 10) ‘Is it part of the psychological control of humans to maintain systems of oppression?’ 11) ‘Is it merely an oversight on the part of curricular planners?’ As a student from India commented in their journal on the effects of invisibility:

“The education system even in an international school setting seems to value the West more than any other part of the world and Whites more than Blacks. (...) I recall being told, at the age of six, that I was stupid and ugly because I am dark. For three years I believed it. I wished everyday for light skin, blond hair and blue eyes. I kept at a distance from people who resembled me. I aspired to be like the norm and tried hard to be accepted. I was conscious of the White, Christian boys and girls and unconscious of the dark, non-Christian boys and girls.”
This journal entry shows the student’s internalisation of negative views of her ethnic identity – what Banks (1988) refers to as ethnic psychological captivity. This has parallels to the internalisation of homophobia by lesbian and gay youth. They both have the same negative effect on self-worth and self-esteem.

However, invisibility is a complex phenomena when it comes to sexuality since ironically there are many gay and lesbian voices in school curricula, but they are unacknowledged. This raises another interesting question of to what extent does an individual’s sexuality influence knowledge? Is there such a thing as queer literature, science or economics? At this stage we move into a discussion of curricular re-vision. Questions are discussed such as “what would each of the subject areas look like if they had a more inclusive base?” and “in what ways would the questions and answers vary?”

The history section has provided a lot of scope for identifying cultural bias in the curriculum and seeing that ideas and interpretations are standpoint-dependent. The rigid control and censorship of school history textbooks in Japan have provided concrete examples. Periodisation in history is discussed and its particular Western male bias. Invisibility is again addressed, whose history and why? Her story, Black history, Third World history, Gay and Lesbian history. Where are they? What is the reason for and effect of their exclusion? Shouldn’t the “real” History have some sort of marker to signify who and what is actually studied? Why do women have “special treatment” with a history of their own – just like blacks with their black history month?

Below are a few excerpts from another student's piece of work which addresses the question “To what extent does history education reflect the power structures dominant in the world and what consequences might this have”:

“History education should be liberating and should teach the students to question and find alternatives for the existing system and ideas, as opposed to domesticating students and preserving the status quo by passing on past values and existing social conventions of the dominating class/elite. People need to learn more about a world in which people like themselves play a role, in which they may find role models that represent their own race, gender, sexual orientation (...) and group.”

In recent years the inequalities and oppressing consequences of traditional history education have finally been addressed. The structure of history has been gradually changed by integrating more viewpoints and new focuses: History from Below, Women's History, Oral History, Gay and Lesbian History, Black History, History of the Body, and History of Illness are just a few examples of new approaches and directions that new history has taken.

When high school students begin to engage in such a critique of their educational experience, as demonstrated by this student’s writing, a process of the reconstruction of the dominant body of knowledge has begun. Edward de Bono in his book “Handbook for the Positive Revolution” stresses that changing simple human perceptions is at the heart of the positive revolution and not the physical power of bullets and bombs. He therefore urges us to go the direct route and work with perceptions and values.

It is my belief that the Theory of Knowledge -course goes some way towards planting the seeds to begin a journey down the direct route.
Conclusion

The development of broader perspectives, appreciation of otherness and understanding towards others is dependent on being able to recognise one’s own blind spots and see the world through someone else’s eyes. Confronting and understanding one’s own cultural lens is therefore an essential part of the process towards affirming diversity – whether for students in a TOK class or teachers participating in the GLEE project.

The challenge is for teacher education to create opportunities to begin the long journey to affirm diversity and redress inequity and injustice. What is needed is a democratic framework for the creation of a social awareness which impels to action – a framework which is reflected in research, teacher training and curriculum development initiatives.

References

7 Sex, Gender and School Violence

Vappu Sunnari

Abstract

A special issue characterising the time we live is violence, and schools included in the problem. Especially very brutal forms of violence seem to be an increasing problem. Violence has been a much discussed topic in Finland and internationally, in recent years. From the perspective of schools, the discussions and the research have mainly concentrated on individual level, however, and they have been gender-blind. For example the following questions have not been included: are there particular gender relations connected with violence in school and is sexuality a component in it. These issues are central in the following article.

Violence, a Brutal Form to Oppress the Other

Violence in feminist discussions is defined as any action or structure that diminishes another human being and as a brutal means through which people seek control over the other (Sen 1998, 8, Holland et al. 1995, 262). Violence is thus discussed as bound with power. It is seen both as a reflection of unequal power relationships in society and as serving to maintain those unequal relationships. This is because both the reality and the threat of violence act as a form of social control. (Maynard & Winn 1997, 178.)

Male violence against women is one form of violence all over the world (see e.g. Heise 1997, 416—417, 422, UNIFEM 1999). It has often been interpreted to be caused by women being socially unable, provoking or too competent, which interpretations exclude the possibility that the problem would characterise the life of “normal” women, and thus maintains the tendency to see the problem as caused by women. Both qualitative and quantitative research, however, repeatedly show the incorrectness of these kinds of interpretations. Firstly, the vast majority of violence experienced by women is in the hands of men and it is surprisingly common (see Heiskanen & Piispa 1998, 20—22).
Secondly, violence against women is largely implemented by men being or having been in intimate relation with the victim, and assaults often occur within the home (Maynard & Winn 1997, 179, Heise 1997, Bachman & Saltzman 1995, 180, Khodyreva 1996, 29, 34—35, Heiskanen & Piispa 1998, 45, Kivivuori 1999). These issues together give messages of the special quality to this form of violence: the central feature of men’s violence against women seems to concentrate on gender boundary maintenance, control and discipline or punishing the woman for challenging male authority. Additionally, the sexual sphere of life often seems to be connected with men’s violence against women.

The term sexual violence is used to distinguish other forms of violence on the grounds that they are acts directed at women because their bodies are socially regarded as sexual. Mary Maynard and Jan Winn define sexual violence in the following way:

“Sexual violence includes any physical, visual or sexual act that is experienced by the woman or girl, at the time or later, as a threat, invasion or assault, that has the effect of hurting her or degrading her and / or takes away her ability to control intimate contact. This definition includes rape, sexual assault, wife-beating, sexual harassment, incest, child sexual abuse and pornography. These acts are overwhelmingly, though not exclusively, male acts of aggression against women and girls.” (Maynard & Winn 1997, 178.)

Some researchers use the term eroticisation of women’s oppression in the aim to make a clear distinction between the varied constructive components of one’s sexual life and the components which serve opposite tendencies. For example Margaret Jackson emphasises that the increasing sexualisation of western women which has taken place since the nineteenth century should not be seen as liberating but rather as an attempt to eroticise women’s oppression, thereby concealing the real power relations between the sexes and making a significant contribution to the maintenance and reproduction of male supremacy (See e.g. Jackson 1987, 74—75. See also e.g. Enzenhofer 1998, 13).

**Sexuality and Hegemonic Masculinity – Central Issues Tied Up with Violence against Women**

In historical western ‘scientific’ and moral discussions sexuality has mainly been connected with reproduction and discussed as if it were a case of “just doing what comes naturally”. Recently, it is emphasised sexuality being separate from reproduction. Context specificity, instead, is emphasised. (Ross & Rapp 1997, 153.)

In feminist discussions, the view of “just doing what comes naturally”, is often referred to as an essentialist view of sexuality. According to it, sexuality is a natural phenomenon, universal and unchanging, something that is part of the biological make-up of each individual. (Richardson 1997, 154—155, Leonardo & Lancaster 1997, 1, Caplan 1987, 25.) The essentialist model of sexuality has been criticised by feminists who have argued that sexuality is socially constructed. The point in constructivist conceptions is that the body, its anatomical structure and physiology, does not directly determine either what people do or the meaning this may have for them. To be socially constructed means that sexual feelings and activities, the ways in which people think about sexuality, sexual identities, are seen as bound with social and historical constructions. (Richardson 1997,
The same applies to the feelings connected with sexuality. They are feelings of individuals, but those feelings are seen to incorporate the rules, definitions, symbols and meanings of the worlds in which they are constructed (Ross & Rapp 1997, 153).

The most radical form of social construction theory even suggests that there is not any natural sexual drive. The supporters of this theory see sexual drive itself to be a historical and cultural construction. (Richardson 1997, 157—158.)

A definition of sexuality which includes the cultural and the bodily components is the one constructed by Janet Holland and her co-researchers:

“Sexuality is simultaneously variable bodily states, desires and physical practices, and also culturally variable understandings of this embodiment and its meanings. Sexuality is embodied in the sense that it entails bodily activity; there is a physical aspect to sexual experiences, desire, and reproduction. But this is always both material and social, since what is embodied and experienced is made meaningful through language, culture and values.” (Holland et al. 1998, 23.)

Power and domination are seen as central to the current construction of both male and female sexuality through being bound with the dominant models of masculinity and femininity. Men are taken to be more aggressive, competitive and sexual than women, and this is to demonstrate the strength of their masculinity. These are the characteristics which they are encouraged to aspire to the extent that masculinity is formulated in opposition to femininity, and masculinity enables men to act out this power for the subordination and control of women (Maynard & Winn 1997, 195) and also for the subordination of the men who will not – or cannot – share the model of masculinity.

For many radical feminists sexuality is at the hearth of male domination. Indeed, some writers have argued that it is the primary means by which men exercise and maintain power and control over women. Others have been reluctant to attribute this significance to sexuality. They emphasise that sexuality as a mechanism of patriarchal control does not have the same significance for all women in any given historical period or culture. They prefer to regard the social control of women through sexuality as the outcome of gendered power inequalities, rather than as its purpose. (Richardson 1997, 152, 154, 171.)

Power, gender and sexuality can be combined with each other through the concept of hegemonic masculinity. This concept, brought by R.W. Connell to the feminist discussions, is connected with the question of male power over the women. The concept elevates the general social status of masculine over feminine qualities and privileges some masculine qualities over others. Connell thinks that there are different forms of masculinity and femininity and that hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to homosexuality and subordinated femininity. The hegemonic form of femininity is lacking because of the collective subordination of women to the men’s homosocial hierarchy. (Connell 1987, 183—184, 187.) The term hegemony being part of the concept, describes the kind of domination that is based on a historical process of establishing a common-sense view that functions to secure the consent of the oppressed in their own oppression (Ibid.) It is emphasised, however, by feminists that hegemonic masculinity presents a public model of masculinity which may not be what most men are but is one which exerts a general pressure over men to consent to it and also influences young women while constructing their adult identity (Holland et al. 1998, 27).
Anthony Chen (1999, 585) started to use the concept *hegemonic bargain* while studying the masculine identities of a group of Chinese men in America to illustrate the specific mechanism by which hegemony can be understood to operate in the social order. Chen thinks that a hegemonic bargain occurs when a man’s gender strategy involves achieving manhood by consciously trading on it, or unconsciously benefiting from the privileges afforded by his race, gender, class, generation and/or sexuality.

**Bullying – a Form of Violence in Schools**

Violence in school has been a much discussed topic in Finland in recent years (Lahdenperä & Sahlin 1994, Penttilä 1994, Kannas 1995, Hamarus 1998, Salmivalli 1997, 1998, Roland & Munthe 1989, Sharp & Smith 1994). The research on the area, however, has mainly concentrated on individual level with very limited discussion connected with social relations. Christina Salmivalli is one exception to the rule. She studied violence in school as a social phenomenon within groups. The research was quantitative.

Salmivalli uses the term *bullying* for the aggressive and violent behaviour she studied. She defines bullying in the school context as a form of aggressive behaviour which is not occasional but systematic and is repeatedly targeted at the same individual child in a context of the imbalance of power. The last component of the definition means that the victim is in some way or other incapable of defending him/herself against the aggressor, either due to physical weakness or for some other reason. Instead of only an individual level phenomenon, Salmivalli sees bullying as an institutionalised habit which is largely motivated by the bully’s need to dominate others or to acquire status in the peer group. (Salmivalli 1998, 11.)

In her research, Salmivalli’s aim was to find out what kind of participatory roles children take on in the bullying process. She used peer-evaluation in the bullying situations and self-evaluation outside the bullying situations. 573 sixth-grade children from 23 school classes in Finland were asked about the issues.

Salmivalli found out that most of the pupils take a certain role in bullying situations in school classes. The roles which Salmivalli (1998, 29) could distinguish were that of the bully (B), the victim (V), the assistant of the bully (A), the defender of the victim (D), and the outsider (O). Victims made up about 12 % of the total sample, bullies 8 %, assistants of bullies 7 % and reinforcements about 20 %. The role of a defender of the victim was taken by 17 % of the children studied. The proportion of the outsiders was 24. (Salmivalli 1998, 23.) Salmivalli’s illustration of the different roles can be seen in Figure 1.
The relative frequencies of boys and girls in the different participant roles were not equal. The participant roles were connected with siding with either the bully or the victim. Siding with the bully, assisting or reinforcing him/her, was quite typical for boys, while siding with the victim was much more common among girls. (Salmivalli 1998, 23.) While more boys than girls thus took the roles of a bully, assistant and reinforcer, the proportion of victims was the same in both sexes. The percentual distribution of the roles is illustrated in Figure 2.
As to the reasons of bullying among boys it was a question of power, dominating others and showing off. Aggression among boys was in some degree idealised and even expected, while the opposite was true in the social world of girls. Bullying among girls, on the other hand, seemed to be more situation- and context-specific behaviour. (Salmivalli 1998, 29—30.)

The secondary roles of victims were also explored. It means that it was studied how the victims of violence behaved in situations where someone else was bullied. Victims who harassed other pupils were rare. (Ibid.)

To measure the social status within the peer groups, sociometric nominations were used. In addition to measuring social acceptance and social rejection by classmates, status groups of popular, rejected, neglected, controversial and average children were identified. Each child’s sociometric status was compared to his/her participant role in bullying situations. The results showed that among both sexes, children in similar or complementary participant roles formed peer networks with each other. The aggressive cliques consisting of bullies and their assistants and reinforcers were relatively large as compared to the peer networks of defenders, outsiders and victims. The victims were very much alone. They were children rejected by the others. (Salmivalli 1998, 23. See also Figure 1.)

The pupils who tended to defend the bullied victims were often the most popular ones in their classes. Salmivalli interprets this to be connected with the fact that it requires courage to take sides with the targets of harassment and to associate with them. Therefore, Salmivalli thinks, it is possible that only those pupils who are already popular and certain of their position in the group dare to do this. They do not have to be afraid of ending up as victims themselves. (Salmivalli 1998, 31.)

Salmivalli’s study showed that in the school class with bullying problems, bullies and victims can be taken as labels describing certain social roles. For instance, being a victim of systematic harassment does not only mean that a child is attacked every now and then by the aggressive bully; rather, s/he is in the role of the victim all the time, and that’s how s/he is perceived by most if not all group members. S/he thus becomes the victim of not only particular bullies but, in a sense, of the whole group. Similarly, instead of being tormentors momentarily, bullies occupy their role all the time. (Salmivalli 1998, 14.)

**Gender Issues and Sexuality – Unspoken Issues in Finnish School Bullying Discussions**

The questions whether one’s sexuality and sexual harassment were components in bullying were not studied by Salmivalli, nor the question whether particular gender relations were connected with bullying and whether the forms of bullying were different if the bully was harassing a girl or a boy. These issues have not been studied in Finnish primary and secondary schools. Several foreign studies, however, have suggested that physical, and particularly, sexual harassment, is common in schools and that this form of verbal and physical bullying limits especially the areas in which girls feel safe. Boys also use social privilege to dominate space and recreational areas, where, particularly in secondary schools, they can subject girls to a critical and coercive gaze, commenting on
See also Wolpe 1988, Jones & Mahony 1989, Walkerdine 1990.)

Parallel phenomena have been found among younger children. Shawn McGuffley and
Lindsay Rich studied how children of middle childhood negotiated gender boundaries by
focusing on the intersection of gender-segregated play. They supposed that since boys and
girls tend to organise themselves into gender-homogenous groups, they are generally
aware that their sphere of ‘gender-appropriate’ activities has boundaries. When they
transgress these bounds, they enter a contested area, which McGuffley and Rich referred
to as the gender transgression zone (See Figure 3). This was thus an area of activity,
where boys and girls conducted heterosocial relations in hopes of either maintaining or
expanding gender boundaries. (McGuffley & Rich 1999, 608.)

![Fig. 3. The gender transgression zone and its boundaries (McGuffley & Rich 1999, 608).](image)

Over a nine-week period, children aged 5—12 were observed creating, defining and
altering gender codes in a summer day camp, involving a total of 315 hours of
observation. Children and parents were also interviewed. The camp averaged 77
participants per week. The gender composition of the children was 54 percent girls and 46
percent boys.

The research showed that the boys organised themselves in a definite hierarchical
structure in which the high-status boys decided what was acceptable and valued, and what
was not. A boy’s rank in the hierarchy was mainly determined by his athletic ability. The hegemonic model of masculinity was characterised by emotional detachment,
competitiveness, the ability to draw attention to one’s self and the sexual objectification of
women so that masculinity was considered different and better than femininity. Conflicts
and disagreements were in the boys’ hierarchy resolved by name-calling and teasing,
physical aggression, and exclusion from the group. (McGuffley & Rich 1999, 612—614.)

The girls’ homosocial organisational forms differed from that of the boys. Girl groups
were characterised by greater emotional intimacy, self-disclosure and supportiveness. All
the girl groups had an idea of being “nice”, which enhanced group solidarity. Being
“nice” among the girls entailed sharing, the aversion of physical and direct aggression,
and the avoidance of selfish acts. The tendency towards a single hierarchy was quite rare.
Isolating a member of the group was used but the boundaries were less defined than those
of boys. (Ibid. 614—615.)
The girls generally organised themselves in small groups ranging from two to four individuals. These groups usually had one girl who was of higher status than the other girls in the group. The highest-status girl was generally the one considered the most sociable and the most admired by others in the immediate group. Girls dealt with personal conflicts by exclusion from the group and by social manipulation. Social manipulation included gossiping, friendship bartering and indirectly turning the group against an individual. (Ibid. 614.)

High-status boys maximised the influence of hegemonic masculinity and minimised gender transgression by identifying social deviants and labelling them as outcasts. A continuous process of homosocial patrolling and stigmatising anomalies occurred. The typical labels the boys used were "gay", "faggot", "fag". The younger boys who got the label "deviant" were not allowed around the older boys as were some of the more hegemonically correct younger boys. (Ibid. 619.)

To play with girls, to be small, to lack co-ordination were reasons to become labelled as deviant. A couple of boys of pariah were used to represent what would happen to other boys who would transgress the boundaries of hegemonic masculinity. Because most of the boys were not sexually mature or knowledgeable, many of them may not have had an accurate conception of homosexuality or heterosexuality. (Ibid. 618.)

Just as the boys of the hegemonic masculinity patrolled their own sex, they monitored the activities of girls and kept them out of the boys’ domain. Girls who entered the boys’ realm, were made to feel inadequate by the boys. The few girls who did succeed in the boys’ sphere were either marginalised or adopted into boys’ middle-childhood culture as masculinised. Marginalisation or masculinisation depended on the girls’ overall athletic prowess and emotional detachment while in the boys’ sphere. (McGuffley & Rich 1999, 620—621.)

Gender transgression was virtually accepted among girls. Girls who dared to participate in the boys’ realm avoided stigmatisation by most girls but were often praised by other girls if they succeeded in the boys’ sphere. As a gender strategy, girls united together to combat the dominance of boys. Girls also accepted gender deviant boys into all their activities without a problem. These boys, nevertheless, had to adhere to the same principles of “niceness” as the girls did. (Ibid. 622—623.)

The findings suggested that hegemonic masculinity regulated boys’ homosocial boundaries and controlled the rules of gender negotiation and transgression for both boys and girls. Hegemonic masculinity was used to sustain the power of high-status boys over subordinated boys and over girls. It is possible to think that this kind of phenomena has nothing to do with Finnish youth. The discussions of Finnish youth, however, give different messages.

**Youth Discussing Sexuality**

Elina Oinas studied gender identity among young Finnish middle class women through their diary narratives on the first menstruation. The women were eight students in Women’s studies and their accounts of their teenage years were written in the 1970s and early 1980s.
The narratives described negative feelings connected with the first menstruation: panic, disgust, grief. The negativity was in many ways due to the images the young women had about the stereotypical and ideal Woman. But in spite of the negativity, the ideal woman in its many variations was a very central theme in the narratives, also when the writer clearly made a difference between the ideal and oneself. The narratives placed the woman in a realm characterised by either heterosexuality or reproduction. In both of these realms, the person existed not for herself, the young woman, but for the male order, and both of these positions – to be sexual or to be a mother – were often first mentioned and then rejected by the writers. (Oinas 1998, 78.)

Reproduction was given little relevance, although the most obvious female image with which the girls associated themselves was a future Mother. The sexually attractive woman and the power of the male gaze, in contrast, were central elements in the narratives: sexual attractiveness was highly valued and heterosexual male gaze seemed to define the status of young women. (Oinas 1998, 79—80.)

Sexual attractiveness was discussed in very similar ways throughout the material: the issue was treated as something some other girls possess, but not the writer herself. The distance was both symbolic and real. Sexually attractive young women were certain human beings of their school classes. And often they were young women who had a working-class background. (Oinas 1998, 82, 84.)

Riikka Pötsönen with her co-researchers studied the views of Finnish youth aged 13—15 as to sexuality, sexual experiences and experiences of sex education in school. The research included quantitative and qualitative components and the data was collected through questionnaires and group interviews. (Pötsönen, Välimaa 1993, Pötsönen 1998.)

The research results coincide with the research results of Elina Oinas as to the dominance: there was clear male dominance in the discourses of sexuality and sex acts of teenagers. Sexuality was by both sexes discussed only in heterosexual context and the term sexuality was associated with having sex. The respondents emphasised mutuality in decision-making about sexual acts, but the content differed: from the males’ side the content could be “not too much pressure” and from the females’ side “it is so difficult to say NO, if the boyfriend wants sex”. The reason for the difficulty mentioned by girls was the fear of becoming left. The discourses of sex by the young men were characterised by its displacement from emotional lives and by needs for independence while the young women emphasised these issues and caring in personal relations. (Pötsönen & Välimaa 1993, 17—20, 23.)

As to sex education, respondents of both sexes first shared the opinion that they get enough information. As an indication of that they named different condom brands and their prices. When discussing the issues in more details, the female respondents emphasised the need for discussion about human relations. The reason for that was the difficulty to discuss the issues with boys. The boys, however, did not admit any need for these discussions as a part of sex education. (Pötsönen & Välimaa 1993, 19—20, 38—39.)

Both sexes agreed that sex education at school was concentrated on sexual acts and its biological base and on the question of how to prevent unwanted pregnancy. Females added to this that girls were presupposed to be responsible for that in the discussions of the topic at school and also in intimate male relations. (Pötsönen & Välimaa 1993, 38—39, 41.)
Both of the two Finnish research reports show that the youth’s opinions of sexuality are constructed in terms of a male-defined, reproductively-focused heterosexual imperative, like also many international studies show (e.g. Jackson 1978, 1999, Mac an Ghaill 1995, Holland *et al.* 1991, 1998, Hillier *et al.* 1999). The reason is that as part of their socialisation, boys learn that having sex with a woman, and more specifically vaginal intercourse, is a central aspect of becoming and being masculine, a “real man” with its privileges, status and rewards. (Richardson 1997, 155, 161.)

Issues connected with power and autonomy seem to be very influential also when looking at the presence of sexuality and sexual acts of young women. But young women encounter contradictions around their sexuality. Women defending their own will with the quality of their sexual behaviour have to negotiate the issues of power and autonomy with their partners. They also want to discuss other issues connected with the quality of the relation, but to negotiate the issues seems to be difficult. The same is shown through a longitudinal research conducted by Janet Holland and her co-researchers in Great-Britain. (Holland *et al.* 1991a, 1995, 1998.)

Holland and her co-researchers developed the related themes of pleasure and pressure to illustrate young women’s contradictions in sexual relationships. They consider the pressures to define the young women’s sexual relationship in terms with men’s sexual needs are tied up with the fact that the ideology of male control of sexuality is a part of the social constitution of masculinity and femininity. (Holland *et al.* 1995, 261.)

Holland *et al.* classify the pressures that young women experience in sexual encounters in terms of the personal, the social and pressures coming directly from men supposing that the main pressures come from the men the young women are with and the meaning and importance they attribute to men’s sexual needs and behaviour. Holland *et al.* argue that young women can only assert sexual needs in terms of their own bodily pleasure if they can negotiate sexual boundaries with their partners. And they have to do it in ambivalence: there is no convention of agency-based and positive female sexuality. Because of that, those young women who wish to control their own sexuality have to be prepared to lose their valued social relationship with a partner or potential partner. (Ibid.)

Holland *et al.*, however, suggest that young people, men and women, have recently been actively engaged in constructing their own femininity and masculinity and sexuality, but in social situations in which they are both produced and constrained by discourses of power and by the way power relations between women and men are socially organised. In response to this gendering of sexuality young women are under pressure to construct their femininity in reaction to men’s construction of masculinity (Holland *et al.* 1998, 24) and thus subordinated to it.

**Conclusions**

To be a woman and especially to be a young woman in the present post-/re-colonised world is governed by numerous contradictory pressures. A special part of the contradictory pressures is connected with sexuality and power. Although a woman’s sexuality has recently been more free from the strict control of the Church and one’s
relatives than earlier in western societies, it still seems to be bound with power which has influence over her. It is also interconnected with violence.

The special type of violence women encounter is men’s violence against them in intimate relations or in a situation the intimate relation is over. It is not a new phenomenon nor a new subject in feminist discussions but these issues are topics of discussions more openly and commonly nowadays than earlier. Maybe the most central reason for that, in addition to feminist discussions, is the work done by the United Nations.

The public work done in the UN for eliminating violence against women, has, however, only a short history. For example the UN documents of human rights were discussed only on the level of the so-called public life, up to the year 1979. The first UN human rights document which reaches the sphere of family and the intimate area of life is the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. (Nousiainen 1998, 42.) The convention dates back to the year 1979. The entire convention is meant to prohibit discrimination against women, and it is thus justified to say that it also aims at prohibiting violence against women. The convention, however, does not use the term violence. Declaration of elimination of violence against women dating back to the year 1993 is the first international human rights instrument on the area. (United 1999, Pietilä 1999.)

As to Finnish school education and teacher education, the issues of power, domination, violence and sexuality in the context of real human relations seem to remain outside discussions or they are discussed only very narrowly. For example during the lessons of sex education in Finnish schools the issues of power, hegemony and violence are not usually dealt with. This statement becomes obvious while observing research results on these areas (Pötsönen & Välimaa 1993, Pötsönen 1998, Kontula 1998, Lintilä 1999).

Basic education and the time – 9 to 12 years – which boys and girls spend together in school is, however, meaningful for how they learn to value each other and what kind of relations they learn to maintain between each other. It is also influential as to their later adult relations as women and men. It is, thus, a big challenge to develop non-violent relationships and pedagogy based on that principle in schools. There is also a need to develop sex education which is holistic and which takes into account the issues of gendering and violence in human relations. These aspects need to be included in teacher education curricula and the student teachers need to be prepared to deal with these issues with children.
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8 Politics, Gender and Technology
Challenge of Emancipation in Technological Thought and Practice

Maria-Liisa Järvelä

Abstract
This article examines the triangle of politics, technology and gender by looking back at the modern project as it appears in the German anthropologist and philosopher Arnold Gehlen’s ideas of the origin and nature of man’s relation to technique and technology. Present and future views of egalitarian and sustainable technological policies are introduced with some practical examples of successful projects with women-centred, indigenous technologies in developing countries.

Introduction
The last decades of the twentieth century have seen a series of major historical events that have greatly changed the daily lives of millions of people. We have seen the breaking down of great narratives such as communism, but we have also witnessed the rise of some new ones, such as the diffusion and deepening of the information technology revolution, including genetic engineering.

At the turn of the millennium, we can also say that the rise of feminism and the crisis of patriarchalism have positively restructured the lives of many people in many parts of the world. This satisfying notion is, however, just one side of the coin; the capitalist postmodernity with the impressive metaphor of the *global village* is, as Ian Ang (1999, 367) puts it, “a thoroughly paradoxical place, unified yet multiple, totalized yet deeply unstable, closed and open-ended at the same time”, in short, “a *chaotic* system, where uncertainty is a built-in feature”.

What is to be feared in this brave new world is that the gap between the rich and the poor keeps widening and the power concentrating in the hands of the privileged elite – western, wealthy, white men with the knowledge of and the access to new effective technology. This state of affairs is frightening because it endangers the value system that promotes justice and equity. Therefore, the division of labour and capital within technology industry and commerce needs to be examined from global perspective, and from gender perspective. The intimate connection between political ideas and different forms of technology needs to be openly discussed on all forums. This claim seems particularly accurate to me living in Oulu – the city in Finland that comes closest to Silicon Valley in the whole of Europe.

In my previous article on new technology (Järvelä 1997), I claimed that the changing nature of mass communication and the accelerating development of media institutions raise many new ethical questions. In the same article, I also asked how the relations of domination are established and sustained by the use of technology in western societies. Today (end of 1999), I want to carry on this discussion by focussing on two aspects of technology and gender. First, I shall be moving back in time to the era before postmodernity, to the mid-twentieth century Europe. At this point I want to refer to Barbara Marshall (1994, 6) who claims that social science cannot understand “modernity” until it comes to terms with the one-sided story it has constructed, leaving out women (poor women, non-western women, unchilded women etc.). One “chapter” in this “one-sided story” is told by a German thinker, Arnold Gehlen, who has remained fairly unknown in Finland, but who had some interesting ideas of man’s relationship to technology, ideas that to my mind reveal how deeply intertwined the masculine technological hegemony was (and still is?) with the modern project. My intention then is to learn more about the philosopher, and the philosophy that praised and encouraged the accelerating development of those technical forms that are most valued in the western world.

From the modern project, I shall move over to the complex network of politics, technology and gender today, and in the near future. More specifically, I shall briefly describe the kind of technological policies that would support the idea of a more just economic and social development. This means, for example, alternative ways of estimating the value of different technological practices (such as indigenous and women-centred technologies) as well as ensuring indigenous people’s – especially women’s – access to technologies that are truly appropriate to them.

Attempting to draw a more optimistic picture of the present and future world also serves the personal purpose of making it easier for me to discuss severe global problems with my students; as a teacher educator, I see inequity in the politics of gender and technology as an illustrating example of global injustice, and revealing this injustice is a challenge that teacher education must face – especially in such a highly industrialised country as Finland. Admittedly, I share the fin de millénium pessimism that Mike Featherstone and Roger Burrows (1995, 1) speak of as a result of the “postmodern sensibility”, with the depressing assumption that there are no new moves visible in the horizon. However, Featherstone and Burrows make a good point by reminding us that in the 1960s, in a talk show with experts of futurology, there was no mention of the computers when predicting life in the 1990s, only automation with plenty of robots. It
may be wise then not to exclude any new, surprising elements when sketching the world some fifty years ahead!¹

Technik:² “Part And Parcel of Man’s Essence”

One of the great narratives that we have learned at school about history of the western world is that the combination of modernity and technology is, simply, a synonym of Progress (with a decidedly capital P). In fact, for the past 300 years, societies have been judged as progressive or backward depending on their practices and knowledge of European science and technology (Crewe & Harrison, quoted by Sweetman 1999, 2). This reverence for natural sciences, and today especially for new technology, offers a challenge to teachers and researchers in cultural studies, humanities and education to study and discuss the relationship between humans and technology from past, present and future perspectives. Interestingly, a contemporary German sociologist, Ulrich Beck (1988) has claimed that the gap between natural and cultural sciences is less unbridgeable in Germany than e.g. in England. It seems, indeed, evident that Germany has introduced a number of thinkers who have deeply considered the relationship between culture and natural sciences, some of them showing considerable Kulturpessimismus in their work. One of these German thinkers is Arnold Gehlen, a prolific writer during the period from the 1920s to the 1970s.

On the other hand, science and humanism have always been bedfellows; their arguments are “the wrangling of the two made into one flesh”, as the feminist anthropologist and philosopher Donna Haraway (1981, 470) has put it. Sociology and biology are bound together by the philosophical roots of anthropology. One of the concrete links between the natural and social sciences is the mastering of technique and technology, which is said to distinguish us from other mammals. This idea was put forward also by Arnold Gehlen, a German philosopher and anthropologist. Gehlen published his book Die Seele im technischen Zeitalter in 1957, but it was first published in 1949 under a different title Sozialpsychologische Probleme in der industriellen Gesellschaft.

Gehlen’s “explanation” for our dependency on Technik is rational: due to the “unfinished” character of the human organism at birth, man is born with Instinktarmut (instinctual deprivation) which leads to Weltoffenheit (world-openness), resulting in physically and biologically intolerable instability. Sounding quite “postmodern”, Gehlen speaks of the human condition of blurred and unclearly related entities. In this situation

¹. In my previous article (Jarvelä 1997), I introduced a science fiction utopia created by Sheri Tepper (1989), where men with their destructive technology had caused a holocaust which changed the world order: in order to preserve what was left of the globe, only women with a small number of “different” kind of men (called servitors) had access to technology.

². Gehlen’s book was translated into English in 1980 as Man in the Age of Technology. When discussing Gehlen’s ideas, I shall be using the English word technique in the same sense as Gehlen used the original German word Technik; being a very broad concept, Technik is to be understood more widely than technology. Some contemporary writers also want to emphasise that they use a broad definition of technology: for example Sweetman (1999, 2) referring to Everts (1998), defines technology as “an object which does something that works or helps.”
social institutions offer continuity and coherence in the uncontrollable and dangerous world. In 1957, Arnold Gehlen (1980, 3) wrote:

“If by Technik we understand the capacities and means whereby man puts nature to his own service, by identifying nature’s properties and laws in order to exploit them and control their interaction, clearly Technik, in this highly general sense, is part and parcel of man’s very essence.”

This statement deserves some critical comments. First of all, Gehlen’s notion of technique being “part and parcel of man’s very essence” can be read as a metaphorical notion of technique being absolutely indispensable to human life forms. This may be the case, but from the ethical perspective it is doubtful whether this human dependency on technique gives man the right to “put nature to his own service” in order to “exploit” nature’s “properties and laws” and “control their interaction”. Gehlen’s argument appears to me as a revealing example of the modern man’s rationality, which has in fact turned the western technological development into exploitation of nature and led our globe into an ecological danger zone with small chances to survive.

This definition of man’s relation to technique, given by Arnold Gehlen, can also be read as a reference to the human-technique dyad in a concrete sense, which again means that we can all be defined as cyborgs: technique is, indeed, “part and parcel” of us all, and more and more so as technology develops and we learn to use it and integrate it into our bodies. Gehlen was (in the 1940s and the 1950s) pointing to an essential feature of technological development, that is, to the unified entity of “man” and technique.

This unity of humans and technology is getting even more indivisible, not only in science fiction, but in people’s real lives. The analytical categories that help us to structure our world – the biological, technological, artificial, natural and human – are all getting blurred. One’s own spectacles or contact lenses, or a pacemaker or an artificial hip in an elderly relative’s body are familiar forms of cyborg-existence which we humans have rapidly got used to. The new forms – genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and highly advanced cosmetic surgery – can do a lot more: they change human bodies (and animal bodies if the humans so wish) into some kind of postbiological existence. (See Featherstone & Burrows 1999, 3—4.) It goes without saying that these prospects bring innumerable ethical problems that will be extremely difficult to solve in any egalitarian way.

### A Modern View on the Origin of Man’s Dependency on Technology

Gehlen’s idea of the origin of human dependency on technique is man’s success story: in order to survive, he learns to exploit and control the interaction of nature's properties and laws. Poorly equipped as man is, because of his Instinktarmut, with deficient sensory apparatus, naturally defenceless, naked, and possessing only inadequate instincts, man is a being whose existence necessarily depends upon action. Since man is not naturally adapted to a specific environment of his own, he is thereby thrown upon his ability to

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3. The term cyborg refers to cybernetic organism, a self-regulating human-machine hybrid, in which the machine parts become replacements that are integrated or act as supplements to the organism to enhance the body’s power potential (Featherstone & Burrows 1999, 2).
transform intelligently any preconstituted natural conditions. Intellect can thus be judged only in relation to action; its primary aim is the production of tools, of artefacts, that can be used by man in his attempts to bring about changes to the advantage of men, by diverting things from their own path and toward our own service. (See Gehlen 1980, 12.)

What I find interesting here are Gehlen’s overlapping notions of technology and magic. The above quotation of Technik (p. 4) actually refers to Maurice Paradines’ definition of magic, a definition that Gehlen claims can “encompass both magic and technique proper, thus both supernatural and natural technique”. It is essential to remember that the magical quality of technique makes it more than just an effort to achieve the goal via instrumental use of technology. For example, a car is more than a vehicle which takes us from one place to another: it has not just practical but also symbolic significance. Moreover, the symbolic value of the technical equipment we use is carried over to the acts and actions when we employ the equipment.

Gehlen backs up his argument of the relatedness of technique and magic by pointing out that both involve something anthropologically fundamental, viz. the concern and the need to ensure the regularity of the processes of nature, and to stabilise the world’s rhythm by smoothing out irregularities and exceptional occurrences. When strange events appear as unfavourable “signs”, magic/or technique must intervene to reinstate the usual uniformities of nature. This intervention is normally carried out by men, and quite often, it is carried out with violence. What Gehlen calls “a semi-instinctual need for stability in the environment” also implies a status quo state of affairs, with the conservative view of the world order.

Gehlen (ibid. 2) also introduced the idea of the dual quality of technique, and magic: the roughest wedge hewn of flint embodies the same ambiguity which today attaches to nuclear energy – it was a useful tool, and at the same time a deadly weapon. This ambiguity that Gehlen refers to is a “natural” outcome of the bond between technique and violence; and just like magic, technique tends to be conceived as either white or black. Technique truly mirrors man, says Gehlen: like man himself technique is clever, it represents something intrinsically improbable, it bears a complex, twisted relationship to nature. The world of technique embodies the features we associate with our images of A Great Man. Like that man, technique is inventive, resourceful, life-fostering but at the same time life-destroying. (Ibid. 4, 5.)

For Gehlen, technique with its rotating mechanisms and automatisms, represents something that is deeply rooted in the mind of mankind. In fact, man himself is an automatism with his heart and lungs and other organs. Due to the resonance phenomenon, man is eternally comparing himself to something non-human, to the other. Thus, the philosophising about the concept of technique brings along the ontological question of what is human.

The idea of technique as white or black magic illustrates the eternal human dilemma of the good and the bad. This ambivalence is put on the scene rather drastically in our attitudes towards advanced technology. On the one hand, advanced technology signifies potential threat to humanity, which is why eco-feminists claim that women should reject it

4. Stanley Kubrick’s film 2001: Space Odyssey (1968) illustrates the two sides of the technique with a beautifully shot metaphor: after realising how to use a slab as a tool, an apeman throws it and while flying in the air it is turned into a rocket in space.
(see Grint & Wolgaar 1995, 48ff). Some theorists (see Street 1999, 387) also claim that by breaking down existing boundaries, the new forms of communication are simultaneously dissolving the communities resulting in political life that is marked by instrumental, individualistic self-interest in which democracy based on public participation is impossible.

On the other hand, there are those who argue that this same new technology is creating ideal conditions for a new democratic order, *electronic democracy* (see Street 1999, 387). These technophiles think that new technology might offer solutions to the problems humankind has not been able to solve; perhaps technology can save the Earth from ruins and lift us from our species' physical and intellectual deficiency? Making the world a better place to live for all people, however, takes a lot more than just admiration of advanced technology: it demands a thorough analysis of technology in relation to gender and power, and of course, a lot of active political work and goodwill.

**Towards Egalitarian Sustainable Technology**

During the past three centuries, societies have been judged as progressive or backward depending on their knowledge of European science and technology. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that critiques of the transfer of mainstream "modern" technology began to gain ground. A focus on mostly large-scale, technically "sophisticated" technologies in urban industrial settings gave way to concerns to meet the rural dwellers for appropriate technology. As for appropriateness, those who deemed technologies "appropriate" were not men and women who would use or adapt them, but northern, predominantly male, experts. Their knowledge continued to be seen as superior to that of the producers and users of indigenous technologies, which were considered mediaeval and decayed. (See Sweetman 1999, Foster 1999.)

Now, more than a quarter of a century later, some commentators are drawing parallels between these ideas of modern technologies as the key to development. Comments are also currently made about information and communications technologies (ICT) including the Internet: promises of new opportunities for wealth and equity through ICT are matched by warnings of the dangers of non-participation. (See Sweetman 1999, 3.)

As John Street (1999, 387) has pointed out, technology is cultural: we live through our technology, our values and our identities both shape and are shaped by it. Technical systems and political values are not discrete entities, which is precisely why we must look at different technologies in order to see how they can be used by people who want to contribute to diminishing the gender gap and the class gap that now exist both in developing and industrialised countries. There is, in fact, a large array of valuable technological uses employed in developing countries that support fairness and equity for women and indigenous people, uses that witness of these people's technological skills and knowledge that have often gone unrecognised and undervalued. For example southern African women have always innovated and adapted technologies, integrating those from other cultures into their own. This dynamic approach to technology proves that the distinction between "traditional" and "modern" is meaningless and patronising. (See Sweetman 1999, Foster 1999.)
The delivery of technologies designed in the North to the South has been viewed by governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as the key to economic and social development. Caroline Sweetman (1999, 2, 3) argues, however, that women’s experiences of technological innovation has shown that this is a gross over-simplification: while technologies in varying social contexts can offer opportunities to challenge existing barriers to economic, social and political participation, they can also consolidate and even worsen existing power imbalances. What is crucial is to support technologies that enable women all over the world to generate income, to save their labour in home-based tasks and help them control their fertility. Women’s and men’s uses of technology are intricately linked with social and cultural factors such as the gender division of labour (see also Otysina & Rosenberg 1999, 45), which should be kept in mind when planning technological policies in collaboration with developing countries.

Studying a number of successful projects of sustainable technology by women in developing countries (see Gender and Development, July 1999) has given me faith in the possibility that market mechanisms may enable development workers to promote sustainable technical change more widely. I learned, among other things, about a project that promoted knowledge of contraceptives in rural Zambia, and about a Tanzanian technology programme supporting women as producers in agriculture and small-scale commodity production. Other examples of sustainable technological projects are also a pioneering tele-centre project in rural South Africa and a weaving project in India. The latter illustrates how the privileged act of naming enables those in power to project an interpretation and a description of the weaving women: they are seen either as skilled craftswomen or just cheap labour, depending on the speaker’s position in relation to these women. As Rachel Humphreys (1999, 56) has pointed out, it is most important to challenge the stereotypical conceptions of “women’s tasks” and focus on the values accorded to these skills, both in cultural and economic terms.

Conclusion

In this article I have discussed a number of issues linked with gender and technology, starting with a backward glance into the mid-twentieth century modern project with its admiration of man’s technical knowledge and skills. I wanted to shed some light on the recent history of ideas by introducing a conservative male view, represented by the German anthropologist Arnold Gehlen.

I also wanted to introduce such present and future views of technology that can make life look brighter for women living in difficult circumstances. I presented a progressive female version of some uses of technology serving the disadvantaged people, and specifically women, in developing countries. Women’s technological knowledge and skills have been severely undervalued, but by focussing forcefully on indigenous technologies and the appropriateness of these, the male-female power balance can be readjusted and women’s lives considerably improved.

Today the severe gender asymmetry in cyberspace is obvious and should be paid more attention to. Taking this into consideration new ways of using technology must be launched globally and the old appropriate technological uses should be strengthened so
that also the non-privileged groups of people can benefit from their knowledge and skills and thus receive the appreciation they deserve. Technological policies that are in accordance with local conditions, policies with sustainable egalitarian goals can, step by step, diminish the gender gap and class gap in cyberspace.

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Films

Pedagogical Reflections
The article discusses the changes and trends in the present society with a special focus on the versatile interrelatedness of different parts of the world. It considers the challenges set for teacher education by increasing diversity and internationalisation and how education should be changed to respond to and influence the tendencies. It deals with teachers’ competencies and the process of becoming interculturally and globally more sensitive. Finally it introduces the M.Ed. Programme in Oulu and preliminary results about its multicultural approach.

Our Varied but Interconnected Reality

Before you finished eating breakfast this morning, you’ve depended on more than half the world. This is the way our universe is structured… We aren’t going to have peace on earth until we recognise this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality.

The above quotation by Martin Luther King Jr. is often repeated to describe the present state of the world. Whether we agree on the number of countries we encounter in our day and daily lives, the basic fact cannot be denied: in many respects the world seems to shrink and interrelate. We cannot escape the variety and interdependence and globalisation of many phenomena. We know that pollution and ecocatastrophies affect the whole globe, but so do the realities of global economy, trade, fashions, global communication systems, ideological, scientific and technological revolutions.

Very often it is said that movement is the only permanent thing in the present societies. Still, there are megatrends in that change. Sometimes those trends are conflicting and paradoxical, which makes it even more perplexing for anyone to manage and make sense out of them. On one hand we experience globalisation of many aspects, but at the same
time the value of local cultures is cherished and emphasised, and to make it even more complex, nationalistic tendencies and upheavals emerge. Even though post-modern times are described as an era of a variety of values and cultures, neoliberalism and capitalism seem to overrule the western ideologies not only in economics but in other sectors and life worlds. In most western countries we are witnessing a decentralisation of administration, including education, but at the same time the schools and communities can be strictly controlled through financial resources, assessment and new demands. Equality, human rights and peace are part of daily discourses in politics and the educational sector, and at the same time many of the practices, such as privatising education and high competition between schools, may create tension and increase inequality and injustice.

Still, in the middle of many changes, tensions and conflicting tendencies, there are many reasons to believe that schools and societies have become more visibly multicultural and international, and Marshal McLuhan’s vision of the global village has become a reality. Marilyn Turkovich (1997) has given four reasons to believe so.

1. Interrelatedness of the world. Turkovich argues that the images conveyed in former schooling about a sharp split of the world (i.e. my own society vs. the rest of the world, domestic vs. foreign affairs) are no longer true presentations of society. Trade, business and electric communication recognise no borders, neither do world problems like pollution and the transport of drugs.

2. Global transformations. In addition to increasing interconnectedness there have been profound changes in the world’s socio-political and economic arrangements, which must be understood by citizens. Some of these changes are:
   - Many new nation-states have been born, others have integrated and formed big units like EU.
   - Local and global problems like poverty, inequality, oppression and war cause many citizens to challenge the viability of existing authorities and structures.
   - A global communication system brings the world to our living rooms in seconds.
   - There has been a dramatic increase in the number of public and private transactions between nation-states and in international affairs; non-state actors have increased their activities and become more influential in international affairs.

3. Expansion of cross-cultural experiences. Curricula, which have been predominantly monocultural, mono-national or Euro/Western-centric, will be challenged by the reality of the shrinking world. People migrate, live in different countries parts of their lives, travel for work and pleasure, communicate by means of new technology, find information about distant countries from internet. Communication may open new perspectives: realisation that there are many ways to understand things, many paths to development, and that knowledge is usually not neutral.

4. Expansion of civic responsibility and participation. As the realms of citizenship might expand from local and national to international levels in many respects, schools have to reconsider what skills are needed for the new citizenship. The old conceptions of cultural identity might also need re-evaluation as children live in bi- or tricultural families, learn several languages and cultures at home. Cognitive skills are not enough but multiple intelligences, e.g. emotional and ethical sensitivity, are needed in understanding other perspectives and creating a responsible civic culture (Boulding 1988). Roots and home communities are important for people’s growth, identity and
feeling at home, but these communities may in future be more versatile and include other important factors, not only nations and states. School classes have become visibly multicultural, they offer natural possibilities for cross-cultural intercourse. At the same time they offer excellent possibilities for intercultural education: to understand the role of culture in one’s perspectives but also to live peacefully with those who think differently. Young people live with media; at least in principle the means for developing also global awareness are available. However, the youth need tools to analyse and interpret all that information they receive. The expansion of knowledge presents many possibilities but also problems.

One reason for multiculturalism becoming more visible is the fact that many cultural groups which were not earlier recognised have now had their voice heard. In addition, the whole concept of multiculturalism has become more diverse and structured. It is realised that nationality is a vital part of the cultural background, but other aspects like ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, rural/urban background, age-group and especially languages can be equally important. In single persons’ identities these aspects can play a different role, subcultures form various combinations. Different sides of cultural identities are predominant at different ages and situations. Cultural identities are dynamic and in the process. Besides, no cultures are pure, also national cultures have always been influenced, creating and being created by other cultures and contain an abundance of subcultures. New cultures from abroad become part of national cultures, old national subcultures are recognised, and the awareness of cultural diversity and complexity increases – although there are also resisting forces emphasising strict migration rules, homogeneous national cultures and assimilation policy.

The multicultural and international reality is not easy for the teacher, particularly as it is not the only change and challenge to be coped with. Variety and richness of cultures, global interrelatedness, expansion of participation and responsibility require knowledge, new skills, and above all re-evaluation of earlier perspectives, attitudes and paradigms. Teachers are faced with the question of how to live with this reality and prepare new generations to meet difference, to co-operate and care for people, world and shared future – to take responsibility in the global village. The new situation presents teachers with many challenges and possibilities where value-questions have a central role; when changes are quick it is important to ask what is essential in education and human development from individual, communal and global perspective – what increases human and global well-being in the long run.

Teachers need courage, self-confidence and inspiration in their task. Teacher education can play an important role in supporting them, preparing for new competencies and offering the time, space and tutoring for dialogue, growth and reflection.

**Need for Wider Perspectives in Teacher Education**

Having worked in the group responsible for international affairs at the university level since the beginning of the 1990’s made me question several aspects when viewing educational departments and teacher education from that perspective.
The first question raised was why educational faculties became international later than most others although education was called for help in many interregional and global problems. In recent years international exchange of students and teachers and international research projects within education have rapidly increased, but for a long time it was more emphasised e.g. at technical and medical departments, and they also attracted foreign students and scholars.

Another question to be faced was whether teacher education prepares for professional and scientific co-operation across boundaries and whether it should do so. If it is considered an academic university education, international perspectives should be a natural part of it, particularly when considering the role of education in human development. If we also aim at educating active innovators for schools and educational policy, we need teachers who know more than one alternative, teachers who know how different states have solved the same problems and what we could learn from other cultures and countries – and what we could give in that co-operation.

From many points of view professional international co-operation seems vital for the advancement of schools and education. Still, the feedback from expatriate students is that teacher education in Finland is characteristically ethnocentric and strongly tradition-bound. There might be good reasons for that in many respects, cultural self-identity and traditions are important. However, the aims and programmes should also be re-examined from the point of view of the new national multiculturalism, international professional co-operation and global interrelatedness. Very often there seems to lie a subconscious fear of losing your identity if you work in close contact with other cultures and study their understandings of the world. Most often that is not true, in cross-cultural intercourse you learn also about yourself and your own cultures. You can be multiculturally and globally oriented and still maintain a critical attitude towards supranational tendencies that are threats to cultural richness, or practices that violate human rights and equality in your own and other cultures.

An issue that has often worried us as teacher educators was our experience that few teacher trainees are interested in social issues and world affairs during their time at teacher education departments. Their main concern is, maybe understandably, in didactics and developmental psychology, how to cope in the classroom situation with different individuals. However, for understanding the situations and their development, knowledge of social psychology and sociology is of vital importance, too. The teacher trainees’ focus of interest raised at least two questions in my mind: Does teacher education perpetuate the ideal of didactically skilful, individual-centred teacher, neglecting the other aspects of the work? Do teacher education students still mainly come from very safe, monocultural backgrounds, and should teacher education pay special attention to providing different experiences and practice periods, getting acquainted with pupils’ cultures and backgrounds, increasing knowledge of the whole spectrum of life? My intention is not to deny the central value of working skilfully in the classroom with the students in the particular school, but to open the perspective of the interrelatedness of education and other sectors of society. Pupils and students have their histories, contexts and other areas of life besides school. They live in certain societies and institutions which are historically and culturally constructed and which have an effect on them physically and mentally. These students are citizens of future societies, which at the moment are increasingly
interrelated. Teachers have a special role in the creation and forming of the future world, maybe even more so when horizons seem unclear and unstable.

Looking at the teacher education programmes I also had to ask how they will prepare future teachers for the multicultural and international reality of today and what could be done to develop the programmes in that respect. Teacher education programmes have long and strong traditions, they are already now very tight, versatile and fragmented into small content areas. To introduce any new contents or perspectives into the old structures seems difficult; the usual result is that schedules become even more hectic as none of the former elements change but the new substance is added on top of the old ones. It is difficult to deny the need of preparing for multicultural schools and intercultural relations at teacher education, but to integrate these perspectives into the actual programmes needs commitment, experimentation and further training of the staff at teacher education departments.

A lot of questions have to be asked in the more international teacher education process, e.g. what the aims, approaches and basic assumptions are behind it, what kind of competencies teachers of a global village need, and how they could be developed.

**The Varied Interpretations of Internationalisation and Intercultural Education**

Internationalisation and multiculturality have got varied and different meanings, contents and aims at schools. Very often language skills, knowledge and experience about other cultures are mentioned as main content areas. At present, technology and computers have gained a lot of attention as means of communicating with distant regions and cultures. The variety of meanings also applies to the educational institutions which in one way or another have profiled themselves in international or multicultural aspects. Originally very many international schools were elite schools with high fees, and they aimed at certain cultural and academic standards and ideas. In spite of their international definition, they could follow the curriculum of one particular country, e.g. the USA, Britain, France. Students in the schools, however, could represent many nationalities, and the schools in that respect could be very multicultural, and students learnt intercultural communication in their daily co-operation.

On the other hand, the history and position of the UNESCO-schools have been different. They are usually normal state schools with a special mission to work towards the aims of the United Nations declarations for democracy, international understanding, collaboration and peace. International schools have been categorised in several ways. In attempting to group them according to their observable characteristics, or ethos, Matthews (1988) emphasised the divergence of the underlying philosophy which he believed to lead to a division between ideology-driven and market-driven schools. The former were founded for the purpose of furthering international understanding and cooperation, the latter arose mainly from the needs of particular groups of expatriate communities, companies or government agencies.

There are also big differences in the range of internationalisation and cultures included. There are schools which concentrate more on two national or ethnic cultures. In
many schools, the emphasis seems to be on Europe, and it is one of the strategies of the
European Union to include modules of European dimension in the school curricula and to
guarantee the so-called European standards in schools. There are, however, schools which
systematically aim at a wider perspective and which strive above all for global awareness,
responsibility and sense of togetherness in spite of differences.

Multiculturalism is a very complex and versatile term like internalisation as culture
itself can include almost any aspect of life, and more and more emphasis has been given
to cultural subgroups like ethnicity, social class, religion and gender. In many cultures the
life-worlds of men and women can be very different, the same country can be socially and
religiously very multicultural, and many schools that consider themselves international
can be very monocultural, e.g. from the social class point of view.(Gollnick & Chinn
1990, 15.)

Models of educating for internationality and multiculturality often follow the
mainstream idea about constructing identity. First you learn about your own culture, then
about your neighbours, then Europe and finally other cultures. That approach was maybe
valid before television, videos and computers. At the moment, it is problematic, however,
because if giving knowledge about other cultures is postponed at school, mass media
form pictures about them, and it is difficult to correct or reconstruct these images any
more. That is why I think that in the present world we need more careful planning in
introducing other cultures. Pupils need “mirrors” of other cultures to reflect and
understand their own ones. From fairly early on students need knowledge about near-by
and remote cultures to understand that people are simultaneously similar and different and
share the same globe. It is also essential to realise how versatile and multicultural nations
and ethnic groups in themselves can be. Whether education concentrates on differences,
conflicts, and competition, or whether it emphasises diversity with collaboration,
responsibility, care, and peaceful problem-solving, is also a central issue.

Approaches towards multicultural education have been categorised in many ways, and
institutions differ in their approaches. Banks (1989) has divided teachers’ approaches to
multiculturality into five differing categories, which of course can also overlap in a single
teacher’s actions:
1. teaching the culturally different as if they were the exceptional or retarded and should
catch up with the norm
2. approach that emphasises positive human relations
3. approach where problems are solved by adding separate courses
4. multicultural education approach
5. education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist.

The first argues that there is a corpus of knowledge that everyone should learn, and
deviations from that content should be only temporary. In order for exceptions to be able
to reach the common core, instructional procedures and special education are paid a lot of
attention to, in addition to making use of the students’ learning styles.

The basic belief in the second approach is that a major purpose of the school is helping
students learn to live harmoniously in the world that is becoming smaller. The human
relations approach teaches positive feelings among all students, encourages group identity
among students of various cultures, and tries to reduce stereotypes, prejudices, and biases.
The approach of teaching the exceptional and the culturally deviant usually emphasises
helping students to acquire cognitive skills and knowledge in the traditional curriculum,
while the human relations approach concentrates on attitudes and feelings people have about themselves and others.

The adding-single courses approach usually concentrates on an aspect or a group that has been neglected in society, and aims at raising the status of and respect for that group. The approach involves introducing new elements into the traditional curriculum, making significant changes in what is normally taught, and providing a profound study on specific groups and a critical examination of their deprivation.

According to Banks, the fourth approach called multicultural education approach advocates a total school reform to make schools reflect the cultural diversity of the world. It aims at giving equal attention to a variety of cultural groups, whether they are represented at school or not. The curriculum includes perspectives, experiences, and contributions e.g. from people of colour, low-income people, men and women, and people with disabilities. Its goal is to show the whole spectrum of life in order to reduce prejudices towards and discrimination of oppressed groups, and to support equal opportunities for all.

Education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist extends the previous approach in that special attention is paid to students’ social awareness, and particularly to analytical and critical thinking and social skills in shaping their circumstances and the society around them – and their destiny. That is why democracy must be practised at school, and Banks emphasises that in order to understand democracy students must live in it. Students should have the opportunity to make decisions on important issues and problems, and take action to solve them, in order to later reform society toward greater equity.

Very often multicultural education in schools and teacher education departments has been realised through theme-projects which familiarise students with different cultures. The projects can be very interesting, exciting, and exotic, and might raise interest towards the area. However, being often short-term and fragmented, they sometimes even increase stereotypes and naive views of other cultures. Superficial, short-term theme-weeks have sometimes been called “pedagogical tourism” which implies the visitors’ role.

Sonia Nieto (1996) has criticised the simplistic approach to multicultural education in her book Affirming diversity and has given guidelines for a more thorough and pervasive approach. She emphasises that multicultural education is not a question of methods and projects but a philosophy, a way of looking at the world; and that is why it is present throughout the school and needs changes in the total curriculum. She also states that multicultural education is not only for minority students or ethnically mixed groups, but it is about all people and for all. It is often the majority that most needs attitude change and awareness of themselves. Multiculturality being the reality of today, Nieto considers multicultural literacy as important as reading, writing and arithmetics. She remarks that monocultural education deprives all students of the diversity that is a part of our world. It emphasises ethnocentrism and thus makes transforming perspectives and mental border-crossing increasingly difficult. According to Nieto, multicultural education is not neutral but strongly value-laden, antiracism and human rights being its core aim. She points out that oppression and racism in all their forms are destructive and demeaning to everyone. She encourages active participation and open discussion about social injustice, poverty, discrimination, and gender issues.
Nowadays the term multicultural education has often been substituted by inter- or cross-cultural education. People have different reasons for preferring these terms: some people do not like all the aspects of the earlier definitions for multicultural education, others want to emphasise that it is not enough to recognise different cultural perspectives in the society and on the globe, but the representatives of the groups should learn to live together and learn from the discourse and dialogue. However, the distinction between terms is not clear and different theorists’ definitions of the same term can differ to a certain extent; the writers can also use different terms but still mean the same thing. Personally, when talking about education, I prefer to use the combination of two terms: intercultural education and education for global awareness. With the first one I want to emphasise multicultural perspective but also the need for intercourse between the cultures and the dialogue which is a continuous learning process for all participants. Education for global awareness can be included in intercultural education but if we want to make sure that the education aims at opening perspectives outside the immediate surroundings towards global citizenship, the combination of the two terms may be needed. Also the term international education can be used for raising global awareness, as long as the meanings are the same.

Teacher’s Competencies for the Global Village

When planning and evaluating intercultural teacher education programmes, the same criteria as with any teacher trainees must be used, and qualifications like creativity, innovativeness, reflectivity, concern for children, and basic teaching skills should be mentioned. In addition to that, special criteria for working in multicultural and international contexts must be added, and their development can be observed separately.

Many writers like Bennett and Noel emphasise that particularly when societal changes are fast and we educate for an interconnected world, technical competence is not enough, but teacher education should involve awareness of broader social and educational issues in addition to a pedagogue’s skills (e.g. Bennett 1995, Noel 1995). They also remark that teacher trainees often come from very secure backgrounds and have little understanding of the whole of society. They claim that issues like ethnocentrism, power, equality, stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and minority oppression are seldom found in teacher education agendas.

The other important requirement Bennett and Noel set for culturally sensitive teacher education is awareness of how our community and background effect us. In order to be able to see that, we must go beyond names and birthplaces to the factors that have shaped our beliefs, attitudes, values, and traditions. According to Bennett, cultural consciousness-raising is a process of bringing one’s own culture to the level of awareness, which makes it possible to perceive it as a potential bias in social interaction, and in the acquisition and transmission of skills and knowledge. Understanding this helps us to be more open to the ideas and values stemming from other cultures, not to see things as black and white but mostly as historically and culturally developed phenomena.

The third criterion Bennett (1995, 263) distinguishes in multicultural teacher education is developing special intercultural competencies. According to her, this includes
intellectual and emotional commitment to the fundamental unity of all humans, but at the same time, acceptance and appreciation of the differences between individuals and cultures. Interculturally competent teachers are aware of the diversity of cultures, but they know that cultures are ever-changing, and they are conscious of the dangers of prejudices and stereotyping. They know that if they do not make constant efforts to see the cultural attributes of others, they are likely to be guided only by their own cultural lenses. Bennett emphasises that key elements in intercultural competencies are informed empathy, role-taking, and dialogue. Intercultural dialogue increases understanding of otherness, and through this we also enrich our self-understanding by trying to consider our beliefs, values, and actions from a fresh standpoint (Noel 1995, 268). Intercultural dialogue presupposes also many practical skills like being able to communicate in each others’ mother tongue or at least via some common language.

Bennett (1995, 263) also distinguishes a fourth demand for a teacher of a global village: to develop a commitment to combat inequality, racism, as well sexism, and all forms of prejudice, oppression, and discrimination through the development of understanding, attitudes, and social action skills. She argues that acquiring multicultural literacy and appreciation of cultural diversity will not necessarily help teachers to put an end to prejudice, but that the emphasis should be on clearing up myths and stereotypes that foster beliefs about the badness or inferiority of different races and cultures. This should also include awareness of institutional and cultural racism and power structures in the world. According to Bennett, the ultimate goal of multicultural teacher education is to develop teachers who work against prejudices and racism.

In addition to that, there are special pedagogical skills that experts in intercultural and international education need. They must be aware of the various approaches to intercultural education, and of how the approaches could be implemented in schools and education. They should be conscious of its basic values, and have knowledge of the aims, methods, teaching material, and curricula. They should also realise that intercultural education and education for global awareness are not techniques or a set of methods but a perspective or a philosophy that permeates everything and influences all aspects of education and school life.

Developing societal consciousness, cultural awareness, intercultural competence, special pedagogical expertise, and antiracist action requires the cultivation of intellect and attitudes, but also skills and courage. Teachers should learn to translate their philosophies and knowledge about cultural diversity and similarity into plans for use with students in wider contexts. Multicultural school and society need teachers who are autonomous and courageous enough to tackle problems whenever they see injustice and inequality.

The Process of Becoming Interculturally and Globally Sensitive

Most of the writing and research on intercultural competence has focused on identifying characteristics of successful intercultural intercourse and the phases in intercultural development. Less research has taken the perspective of learning – how it is that people become interculturally competent. Still, understanding the learning process is essential for developing more efficient educational programmes and for identifying the factors that
can aid learners during their experiences. Bennett (1993) and Taylor (1994) are some of the few people concentrating on the learning aspect. Taylor has applied Mezirov’s transformative learning theory to illustrate the process of developing intercultural competence, and Bennett has introduced a personal growth model from ethnocentrism through various stages to greater recognition and acceptance of difference.

When strangers stay in contact with another culture, they, according to Taylor, are forced to experience transformation, which means that they must look at their world from a different point of view—a perspective which might be in conflict with their values and beliefs. Intercultural transformation means “a gradual change in the internal conditions of individuals as they participate in extensive intercultural activities”. Some kind of culture shock is often the core experience that a person must transcend to achieve a higher state of cultural awareness and self-awareness. Several stages have been separated in this learning/growth model.

Taylor emphasises that becoming interculturally competent requires perspective transformation, which usually occurs either through a series of cumulative transformed meaning schemes or as a result of an acute personal crisis or shock. Those meaning schemes are like a “double-edged sword”—they give meaning to our experiences but at the same time limit our perception of reality. These meaning perspectives are often acquired uncritically in the course of our childhood through socialisation, mostly during significant experiences with parents and teachers. These assumptions may constrain us but can also be transformed or widened gradually if wanted and the conditions stay favourable.

Bennett is especially interested in the way people construe cultural difference and in the varying kinds of experience that accompany these different constructions. He argues that intercultural sensitivity is not natural, but must grow and be developed. It grows from the realisation that one’s own culture is just one meaning-making in a variety of worldviews. Learning is expanded understanding and awareness of other perspectives. (Bennett 1993, 24—26.) Instead of perspective transformation Bennett talks about the ability for perspective shifts.

The outcomes of the learning process can be seen in cognitive, affective, and behavioural skills. Cognitive outcomes are seen as an increase in a person’s capacity for perspective-taking. The affective outcome is seen in a person’s development of aesthetic and emotional co-orientation with the others. And, behaviourally the person is able to perform many of the required social roles in another culture or situation. As prerequisites for change Taylor names, in addition to what was mentioned earlier, critical reflection, and particularly self-reflection. However, he points out that critical reflection alone will not lead to a perspective transformation, but it needs to take place in conjunction with action and discourse. One should explore, experiment, and experience new roles in the other culture. It also means seeking out new skills and knowledge. Furthermore, the stranger ideally needs to be in dialogue with others, to get constant feedback. It is through a learning process inclusive of critical thinking, seeking out new skills and knowledge, action, and discourse that the stranger interprets the meaning of her/his experiences and develops intercultural competencies. (Taylor 1994, 399—400, cf. Bennett 1993, 26.)

Although Bennett’s and Taylor’s theories in many ways sound very comprehensive, there are certain questions one may raise. They base their theories mostly on situations where learners stay a longer time in contact with other cultures and experience the need to
change in order to survive and cope with the context. They also consider individual persons' learning processes in a peaceful context. Although there are similar features in the processes they differ according to the life situations and history of the people. The relations of the two cultures can be historically traumatic and the relations between people become extremely complex at war time. That is why education for intercultural competencies should aim both at good relations between individuals and at educating courageous and critical citizens who influence their societies to prevent oppression and war.

Pedagogical situations for example in the classroom are different from natural settings and that is why they need special considerations as to how perspective-taking or transformation can take place in such “artificial” circumstances. Experiences, dilemmas, and solutions have to be specifically planned and monitored.

Taylor suggests some features of educational practice that would foster transformative learning in the educational settings. They include (a) recognising that learning to be interculturally competent is a process, involving a series of interconnected events, a variety of approaches and experiences over time – that is why educating should be comprehensive, diverse, and long term; (b) creating supportive and safe learning environments; (c) encouraging the trainee to be critically reflective; and (d) emphasising the experiential and participatory instructional methods. (Taylor 1994, 406.) Bennett particularly emphasises inductive approaches such as discussions, simulations, reports of personal experience and other methods of discovery. He also considers the role of the representatives of other cultures as resource persons in the learning situations to be vitally important. (Bennett 1993, 45—46.) Taylor does not pay attention to the teacher’s/mentor’s/facilitator’s role in the learning process; Bennett bases his advice on his theory of stages: the teacher should be aware of the learners’ stages and be at least one level ahead of them.

Both Bennett and Taylor speak about perspective-taking, understanding, acceptance and adaptation. They are all mostly important elements in intercultural relations. However, they also raise questions. Understanding does not mean the same as approving everything. In addition to intercultural sensitivity, education in the global village should sensitisate to the global reality, its great possibilities but also inequality, power structures, and the fight for recourses, which mostly have caused suffering, wars and conflicts. In the interdependent, conflict-sensitive world education should promote knowledgeable peacemakers and the search for common ethical principles to safeguard the existence and well-being of the earth and humankind. (Gerle 1988, Räsänen 1996, 1999, Our creative diversity 1995.)

The human rights documents are manifestations of this pursuit. The process has not been easy, the series of human rights documents is unfinished and the dialogue about ethical principles and their interpretations between cultures must continue. In the present discussion, the relationship between the universal and specific has become central: which are the ethical principles that should be valid globally, which ones can and should be specific to different cultures, societies, groups and individuals. (Sunnari & Räsänen 1994, 149—162.) Although we might understand some violations of human rights through the history and traditions of some group, it does not justify tolerating suffering, oppression, violence and injustice on the basis of culture. In addition to information about cultures and individuals students need knowledge about societal, local, and global structures that
create or prevent equity and justice. They also need to know how to affect these structures.

**International Teacher Education in Oulu as an Attempt to Widen Horizons**

We have tried to respond to the requirements of the global village at the Department of Teacher Education in the University of Oulu by starting a new M.Ed. international programme, which provides students with a Master’s degree and a teacher’s diploma, but attempts to give special competence and skills for working in international and multicultural reality. The process has been challenging both for teachers and students: there is a lot to be learnt but some of the most urgent questions have got at least tentative answers. The experimenting group shares a commitment to the learning process and a conviction that teacher education should be developed into a less ethnocentric direction.

The selection of 20 students for the programme yearly (since 1994) has not been easy. Special attention has been paid to language skills, knowledge about society, previous studies or work in multicultural contexts, and above all interest in the role and nature of education in people’s life and world’s future. The selection boards have also stated that they are looking for innovative and critical reflectors who would become caring and active members of school and society. Collaboration skills are also paid attention to, but they are areas to be considered during the whole programme, too.

One special selection criterion has been to choose groups of students that in themselves would be multicultural. Thus the students’ native places vary from Helsinki to Utsjoki, from cities to countryside, and the groups have representatives from minority cultures and some graduates from other nationalities. Some of the students have stayed years abroad for example in Scandinavia, Europe, Saudi-Arabia, Asia, or Africa, others have no extensive experience about intercultural contacts or working in multicultural contexts. Foreign exchange students study with the groups and bring cultural richness to them.

Although the language of tuition is largely English for practical purposes, students are encouraged to study other languages, and there are speakers of rarer languages like Saami, Arabic, Swahili, and sign language. Geographically, too, the students’ interests vary: some of them want to work in Finland in multicultural classes, others aim at international schools and development or research work with neighbouring countries, in Europe or outside Europe. Fairly many are interested in development co-operation projects with the Third World.

One third of the studies in the M.Ed. programme is similar to that of other students in teacher education, one third partly similar with special orientation, and one third specifically planned for the international groups. The special courses introduce cultures, educational systems and policies of various countries, deal with intercultural education, comparative education, and global issues and education (equality, peace and conflict solving, human rights, environmental aspects, theories of knowledge and development).

At the very beginning of their studies, students take part in the simulation project called ICONS (international communication and negotiation skills), where students
representing different countries discuss current issues in world affairs via computers and video. The simulations are preceded by thorough study of the topics and of the respective country. One year students represented Namibia, which was meant to familiarise them with the country and give an idea of the role and position of a small, independent African country when negotiating with world powers about trade, health, environment, education. The aim of the project is to open a global perspective and to show the interrelatedness of different parts of the world, and education and other sectors of life. Its purpose is also to raise societal and ethical questions and deliberations from the very beginning.

Within the first two years students learn about European educational systems and cultures, educational philosophers and policies. The study units include excursions to Russia and/or Baltic states, some Scandinavian and European country/countries, and lectures about other countries are mostly given by the representatives of the respective cultures. Teaching practice is partly done in practice school, the other half students can plan individually according to their interests and aims of the programme. The choices have included multicultural and special classes in Finland and abroad (e.g. Romani and Sami people, small countryside and big city schools, refugee centres, international schools, development co-operation projects). The third year course on global issues turns the attention back to world-wide concerns. Comparative education and research methodology provide competencies for research on multicultural and international issues.

During the first three years, tutoring sessions and studies in intercultural education run parallel to all other studies. They aim at providing continuous, long-term experience and reflection on different cultures, and raise discussion about students’ professional development in a secure atmosphere. The tutors develop the programme together with students, collect feedback about its meaningfulness, and discuss students’ orientations and intercultural learning processes.

Advanced studies include longer periods of working practice, and a research paper, written either in Finnish or in English and hopefully containing intercultural or comparative aspects. Most of the students have decided to take parts of their minor subject studies or collect their research data abroad. Some comparative research in collaboration with students from other cultures has started to emerge.

### Some Preconditions and Limitations for the Development

From many perspectives, the experiences with international teacher education have been encouraging. The students have learnt from their multiculturality and claim that studies have added to their cultural understanding, widened their perspectives, and increased courage and societal initiative. The excursions and different practice periods, which have been preceded by careful preparation, have been especially educating. Meeting and working together with members of other cultures have helped to understand each other. However, it seems to be equally important to learn to see in ourselves the culturally-built dispositions, value systems, and ways of thinking that make it difficult to be open to new ideas and meet otherness. Finding these growth-preventing constructions has often been most painful both for students and teachers. Very often the reason for the change has not been any sudden incident, but a series of successive experiences or pieces of knowledge
which have challenged or caused friction with earlier dispositions or frames of reference concerning other cultures or state of the world.

According to the students' experiences at least the following conditions are favorable for the intercultural learning processes.

1. Supportive and safe learning environment, where people dare express their own ideas, beliefs and opinions. Students know that they are listened to and respected, they are given space and voice.

2. Dialogue where different people and cultures meet on equal terms and learn from each other. Representatives of different cultures, experts of various knowledge areas and people with differing life experiences have an important role in that dialogue.

3. Critical and many-sided evaluation of one’s own and other people’s views from various perspectives, also from new and unexpected ones. The group whose interest is not to decide who is right or who is wrong but to find together various alternatives and best possible solutions is an ideal learning community.

4. Combination of experiences, their reflection and further reading. The experiment has proved that different kinds of experiences are important for developing intercultural and global sensitivity. At the same time it has shown that mere experience does not guarantee anything: people can travel around without ever questioning ethnocentric perspectives or knowledge about other countries. Experiences should be prepared well, reflection must be given time and space, tutors and representatives of the respective culture and knowledge area are important in the reflection. Students need feedback, further reading and inspiration.

5. Learning units should be long and many-sided enough in the central aims and content areas. One of the main problems in teacher education is its fragmented nature and lack of integration, which makes it difficult for students to see the essential questions of education, and for tutors to organise deep and peaceful learning experience.

6. Tutors have an important role in facilitating the learning process and developing the programme. Partly the process, literature and courses can be planned, but very many of the best learning situations arise unexpectedly from the natural experiences and dilemmas during seminars, practices, excursions.

7. Discussions about values and the role of education in the world’s future are important in international teacher education.

Students have mostly emphasised the role of five aspects in their intercultural development: 1.) meeting representatives of other cultures and experiences in different contexts and cultures, 2.) contents of studies that expand the horizons and world view, 3.) studies in ethics, 4.) the role of a safe but challenging group, 5.) the importance of the tutor who supports, encourages and opens new perspectives.

The students have been particularly satisfied with their studies in ethics, global issues and international communication and negotiation skills. The study group and its ethos seemed to be of vital importance as well as the tutors. It was surprising to the coordinators how essential the tutors’ role was considered in the learning process. In the more pupil-centred approaches the challenges for the tutor are big: in addition to understanding his/her own biases he/she should be able to question them in his/her students, suggest suitable reading material for various students, and help students with their different learning processes. The group and the tutors also have an important task in
collecting, reflecting and conceptualising the experiences that varied practices, reading material, excursions and cultural encounters offer.

Development of intercultural and global competencies is a long process, which is never finished or perfect. That is why it is essential that intercultural and global aspects would be integrated in the whole curriculum. Development presupposes holistic approach, understanding of, and commitment to the basic philosophy of intercultural education. In addition to skills and critical reflection it is essential to nurture in students care, courage, and confidence about the importance of teachers’ work and their possibilities to manage and make improvements.

The conditions for the holistic approach from the intercultural perspective are not always easy in the traditional teacher education. The main problem seems to be the full curriculum which makes it almost impossible to introduce new elements. Integrating the multicultural perspective does not sound easy either. The result usually is that students study the same contents as before and the new substance is added on top of everything else. Partly this has happened in the M.Ed. programme, which makes students’ workload very heavy. Pressure towards similarity has also been obvious both among teachers and other students. It took time before the new programme was accepted and any suggestion for difference or change was first considered a threat or inconvenience. Dissimilarity was mostly regarded as a shortage not as an addition or richness which could be shared. One problem was teaching practice; it was hard to believe that students learnt if they were not supervised or controlled by the staff members in the practice school.

One reason for the initial difficulties were the various interpretations of international or intercultural education. Both students and teachers should have a common understanding of the approach, e.g. the ethical undertone of the intercultural education in Oulu. Some members of the staff were also concerned about the lack of national contents and identity in the programme. A sensible balance is important; still, according to our experiences intercultural encounters increase reflection on one’s own culture as well. The programme has also increased critical attitudes towards international power structures and threats of cultural integrity.

Is there Hope to Meet the Challenges?

Some of the experiences with the M.Ed. programme have been frustrating: the old structures both in institutions and in our heads seem to change very slowly. The structures and conventions of teacher education are strong and the traditional approach ethno- and Western oriented. Partly that is justified but mostly needs fundamental reforms considering the present state of the world.

Mostly the experiences and results have been positive, however. The clear learning results among students and the commitment of the key members of the staff have been very rewarding. The old structures have also started to change — slowly but steadily. Very often the problem is that we are too impatient with our reforms. Everything should change in a day or two. Being impatient we do not give members of the staff justifications which would prepare them for the change so that the interpretation of the aims, contents and approaches would be similar.
I am particularly concerned about teacher education as I consider teachers’ role essential when educating future world citizens for intercultural competence and global awareness. An enthusiastic teacher who cares for people, cultures, environment and the present state of the world, can best open these perspectives to his/her students. Intercultural and international education should not any more be the privilege of the few; the issues and aspects concern everybody in one way or another. It is not realistic to think that people, cultures and nations could be kept separately in future – and I do not consider it desirable either. Instead, we could learn from cultural dialogue and from expanding our world views and look forward to an exciting and interesting challenge for ourselves and future generations. If there is a will there is a way. The educators have the key role in affecting the way the world moves ahead.

References

10 Skills and Competencies Needed by a Multiculturally Oriented Teacher – Philosophical Considerations

Satu Haapanen

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to outline some philosophical foundations for intercultural competency requirements set for teachers’ profession. These requirements derive from the changes in the society and in the surrounding world. Consequently, these requirements have an impact on teacher education that has to find the means to respond to the changes and new challenges of the profession. Competency requirements are viewed from three perspectives: from general characteristics of education, from contextuality of educational situations and from the philosophy of multicultural education. In the end, an effort is made to sketch some categories of competencies that would seem to characterize the work of a multiculturally oriented teacher in the present society.

Introduction

Teachers’ intercultural competencies are under discussion and evaluation in many countries. Traditional pedagogical skills and competencies required from a teacher do not seem to be enough to respond to the challenges teachers face in their everyday work that has become increasingly more multicultural by its nature.

Nevertheless, many teachers still act as if changes did not happen around them in the fields of internationalisation and multiculturalism. Their strategies to cope with multiculturalism in their school environment often vary from an assimilationist approach to an approach where problems are solved by adding separate courses as Räsänen has described in her article in this report. Only few teachers seem to have adopted a multicultural approach in their teaching.

Certainly many explanations have been given to this lack of a multicultural approach in teaching. An often-heard explanation is that teachers come from a secure background,
from middle class families with modern values. Due to their own monocultural background they have no tools to handle the continuously changing situation in culturally diverse classrooms. However, this explanation tends to simplify the complexity of multicultural teaching competency by giving it a status of a “natural gift” that is possessed only by those with a multicultural background and experiences. Moreover, such a justification makes the whole issue of multicultural education look an almost impossible task to fulfill by any teacher, which leads to a danger of not taking it seriously at all. A person’s background and life history cannot be taken as determinative factors so that they would wholly explain the way one teaches and reacts to multiculturalism\(^1\). Attention has to be paid also to teacher education, its effectiveness and to the experiences one has had on multiculturalism before and during one’s education.

However, there seems to exist a gap between teacher education and a reality teachers meet in practice in the field of multicultural education. Traditional teacher education does not seem to offer enough tools for coping with multiculturalism. One reason for this, as I see it, is that the paradigms of traditional teacher education originate in modern developmental thinking. How do the traces of modern developmental thinking then show themselves in teacher education?

Philosophically teacher education as it appears at the moment seems to fulfill two main purposes: the idea of universal education and the idea of development. Teacher education prepares teachers to teach all the children, hence fulfills the principle of universal schooling which aims at offering education to all the children. This right to educate oneself or one’s child, arising directly from the Declaration of Universal Human Rights, is at the same time closely connected to the idea of development. By development the educational authorities and other power holders do not, however, necessarily mean the independent development of an individual child to her/his fullest potential. Instead, the word development is often connected to the development of a nation and especially, to the economical development of a nation. Development begins to mean both ideological unity among the citizens but also an economical development. In other words, philosophy of a traditional teacher education, although hidden, is to educate teachers who in their turn will educate the next generation to complete the aims of a nation. Promotion of cultural diversity among the citizens and inhabitants of a country may remain secondary; either it is seen as against the national unity or its value for a state and for a nation remains unclear.

This presupposition of a nation based on education implies that education is carried out nationally and, furthermore, directed to some form of nation building. The educational pursuits where teacher education prepares the students for are more or less nationally determinated. Even when speaking of internationalisation, the underlying idea is gaining national advantage out of it. Educational pursuits with a nationalist perspective – hidden or visible – come to cover most of the school subjects from sciences to modern subjects as well as to arts and languages. Nation based contents of knowledge include learning about cultural heritage, respecting and celebrating certain cultural symbols and basically, conducting the academic year and practices at school in one culturally bound manner.

\(^1\) Another thing in addition to just presenting a certain culture is the awareness of one’s life history and cultural background and their effect on one’s worldview. To better understand one’s way of thinking view of life is part of the intercultural competencies. Knowledge and understanding are means to gain a critical attitude towards the practices and ways of thinking existing in society.
This may lead to a false concept of possessing culturally right knowledge, skills and manners what comes to the contents and methods of education. There is also a danger that a nation and culture become to mean the same in minds of teachers.

Nationalism in education shows itself in another way, too. The issues that are dealt with in a traditional teacher education do seldom concern international or global issues but concentrate more on themes and topics at a national level. Another outcome of an indirect nationalism in a teacher education seems to be that despite of all curriculum reform that should give schools and individual teachers more power to decide upon the contents and methods of their teaching, the idea of an external authority as determining upon the curriculum and practices of a school seems to be firmly established among the teachers. There is a danger that this kind of atmosphere and attitude leads to a way of thinking that a teacher does not have to take responsibility for global nor even for societal issues, as another authority is supposed to take this responsibility. In a traditional teacher education social and societal issues have been largely neglected, which in its turn, has led to a low interest and awareness of teachers on the current phenomena in the society and to a low degree of participation of teachers in social and societal issues and processes.

The third aspect of modern originated thinking in the traditional teacher education is due to its subject boundness and the very fragmented nature of its contents. This being the case, the broader view of life and of crucial social, societal and global issues may suffer from the splitting of the contents into different subjects. These subjects are considered as equal but still often they are competing with each other about scarce resources. Subjects have certain contents to be learned and furthermore to be transferred to future generations. Fields like multicultural education, inclusive education or sustainable development are subordinate to the subject centered way of thinking that seems to break the students’ worldview to shivers and prevents a student from seeing the globality and interdependence of the world phenomena and at the same time the situationality of educational events.

Paradoxically, it seems that in the present world both the subject bound knowledge and skills are needed but as alone they are not enough to respond to the urging needs of the society and of the world. What is the postmodern knowledge like, then, and what are the skills needed at the dawn of the new millennium? Because of the relativity of knowledge, on one hand, the context where teaching and learning takes place will be emphasized and has to be taken into account when planning the teaching. On the other hand, we cannot neglect the globality in all the aspects of life and the challenges and needs that are set for education by the interdependence of the humankind. The change from the modern era to postmodern globality is seen in today’s schools for example by increasing multiculturalism and diversity of thoughts and values as well as by the increasing use of optional learning environments. Because of the rapid change and the boundlessness of knowledge and information the subject bound approach has to be reconsidered from two points of view. First of all, the contents of the subjects have to be re-evaluated and the connectness to the other fields clarified. This is necessary because the value of pure knowledge seems to diminish and the importance of application becomes larger. A skill to select meaningful information from a huge amount of knowledge seems to have become a vital condition for survival as well as a skill to distribute and share this knowledge with other human beings. In addition to interdisciplinarity and interchange, another important
task has appeared for a humankind: this is how to coexist with the nature that, after all, sets us the limits of survival.

In light of a traditional teacher education it is understandable why teacher students and even experienced teachers often feel that multiculturality is a rather complicated area to be taken into consideration in their teaching. In the previous chapter I have attempted to find philosophical reasons originating in traditional teacher education to the question why many teachers experience multicultural education as a difficult task to fulfill. In the following, I will try to find answers to this question by comparing the philosophy and practices of what I call a traditional education and the context bound education. I will also seek for an answer to this problem by looking at the general philosophies of multicultural education presented by a few researchers of multicultural education.

**Values and a Teacher’s Role in a Changing Society**

It is supposed that a teacher's thinking is guided by the values and perceptual and cognitive models and ways of thinking that originate in the modern (traditional and monocultural) society. In a modern society value systems were quite stable, in other words, people knew their social position and their share in life. There were certain pillars in their lives which gave them impression of continuity and of security. Also the amount of information and the sources of it were somehow more limited and under more control.

Postmodern society, however, is characterized by diversity of thoughts, philosophies and the idea of continuous change. Nothing is certain: education is carried out by several actors from television to teachers and parents, and the supporting pillars of religion, permanent human relationships, permanent working place and the limited information have all collapsed. In addition to this people are forced to move from one place to another, from a culture to another, for a reason or another.

Classrooms possess more multicultural character than ever. Although multiculturalism would not present itself in the form of ethnic diversity, still there are children with different backgrounds and life stories, each of whom deserves to be treated individually according to their specific needs and characteristics. Teachers have to adapt themselves to the existing multicultural reality in a way or another. Many teachers have already begun to educate themselves in order to better respond to the challenges of multiculturality in their working environment. Also teacher education has begun to see multiculturality as part of its development. One of the key questions set for teacher education is what are the competencies that should be developed in teacher students in order them to better face multiculturality in various educational environments and how would these competencies be developed.

Teacher educators themselves are in a key position to critically investigate the prevailing practices and to develop teacher education to a more multicultural direction. They are challenged to examine further the possibilities and means of teacher education in developing intercultural competencies. Special attention has to be paid to the competencies and skills that teacher educators themselves need to have, and to the scientific work needed to be conducted in this field. What are the preconditions for a successful multicultural / intercultural teacher education? These are very interesting
topics that seem to raise vivid discussions and experiments in many countries and at international level; they are interesting, because the need to find answers and solutions come directly from grassroots practices that are shared by children, youth and adults living and working in joint diversity.

Schools and classrooms are meeting places for cultural diversity and a teacher practices her/his profession within this diversity. In order to work successfully with children of different needs and backgrounds there are several prerequisites to be met by a teacher. These prerequisites are both physical, connected to learning environment, and more personal concerning teacher's intercultural competencies both as a private person and as a pedagogue.

One must not forget that a teacher is a social and a societal actor as well. S/he in a way works at the crossroads of institutional structures and of lifeworlds of ordinary people. More or less a teacher has to choose her/his position in these crossings of a system and private spheres. S/he either maintains prevailing structures and ideologies or acts as a changing agent in a society. S/he either follows the others or makes her/his own paths. As a social actor, a teacher also may change her/his position and level of activity in regards to social and societal issues and changes, depending on each social situation. However, as education results of historical and socio-political developments in a society a teacher can not neglect these developments nor the context where education takes place in.

This context, ideally, consists of global environment but is often reduced, in traditional schooling, to national or local context. Nevertheless, however broad the context defined is, a teacher cannot neglect the values and principles that guide her/his teaching in the certain context for the reason defined in the following.

Education, in whatever way we define it, is always value bound (Moilanen, 1998, 67, Räsänen 1998, 31—41, Simola, 1995, 246). This is also the case when we talk about intercultural or multicultural education. Education attempts to answer questions like what the aims for education are, what kind of future is wished for, what skills and competencies are needed and necessary for a child whose generation one day will take the responsibility of the world. By education a new generation is initialized to what is considered to be good and desirable. This concept of good is usually formed in historical processes and it manifests itself in educational philosophies that value certain things and undervalue or leave invisible others. The concept of good can be considered contextual, but there are also some aspects of universal good to be found that respect similar phenomena of human life despite of the time and place. (Räsänen 1998, 31—41.)

The concept of good is inevitably extended to the future, because the orientation of education is in the future – although hidden intentions would preserve the past. Future

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2. Teacher's intercultural competency can be seen as consisting of teacher's knowledge i.e. cognitive skills, of teacher's pedagogical skills and of teacher's skills of encountering otherness. The last one includes a teacher's attitudes and emotional skills. A teacher's educational philosophy penetrates all these aspects of teacher's intercultural competency and lays a basement for all of these.

3. Räsänen's research on teachers' ethics reveals that when considering ethical problems of a teacher's profession teacher students concentrate mostly on the questions concerning the school and classroom environment and very much neglect the societal and global questions (Räsänen, 1993, 161).

4. In this presentation concepts multicultural education and intercultural education are used almost synonymously although I'm aware of the different definitions and connotations linked to them. If we want to be more accurate, I use intercultural education when talking about teacher's skills and competencies and multicultural education when I talk about the approach to teaching as a whole. The term multicultural education has been criticized by e.g. Lintala & Van der Meer (1999) and by Mistrák et al. (1999, 115).
orientation brings also global aspect to education, because the future cannot be seen only
from a perspective of one group, one nation or one continent. Globality means among
other things environmental and economical interdependence, common challenges of
sustainable development and global informational exchange.

Education prepares a child for adulthood i.e. for responsible autonomy (Moilanen,
1998, 65). In education the question is always about the relationship between a more
competent educator and a more incompetent educand – a child, young person or even an
adult (Räsänen 1998, 31—41). Usually the expressed value of education is to work for the
best of a less competent person. The difficulty, however, lies in defining what the best is.
The values of education may vary a lot depending on a teacher's own values, on the
values presented in a curriculum and on the values of society where schooling takes place
according to what the best for a child is considered to be.

Sometimes the interest of a society may replace the advantage of the educand but
usually, at least as an ideal, education tries to respond to the interests of several actors:
society, parents, teachers and children / youth themselves. Values as any other social
phenomenon, are born in human interaction along the history, but can also be affected by
human action.

Intentionality, Interaction or Communicativeness and Contextuality as
Characteristics of Education and their Implications on a Teacher’s
Profession in a Traditionally Understood Teacher Education

In previous chapter I examined the value boundness as a general characteristic of
education. In the following the other general characteristics and preconditions that are
involved with any educational process are examined. These characteristics are
intentionality, interaction or communicativeness5 and contextuality of education.

Intentionality can be regarded as a principle for education: there is no education
without purpose. Furthermore, intentionality means more than mere knowledge about the
aims and goals of education (Moilanen, 1998, 61). Intentionality involves also knowledge
about the present situation that is wanted to be changed. Thirdly, the concept of
intentionality includes also methods used to reach certain aims of education.

In order to educate, to get some results out of work, it seems that a teacher should be –
implicitly or explicitly – faithful to some principles and values that guide her/his work.
Otherwise we can doubt whether successful education takes place at all.

Intentionality requires from a teacher some kind of philosophy concerning learning,
nature of childhood and of human being and life as a whole. The task of teaching may be
easy for teachers who are expected to strictly follow a curriculum and to leave out
opinions differing from a mainstream thinking. From another point of view, it is also a
moral decision whether to follow a curriculum designed by the others or whether to be a
critical and transformative teacher – or to be a teacher at all!. On the other hand, we have

5. If we take education as a communicative action, it means that the relation between an educator and educand
is equal and democratic. As a consequence, the aims and means are discussed, agreed and decided together,
not by a teacher alone. Also parents and children's other guardians should be brought in to this process.
many examples of teachers who despite of differing opinions and oppression continue to teach in a way they see it right – and, unfortunately, often pay for it.

General characteristics of education are often traditionally defined from the perspective of a teacher and her/his action. We talk about a teacher and her/his intentions and tend to forget a child and her/his needs and intentions. Intentionality described as a teacher centered orientation may finally appear as very inflexible and monocultural. As a result, intentionality becomes in its extreme form to mean fixed aims a teacher sets for an educational process. Because the aims are set in advance there is no flexibility nor possibility to take into account the differences among the students and their intentions. And if there is, still a teacher is the one who is thought to know best what a child needs. A good becomes that of a teacher. Consequently, a teacher makes the evaluation of a present situation according to her/his criteria and chooses the means to reach the aims s/he has set for education.

Apparently, intentionality as it is understood in traditional teacher education requires long term plans, deep acquaintance with the subject and well established methods of teaching. However, this kind of intentionality seems to lead to a teacher centered education with task oriented and subject centered teaching styles. It does not give opportunity for a teacher to listen to the children's needs nor to direct her/his teaching towards a more child or learner centered style.

Similarly, intentionality – as it traditionally seems to be understood – restricts the use of equal interactional means of work. Interaction, in its extreme, is limited to from a teacher to a pupil – model and there is little communication between students, or between a teacher and a student. Instead of one way communication model, communicativeness in education would mean evaluating the present situation together, setting the aims of education together with the learner, parents and a teacher and choosing also the means of communication together.

Naturally, the more teacher and subject-centered the teaching is, the less contextuality is taken into account. This, evidently, causes many learning and social problems at schools. The importance of noticing the meaning of the context is more described in the following chapter.

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**Context-bound Education in Light of Four Characteristics of Education**

It seems that increased diversity has not led to many changes in teachers' pedagogical actions. Teachers tend to think in a monocultural way that leads to an attempt to assimilate or integrate the immigrant children to the mainstream culture by any means as quickly as possible. The idea of cultural diversity seems to be a leading principle of practice only to very few teachers, at least in Finland. (Talib 1999, 238—239.)

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6. According to Moilanen (1998) because of differing and changing intentions and because of a continuous redefinition of identity, the longer the period is, the more difficult it is to predict human behaviour.

7. For teaching styles see Bennett, 1995, 187.
This conclusion, that would need more research on, raises many questions, among others a question whether teachers' thinking still generates from the ideologies of modern era i.e. they think there are certain aims for all to be reached, certain development leading to one point and that should be common for everyone and certain collections of values that should be learned. Deviations from these values, knowledges, skills and habits are not normal or they are considered as negative effects or problems in teachers' work. Certainly there are some principles that should guide school work to make children feel safe and secure, but are they only the principles of the mainstream culture that make schoolwork successful? Most probably some students always feel unsafe if for example school starting time is very fixed and punctuality is valued as a basic principle of schoolwork and a child is always scorned or punished of being late. The same applies for undone homework, however good a reason a child would have for not having done the tasks set on her/him.

In practice, the context-bound approach to teaching would begin with the realities of a schoolwork. It would take into account the different realities where the children live in and come from and it would try to approach the world from the point of view of a child and of a group of children as a whole. The context-bound education would take into account the needs existing in families and in a community as a whole. It would prefer the experiences of children as a starting point for teaching and it would attack the problems existing in everyday life of children and their families and of the community where the children live in.

As the central question, the context-bound education would ask what the barriers are that prevent or slow down a child's growth to her/his full potential and how these barriers could be overcome. These barriers may exist at a societal level, at the level of a community, in interpersonal relationships or in pedagogics used at school and in the classroom.

What would then the four previously mentioned main characteristics of education – value-boundness, intentionality, interaction, and contextuality – mean in the context-bound education? Values, firstly, would be brought into a dialogue: the aims and the means of education would be discussed together with parents, children and other teachers. This would happen for the reason that people are supposed to present different worldviews, cultures and concepts of a human being and education i.e. multiple realities. Their educational philosophies may also vary as well as what they see as a good future for their children. In order to be able to pay attention to differing realities the teacher has to be aware and to know about them. Of course, there might still exist traditional, modern communities where a consensus prevails on educational matters and the children present quite similar backgrounds. However, from my own experience, these kind of communities are rare in many European societies, and most of the classrooms, even though the children would present one ethnic group, are multicultural in a sense the children come from e.g. religiously, ideologically, linguistically and culturally different backgrounds.

Differences among the children may appear also due to differing socio-economical conditions, loose family structures, irregular rhythms of life or differing concepts of good 8. What is the child's fullest potential? This cannot be defined by a teacher alone but only together with a child and her/his parents. Maybe for some people the fullest potential is not in the future but already at the very moment, in guaranteeing safe, open and free growing environment, maybe for someone, growth to the fullest potential presumes very organized and directed learning context.
and holy. There may be children who have no "great narratives"9 in their lives: they don't have a history, nothing to believe in, no future visions, no mental pillars to guide or support their identity and growth. On the other hand, there may be children with very stable life conditions – and all these people meet at school under the same roof. No wonder, a teacher might feel lost sometimes, and as a consequence, desperately tries to hang on to matters that present familiarity to her/him.

Intentionality in education, is a very relative concept, indeed, – especially in an environment where different realities, time concepts and meanings meet continuously each other. The context-bound education would start from the fact that educational situations are always changing, living and unpredictable. They have to be almost daily, if not almost by minutes, redefined, the aims have to be reset as well as the means to reach these aims. In the case of impatient children, whose life conditions are very unstable, short-term aims have to be flexibly re-evaluated – and still there has to be a continuity in their education to strengthen often so weak self-concept. In a multicultural classroom where there are children with traumatic experiences or children who have different cultural codes, it takes time before long-term plans can even be set, firstly, a teacher has to know how to adjust and arrange these different realities and secondly, in order to be capable to learn anything, a child must feel safe – the same applying for adults also.

Interaction, in its turn, in the context-bound education cannot be communication dominated by one actor. Context – meaning cultural (including values), social, economical, physical, pedagogical and mental (intentional) realities – requires dialogue and communication between all the actors of an educational situation. Through the responsibility for growth and the closest emotional contact with a child, parents are indirectly part of this educational situation and thus, actors themselves. Communicativeness means setting together values, aims and means of education both on a group and on an individual level.

Because educational solutions concern always not only individuals but the whole group and community, even the whole of (wo)mankind, the negotiation on power relations at different levels of society in educational matters is necessary. Moreover, they are not only educational matters, but at the same time social, economical and political. Dominance of one power group is not possible in a pluralistic multicultural community. In order to guarantee well-being, happiness, fruitful co-operation, equality and human rights between different cultural groups, power has to be shared in a just way.

Contextuality in context-bound education means also consideration of ethics of education. Somehow, the ethics of a multicultural school cannot be thought of being ethics of duty and responsibility. Duties vary in different cultures, or if this approach is taken to school – schools tend to have all kinds of written and hidden regulations – different duties and responsibilities should at least be brought into negotiation.

Especially, when working with the children with identity problems, with language problems or different cultural codes, an educator has to approach these children openly, by not judging them by any mainstream cultural measures but let a child be her/himself, and try to understand her/him as a whole person. This requires caring approach. Whatever

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9. "Great narrative" presents a concept of modernism vs. post-modernism referring to belief systems where the basic elements are stability, unchangeability, collectivity and their presentations are institutions like religion, concept of nation, life long working place, stable social network and human relations.
deficiencies a child would seem to present to an adult's eye, an educator has to show a child care, love and respect and always begin the process of education from the basis of all the good and strong a child has presented and presents.10

These thoughts have led us to a difficult question of educational paradox: education, generally, is understood as a process of affecting or changing something but do we have a right to change anyone? As a philosophical question, each educator should ask her/himself whether s/he has a right to change the other persons' identities and realities – and as well, whether s/he as an educator has a right to leave the other – the incompetent one – unchanged. Furthermore, more delicate questions should be asked: what is it that an educator has a right to change and what is it that s/he is responsible for to be changed?

Multicultural education – as a philosophical and value-bound construction itself – tries to give an answer to this difficult question: it presupposes that each child has her/his potential to be reached. Educational system must guarantee equity, for without equal educational system these excellences that are hidden in each child could not be reached.

The major goal of multicultural education is "the development of the intellectual, social and personal growth of all students to their highest potential" (Bennett 1995, 16—17)11.

Thus, multicultural education accepts transforming and changing the students' ways of understanding the world and thus, accepts education as a means to change realities, but there is one condition, as I have understood: all realities i.e. cultural diversity should be recognized as far as they (realities) respect life, human rights and equality of all human beings.

Summary on the Characteristics of Traditional and Context-bound Education

In previous chapters I have attempted to outline and clarify two philosophical approaches to education: the traditional one that relies on the world view of modernity and the context-bound one that takes into account each context of educational situations and different realities that meet each other in these situations. In the following I will try shortly describe the characteristics that these approaches seem to include.

In traditional (monoculturally viewed) way of education the intentionality means long-term plans, fixed definitions of educational situations and often teacher-centered methods. Also the aims and means of education are determined from the point of view of one culture or one learning style. The changes in a classroom or in the students' lives are hard

10. In my own research on Greek Cypriot children I asked the children in what way would they imagine a Turkish Cypriot teacher receiving them if they entered a Turkish Cypriot school. Answers were astonishingly similar: teachers would treat them well, and the reasons for this were even more astonishing: "because teachers rejoice every time they see a new child", "because all teachers are good" and "because a teacher wants to teach all children". I believe there exists a universal trust among children on teachers and a trust on teachers' overall goodness. A teacher is believed to be always on a child's side. Thus, if nothing else, challenges teachers to value their role as a responsible educator.

11. Bennett (1995, 17) continues: "This goal is not different from the educational excellence goal. It depends however, upon the teacher's knowledge, attitude, and behavior and on whether he or she provides equitable opportunities for learning, changes the monocultural curriculum, and helps all students become more multicultural (i.e., helps them develop or at least appreciate multiple systems of perceiving, evaluating, believing, and doing). This goal includes students in monocultural classes and schools."
to be taken into account in teaching situations that are planned beforehand and in separation of the actual educational situation.

Appearing weaknesses of the traditional approach are due to the fact that human action is not predictable or at least hard to be predicted. The problems that may appear in a monocultural teaching situation when there has been no common discussion on values beforehand are that teaching methods or contents do not fit every student\(^\text{12}\). Students suffer from the lack of motivation as they cannot participate the planning process or they feel that subjects and methods are more important than they themselves as learners. Disappointments may occur – and are in fact quite usual – on teachers' side also: a teacher has planned everything so well beforehand and for one reason or another a magnificent lesson turns out to be a nightmare.

As a whole, the traditional approach to teaching neglects the differing needs and intentions of students and their families as to the teaching methods, learning styles, communication cultures, needs for different contents and tasks. Moreover, it neglects the inequalities that prevail in all the levels of society including community and school.

The context-bound education seems to be more flexible, because it takes the situation itself as a starting point and attempts to bring together different intentions of students, parents, teachers and community. Intentionality means a continuous evaluation of learning situations, of aims and methods. Interaction in the context-bound education is more communicative: decisions are made together, in a democratic way, respecting all the actors and agents of the educational situation. A child and the reality/realities s/he lives in is a central subject, in fact, the key for education. The values of education are based on human rights, human dignity and the global equilibrium and equity.

The weaknesses and problems of the contextual-bound education are the same as of any human action: how to guarantee a safe and functional learning environment in the crossroads of different cultures and ideologies, how to find core contents for teaching and how to act equally in a classroom situation where each child needs different treatment but still, the time and resources are limited.

**Teacher Education at the Crossroads of the Modern and Post-modern – Challenges and Possibilities of Context-bound Teacher Education to Respond to the Multiculturality**

Moving from a modern era to postmodern globality means great changes for traditional pedagogics. It seems that the traditional teacher education cannot keep the pace of changes in the surrounding world but carries along very rigid structures and practices that are not in line with the reality teachers face at schools. This imbalance between teacher education and school reality poses a question: in what direction and how should teacher education be developed in order to better correspond with the reality of cultural diversity?

A second set of questions follows out of this and remains to be answered by future teacher education and educators: what is the reality at the moment and after five years? Whose reality? And what are the realities to teach / reach reality?

\(^{12}\) The criteria being the growth of each student for her/his fullest potential.
The context-bound teaching does not have to begin from an empty space. On the contrary, and despite of the collapse of great narrations, there are plenty of realities to be tackled: identities and world views of a teacher and of an educand, current political and environmental situations of the world; pollution and natural catastrophes that invite humanity for a common struggle, famine and poverty that challenge the whole of humankind, the lack of resources that causes interdependence, outrageous crime and violence that does not save those not guilty or innocent ones, international communication that reaches everyone and requires global ethics to serve a human being in a constructive, not destructive way.

In this light of global challenges many matters taught to future teachers seem to be no relevance any more. In countries that are still in the process of nation building or that in some other way try to strengthen ideological or national unity or where there might be some other topics to replace the vital questions defined in previous chapters, traditional way of educating teachers might still be appropriate. But, to my mind, closing eyes from the universal threats of life would mean misleading future generations from the reality common to all human beings.

Traditional teacher education teaches students to organise classrooms so that everyone feels comfortable, sees and hears well, and can co-operate easily with the others. But how do future teachers receive students who come from environments where the ideas and ideals of education and modes of behaviour are deviant from this? Or students from war areas, bilingual or none-lingual students? Traditional teacher education teaches to celebrate certain memorable days of the calendar of the mainstream culture, teaches national anthems, dances and other symbols – all kinds of valuable matters, but does not value or pay attention to the holy issues of other cultures.

Multicultural teacher education, that in this article is understood as a form of context-bound education, includes according to Räsänen (Mistrik & als. 1999, 215) the same qualifications as any traditional teacher education e.g. creativity, innovativeness, reflectivity, concern for children and basic teaching skills. However, there are other qualities that cannot be left out from a multicultural teacher education. These are e.g. awareness of broader social and educational issues13 and awareness on how community and background affect us.

Certainly traditional, monocultural way of teacher education and multicultural teacher education set different competence requirements for teachers. I leave the competence requirements of a traditional teacher education out from this text supposing the reader has an idea of them, and concentrate shortly on competencies the context-bound multicultural education seems to presuppose from a teacher.

Multicultural competence requirements set by the context-bound education could be grouped in many ways14. One widely used15 classification for the competencies is grouping them into: 1) Cognitive, 2) Attitudinal and 3) Emotional skills. In this article, I have tried to outline and classify the competencies again by combining and modifying the ideas of different theorists (Banks 1999, 1994, Bennett 1995, Gollnick & Chinn 1998, Hofstede 1991, Nieto 1996, Räsänen 1999) in the following way:

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1. **Competency of cultural and societal consciousness** that includes the awareness of one's life story, cultural codes and modes of thinking and the factors that have affected one's thinking and behaviour and the awareness of the principles and paradigms that guide one's thinking and form one's educational philosophy. Cultural consciousness includes also knowledge about cultures and backgrounds of other people, at least of those sharing everyday life and of those living in the same community and society, knowledge of the world and of inequalities in it, knowledge of barriers preventing growth, communication, interaction and co-operation and knowledge of the means to overcome these obstacles, knowledge on enemy images and on the processes by which they are created, knowledge on how e.g. stereotypes and prejudices are born, awareness of cultural and institutional racism and of the facts that have led to inequalities, knowledge of the reasons of enmity and wars, knowledge on peace maintaining skills and of the skills of peaceful conflict resolution, skills to analyze policies and practices.

2. **Competency of intercultural encountering and social skills** meaning the competence to encounter, see and understand other realities, the competence to overcome one's own reality and to strengthen and support other realities (Which of the realities are such as to require guidance and education? Destructive realities?), the competence to take perspectives and roles and the skill to feel empathy, readiness to accept other realities without trying to change them, feeling affection, attentiveness, care, sensitivity to other realities and to the needs of a child, courage to combat inequality and injustice, critical mind, skills of communication and negotiation and the skills of conflict resolution.

14. The competency requirements that emerge from the idea of multicultural education could also be viewed from the point of different paradigms existing within multicultural education. Lintala & van der Meer (1999, 28—29) have separated for example three paradigms that teachers use to describe the school failure of children. Recognizing these paradigms can set different demands for the development of multicultural competencies of a teacher. The paradigms referred to are cultural deprivation paradigm, cultural difference paradigm and racism paradigm. The first one of these explains poor school performance of the children by insufficient home conditions that cannot offer a child enough cultural capital to do well at school. School does not admit its own deficiencies as an educator. Cultural difference paradigm gives value to a child's culture and explains the school failure by cultural differences between the school and the culture of a child. Schools are to be blamed for the failure of a child, and the emphasis must be on changing the school to respond culturally better to the child's needs. The third paradigm, the racism paradigm assumes that racism is the major cause of poor academic performance of minority children. In order to recognize one's own idea of multiculturalism, an educator should be aware of these paradigms and the practices that may result from them. All of these paradigms seem to exist among teachers at least in Finnish school contexts. Personally I believe that by educating teachers further we can help them overcome certain paradigms harmful for a child's growth. Especially harmful for multicultural education seems to be the idea of cultural deprivation. It takes for granted the presupposition of cultural deprivacy, blames homes and cultures for the failure of school children and at its worst, does nothing to change prevailing conditions, least the school practices.

15. This grouping is used in the EU-financed E.C.T. (Immigration as a Challenge for Settlement Policies and Education: Evaluation Studies for Cross-Cultural Teacher Training) -project but was also noticed in other presentations (separate form E.C.T. -project) in the Conference of Intercultural Education, 16—18.9.1999, in Jyväskylä, Finland.

16. For example Berry, M. & Nurmikari-Berry, M. have examined differences in the speech culture in Eastern and western parts of Finland. Presentation in the Conference of Intercultural education, 16—18.9.1999, Jyväskylä.

17. This is followed by the question of a pedagogical paradox between a competent and incompetent persons i.e. can we / do we have the right to set any educational aims anymore to anyone OR do we have the right NOT to set any aims?
3. **Attitudinal skills** including willingness and courage to see and encounter other realities, readiness to accept other realities without trying to change them, commitment to combat racism and all kinds of inequalities as well as sexism, all forms of prejudice, oppression and discrimination.

4. **Pedagogical skills** consisting of the awareness of one's teacher expectations towards students, skills to analyze and understand cultural differences (See Bennett 1995, 65—67), skills to understand different learning styles and to adapt one's teaching to these styles by using different classroom arrangements, materials, orientations to social rhythm and time, the awareness of language and discourses used in the classroom and courageousness to intervene when oppressing or racist discourses appear, critical attitude towards a curriculum and teaching material, awareness and adaptation to different communication cultures.

Räsänen (1999) emphasizes that every competence has to include three aspects: cognitive, emotional and actional. No knowledge is useful without a skill to put it into practice and no skill is useful without emotional aspect, willingness, courage, caring and empathy. All these skills should be put into use at micro- and macro levels: at interpersonal, at family, at community, at societal and global levels.

**Can We in Fact Divide Teachers' Multicultural Competencies into any Specific Groups?**

Making a list of intercultural competencies is difficult due to two reasons. First, the competencies are overlapping not separate and second, each educational context demands different competencies and skills. One could in fact question the universality of the competencies for every context – and ask whether multicultural education is on the whole a western phenomenon not applicable nor even wanted at every context. As mentioned at the beginning of this article multicultural education is a philosophical construction. What makes it, however, as a considerable philosophy for education is that it seems to present constructive way of forming and implementing education for those who are willing to undersign values embedded in it and described in the following paragraph.

The values of multicultural education that seem to characterise it and produce certain types of approaches to education are such as willingness to combat all kinds of inequalities at all levels of a society and committing oneself to the promotion of human rights

Values that can be conceptualized as a philosophy of multicultural education concern world views, the concept of human being and nature, the nature of education and

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18. Christine Bennett (1995, 27—34) has listed three main preconditions that a multicultural school should fulfill in order to educate successfully children from different backgrounds. These preconditions are 1. positive teacher expectations, 2. a learning environment that supports positive interracial contact, and 3. a multicultural curriculum.

19. Christine Bennett (1995, 13—15), has defined multicultural education shortly as being 1. a movement toward achieving equality of educational opportunity and equity among all identifiable groups (including transformation of curriculum and total school environment), 2. a curriculum approach, 3. a process whereby a person becomes multicultural or develops competencies in multiple ways of perceiving, evaluating, believing and doing, and 4. a commitment to combat racism, sexism and all forms of prejudices and discrimination.
the concept of time. Any practical solutions, practices, derive from these profound philosophical understandings and affect directly every student and educator, as well.  

**Developing Intercultural Competencies – the Task of a Teacher Education?**

Teacher educators, tutors and pedagogues are in the position of supporting open but critical atmosphere that could promote education for multicultural awareness, consciousness and action among their students. Educators are the ones who have to point out the injustices and provide students with means to carry out just and equal education later on in their profession of a teacher and an educator.

As a scientific discipline, educational science has to examine multicultural education like any other philosophical construction. However, when the question is about teacher education, educational science cannot remain indifferent in front of the well-being of children and youth or in front of global questions and questions of social justice. Teacher education is normative and value-bound, however uncommitted it would like to be. It cannot remain impartial when the question concerns the relationship between competent and less competent human beings and the responsibility of an adult for a child. Thus, teacher education has to make ethical choices concerning the values it wants to emphasize and convey for future educators and thus, for future generations.

**Conclusion**

Multicultural or intercultural education is based on certain philosophies. Competencies developed in teacher education should be viewed in relation to these philosophies. Otherwise the idea of intercultural education may remain irrational or at a superficial level. Philosophies of multicultural / intercultural education do include common features and aims, however.

There are some universal aspects included in multicultural education, one of them is contextuality. In other words, each educator has to be sensitive and aware of cultural and socio-political diversity and its meaning and effect on her/his environment and on her/his action. In each context, one has to redefine the different challenges posed by one's conceptions and professional requirements and to grow in the direction of these challenges. Growth in multiculturality – one could also call it developing multicultural ethos – presupposes atmosphere of freedom and trust and dialogue of different ideas, views and opinions.

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20. Multicultural education itself can be a very conflicting and sensitive domain. Because of its ambivalence as a concept, many kinds of actions can be found under its umbrella. It can be even used for opposite purposes from what its philosophy would allow e.g. to assimilation. In order to get a more holistic picture of multicultural or intercultural educational philosophy, more comparative research should be done between different theorists of multicultural education. However, I believe that there are certain philosophical guidelines to be followed by those who want to implement multicultural or intercultural education. Some of these principles are introduced by this presentation, but unfortunately, this is still a quite incomplete attempt.
Teacher education should include in its programmes the aim of awareness of broader social and educational issues in addition to teaching pedagogical skills. It is important to see things as culturally, socially and historically developed phenomena. Intercultural competencies include intellectual and emotional commitment to the fundamental unity of all humans, but at the same time acceptance and appreciation of the differences between individuals and cultures. Commitment to respect human dignity and all the rights deriving from this dignity leads to action towards a more just and equal world.

Developing societal consciousness, cultural awareness, intercultural competence, special pedagogical expertise, and antiracist action requires cultivation of intellect and attitudes, but also skills and courage. Teachers should learn to translate their philosophies and knowledge about cultural diversity and similarity into plans to use with students and in wider contexts. Multicultural school and society need teachers who are autonomous and courageous enough to tackle problems whenever they see injustice and inequality (Räsänen 1999, 217).

What sort of teacher education would then help develop the skills and competencies essential in the context bound multicultural education as defined in the previous chapters? There would seem to be an urgent need for at least more experiencial teacher education in order to include the emotional and actional aspects of multicultural competencies. A constructivist approach that is successfully implemented in learning sciences might also help in taking into account the differing experiences of students and thus, it could have some more space in multicultural teacher education. Moreover, a conscious approach that would emphasize the diversity among the students and give different groups and individuals voices might be fruitful in learning to negotiate for different solutions. Finally, I believe, the teacher education that would allow time and pedagogical support for students to reflect social issues and global challenges from different academic, cultural and social points of view during their education would be supportive for the growth of future generations for the more fair and human world.

References


21. Teksti uupuu!
11 Engaged Pedagogy
An Introduction to bell hooks’ Educational Philosophy

Maria-Liisa Järvelä

Abstract
As a former schoolteacher and presently a university teacher my aim has been to educate my students, and myself, towards intercultural awareness and heightened cultural sensitivity. In our International M.Ed. Programme at the university of Oulu, Finland, the anti-racist educational line has been consciously built in and emphasised in the curriculum since the start of the programme in 1994. In our courses dealing with global ethical problems we try to see beyond the Euro-centrism that we have grown into as Finns and Europeans. We have started to question the concept of internationalisation so trendy today, asking for the definitions of it. To what extent does the internationalising policy of Finnish, Nordic or European educational institutions build on promoting students’ and teachers’ intercultural competencies and anti-racist educational skills? On the personal level, how can we as teachers contribute to diminishing racial, sexual, and class boundaries in our own country, in our own school or university, in our own classrooms?

To find answers to these questions I have studied bell hooks’ Engaged Pedagogy. In Finland (as in all other countries) we need an educational philosophy on which to build a curriculum that truly supports the idea of teaching to transgress against all oppressive educational practices. In order to rewrite the educational policy, we need to examine critically, and from global perspectives, institutional discourses and curricular activities in our teacher education programmes. When doing this, we need to focus on sites where the interplay of agency, power and struggle takes place.

Introduction
During the past decade the concepts of multicultural and intercultural education have pervaded the educational institutions in Finland as elsewhere in the western world. There is, in fact, a considerable body of literature available on multicultural and intercultural education, and the number of publications on these issues is increasing. It seems,
however, that even though the curricula of most Finnish schools recognise the words *multicultural* and *intercultural*, or even the word *anti-racist*, the actual school practices may not yet manifest real efforts to achieve the aims declared in school curricula, especially when it comes to immigrant and refugee children. As for the national teacher education programmes, the situation is scarcely any better. What bell hooks (1994, 41) claims of the US, seems to some extent relevant even in the Nordic context: educators are poorly prepared when they actually confront diversity.

The goal of teacher education should be to help students develop into ethically competent professionals who work efficiently for a more just world and against all discriminatory practices. This is of vital importance because the present students will hold the key positions as socio-political actors in their future working communities. It is possible for interculturally sensitive and fearless teachers to influence the educational climate and educational policy around them and make their working communities commit themselves to principles such as accepting and affirming diversity and fighting against all injustices and oppressive practices that take place in- and outside their own educational institutions.

As a former schoolteacher and presently a university teacher, my aim has been to educate my students, and myself, towards intercultural awareness and heightened cultural sensitivity. In our International M.Ed. Programme¹, the anti-racist educational line has been consciously built in and emphasised in the curriculum, both in theory and in practice, since the start of the programme in 1994. We invite guest speakers from different parts of the world, and we organise excursions abroad so that the students get opportunities to meet with cultural diversity and learn from these experiences. Our students study and practice abroad – also outside Europe and the Anglo-American world. We firmly believe that these experiences help students to build a knowledge base from which they can speak and act progressively. To develop the programme, we need thorough theoretical consideration, empirical investigation, careful follow-up studies and continuous self-evaluation – which is also the reason for writing this article; as a teacher, tutor and co-ordinator of the M.Ed. programme, I also need checks on my own knowledge, belief system and educational practices.

**Why bell hooks, an African-American Feminist Thinker?**

In our courses dealing with global ethical problems we try to see beyond the Eurocentrism that we have grown into as Finns and as Europeans. We want to problematise the trendy concept of internationalisation by asking questions like: to what extent is the internationalising policy of education in Finland, Scandinavia or Europe built on promoting students’ and teachers’ intercultural competencies and anti-racist educational skills? On the personal level, how can we as teachers contribute to diminishing racial, sexual, and class boundaries in our own country, in our own school or university, in our own classrooms?

¹. *International Master of Education Programme* is run in the Faculty of Education, University of Oulu, Finland.
Reading bell hooks, the African-American Feminist University teacher’s writings on teaching and education has helped me in trying to understand what meeting, understanding and affirming cultural diversity is all about, in life in general and in educational circumstances in particular. In short, bell hooks is a writer who has given an intellectual form to thoughts I have tried to put into words myself.

bell hooks’ work on educational theory and practice follows the line that has been put forward by Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren. These two critical thinkers claim that “We must combine theory and practice in order to affirm and demonstrate pedagogical practices engaged in rupturing disciplinary boundaries, decentering authority, and rewriting the institutional and discursive borderlands in which politics becomes a condition for reassessing the relationship between agency, power and struggle.” (Cited by bell hooks 1994, 129.)

Given this agenda, the discussions that cross the boundaries and create space for intervention are crucial. However, bell hooks comments upon educators’ inefficiency in this respect seem relevant to me: hooks (1994, 129—130) argues that it is today fashionable to talk about ‘border crossing’ without any concrete work that really affects teaching practices. Knowing this, I find it urgent to study and analyse Engaged Pedagogy; I firmly believe that teacher education curriculum should be based on this kind of transformative pedagogy that has the potential to combine theory and practice, reflection and action.

**Striving for Black-and-White Dialogue**

As a white middle-class woman from a Nordic country, I need to ask: will I ever (fully) understand an African-American woman, her life and thoughts – or her writings on the philosophy of education? Will I be accused (also by myself) of academic colonisation and exploitation? This is a question several white feminists have asked, for example Rosalind Edwards (1996), who discusses her own research on African-Caribbean women. She points out that so much would be missing if her work were based on the experiences of white women only. It is precisely the resistance of black women that has led her to think about whether she can understand their lives and represent such understanding in academic writing. Having completed her study, she claims she can understand but she confesses being more ambivalent as it comes to conveying her thoughts through writing.

The dilemma of ever being able to understand the knowledge of subjugated people is discussed also by Frances A. Maher and Mary Kay Thompson Tetreault in their book *The Feminist Classroom* (1994). They confess:

“By working with women of colour we came to understand that our early conception of the ideal of a democratic and co-operative feminist teacher had been an example of our mistaking the experiences and values of white middle-class women like ourselves for gendered universals.”(Maher, Thompson & Tetreault 1994, 15.)

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2. bell hooks is Professor of English at City College in New York. She is the author of many books; the present article is mainly based on hooks’ *Teaching to Transgress. Education as the Practice of Freedom* (1994).
bell hooks is particularly critical of what she calls “white women’s continuing allegiance to white supremacy”, especially so in her *Killing Rage, ending racism* (1995). On the other hand, in *Teaching to Transgress* (1994), hooks emphasises the crossing of boundaries and barriers that may be erected by race, gender, class, professional standing or any other differences. She actually acknowledges the importance of individual whites struggling to be antiracist even though the main goal should be changing the system, the structure. This concerns especially the media and education through which the domination seeps into different fields of society. Without the critical exchange we are all in danger of losing contact with people in different positions in life and, consequently, in danger of creating conditions that would make contact impossible. hooks clearly believes that solidarity can and does exist, that there really are powerful moments when boundaries are crossed, differences confronted, discussion happens, and solidarity emerges. Dialogue, then, is possible between progressive white and black feminist thinkers. (See hooks 1994, 130.)

To provide a model of possibility – the border-crossing of both colour and sex – hooks (1994) introduces a dialogue between herself and Ron Scapp, “a white male philosopher, comrade, and a friend”. This discussion should show that “white males can and do change how they think and teach”; it also shows that the interaction in dialogue can be meaningful and enrich the discussants’ teaching practices and scholarly work as well as habits of being within and outside the academy.

Conclusively, the most important thing is to become aware of the different positions that we inhabit and to realise that all positions bestow certain privileges and specific powers. In my position then, I have to rely on Patricia Hill Collins (1990) who refers to dialogue as interactive call-and-response mode: knowledge/wisdom comes not to be individually owned but becomes part of the social group’s way of knowing about the world. Thus, being aware of my position as a white feminist educator, teaching at a Nordic university, I find it urgent to write about bell hooks’ educational views hoping that this dialogue grows into theory and practice that help our students to become teachers who are able to meet diversity with sense and sensitivity. bell hooks’ pedagogy needs to be taken into our classrooms because it so powerfully promotes the idea of teaching to transgress against the racial, sexual and class boundaries, in fact, against all oppressive educational practices.

### Paulo Freire – “a Candle” in Her Room

In order to comprehend bell hooks’ educational thinking, one needs to have a picture of another educational philosopher’s, Paulo Freire’s theoretical and practical views of education. It is necessary to point out Freire’s enormous influence on her growth into an emancipatory teacher who believes in a revolution of values and the promise of intercultural change.

3. hooks claims that overt racism is not as ‘fashionable’ as it once was, which is the reason why people can pretend there is no racism; this is why she prefers the term white supremacy to racism.
In her essay on Paulo Freire, bell hooks (1994, 45—58) introduces a playful dialogue with herself: Gloria Watkins interviews bell hooks, the writing voice of Gloria Watkins. Apart from the fact that the dialogue form is an excellent choice as it is one of Freire’s most important concepts, it also affords bell hooks an intimacy which helps her to “share the sweetness, the solidarity” she so passionately talks about. These words convey something very essential about her thoughts of and emotions for Paulo Freire, the great Brazilian pedagogue who died in 1997. hooks shares with us how Freire’s presence inspired her, and what a profound lesson she learned from witnessing Freire embody the educational practice he described in his theory. When talking about Freire’s influence on her, she also refers to her Buddhist teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh’s words of the atmosphere that a great teacher creates when entering a room:

“It is as though you bring a candle into the room” (hooks 1994, 56).

But how is it possible that a black feminist woman felt such great admiration for a white man? What is it about Freire’s philosophy that could so easily and enthusiastically be adopted by bell hooks? To answer these questions we need to take a look at the interplay of the two educators’ ideas and views of education.

Before actually meeting Paulo Freire, bell hooks had enthusiastically studied his writings. She had then felt deeply identified with the marginalized peasants Freire spoke about. She had just started to question the politics of domination, the impact of racism, sexism, class exploitation and other expressions of domestic colonisation that took place in the US. She came into the university from a rural agrarian, southern black experience where illiterate people were too often dependent on racist people to read and write, to explain things. bell hooks herself had lived through the struggle for racial disintegration and she knew all about the position of having no political language to articulate the process she and her black sisters and brothers were going through. Paulo Freire gave her the language. There was this one sentence in Freire’s writing that became her revolutionary mantra when she got engaged in a strong transformative process:

“We cannot enter the struggle as objects in order later to become subjects.”

This sentence of Freire takes me back to my essentialist problem: how can I, a privileged teacher and representative of white supremacist culture support my white privileged students’ growth into cultural leaders with truly progressive views of global problems? Through conscientisation, by constantly renewing the commitment to decolonising political processes, says Paolo Freire. And bell hooks (1994, 47) adds: the transformation begins at the historical moment when one begins to think critically about the self and identity in relation to one’s political circumstance. This is what we need to achieve as teachers: critical self-reflection and a clear goal, a decolonising mindset which gives us the will and the courage to educate our students, and ourselves, for critical consciousness.

But bell hooks also reminds us that Freire never spoke on conscientisation as an end itself, but always in connection with meaningful practice. She also refers to the Chilean Antonio Faundez who claims that abstract political, religious or moral statements must take concrete shape in acts by individuals, that in our individual lives it is essential to live out, day to day, what we affirm. Thus, as both Freire, Faundez and bell hooks testify: the Praxis is not blind action, deprived of intentionality and finality. It is action and reflection. It allows the students to grow from objects to subjects so that they become
capable of transforming the world. Another Freire enthusiast, David Purpel (1989, 127) has claimed that to remain dynamic and responsive, educational communities need constant nurturance and attention which means more than learning about, it means learning to do. This again involves not just understanding of the structure but also how it works in particular and concrete situations.

This kind of progressive ideas necessarily raise accusations of naive idealism amongst the audience. bell hooks (1994, 48) comments upon this by criticising people who pay lip service:

“It always astounds me when progressive people act as though it is somehow a naive moral position to believe that our lives must be a living example of our politics.”

Paulo Freire’s influence on bell hooks and her work has been immense. However, as a feminist she has also criticised Freire, not only for the sexism of his language but also for the way he (like several other progressive third world political leaders and intellectuals) constructed a male-centred paradigm of liberation wherein freedom and patriarchal manhood are always linked as if they were one and the same. This she calls “a blind spot” in the vision of men who have profound insight.

Interestingly, bell hooks finds Freire’s own philosophy helpful in this dilemma: there is no need to apologise for the sexism as Freire’s own model of critical pedagogy invites a critical interrogation of this flaw in his work. Therefore, unlike feminist thinkers who make a clear separation between the work of feminist pedagogy and Freire’s work and thought, bell hooks finds these two experiences converging. In fact, bell hooks warns of the binary opposition that is so much embedded in Western thought; critical interrogation, she says, is not the same as dismissal. She also tells how she personally interrogated Freire about the sexism in his work and that he admitted it, he owned his sexism and wanted to discuss it openly. (hooks 1994, 49, 55.) Conclusively, if there ever was any problem for bell hooks to learn things from Paulo Freire, to me it seems that it was not primarily because he was white but because he was a man.

### Building the Learning Community

The Western ideas and practices of community building have been heavily criticised by many educational thinkers, e.g. by the American David Purpel who has, among other things, argued that much of our culture does not teach us the skills of community building but rather of individual competition. He has also demanded from the learning community that it should show “commitment to joy, dignity, and fairness for all” (Purpel 1989, 127, 122).

Engaged Pedagogy promotes similar ideas as it refers to practices by teachers who enter the classroom with the conviction that every student should be – and basically wants to be – an active participant, not just a passive consumer, which is the case in the banking system of education. bell hooks speaks of teachers with a strong commitment, a vocation which makes them more than just information dealers. These teachers approach the students with a will to respond to them as unique beings. Engaged Pedagogy is practised when all the participants, including the teacher, claim knowledge of the issues that are
being worked on. This notion of mutual labour covers both the theoretical and practical work. (hooks 1994, 14.)

In the learning community that favours Engaged Pedagogy, there is a shift of emphasis from individualism onto a more collective ways of working together. In an interview (by Smith & Petrarca, 1998), bell hooks claims that in [western] society, there is too much logic and ethics of individualism that has been harmful to social movements, which is why she focuses a great deal on the need of building a community. While there can be diverse interests in a given community, part of what a community is about is the communion of the whole, in the sense of a collective good. We grow stronger in communion, she says.

The essential assumption then is that we are, as teachers, able to act responsibly together with the students to create a progressive learning environment. According to bell hooks (1994, 22, 165), teachers who “embrace the challenge of self-actualisation” will be better able to create pedagogical practices that really engage students and provide them with ways of knowing that they find meaningful and rewarding. Self-actualised teachers do not seek asylum in the academy but seek to make the academy a place of challenge, dialectical interchange, and growth – not only for their students but also for themselves.

The concept of mutual labour – working together and sharing the responsibility – puts also the teacher in the position of a learner: along with the students the teacher can grow intellectually, developing sharper understanding of how to construct and share knowledge in interaction with students. This is not to suggest that the students and the teacher are equal and have as much power, but that all are equal to the extent that all are equally committed to creating a learning context; the power of the liberatory classroom is the power of the learning process which can be utterly rewarding – despite the fact that it can also be hard, even painful. It is indeed remarkable that along with this hard work, joy can be present. Thinking of the academy, pleasure in the classroom may be feared, but whenever there is laughter, a reciprocal exchange may be taking place. However, informality should not be confused with lack of seriousness or lack of respect for developmental processes going on in the learning community. (hooks 1994, 145—146, 152—153.)

When discussing Engaged Pedagogy, bell hooks (1994, 13ff) paints a picture of progressive, holistic education, inspired by wisdom of Engaged Buddhism. She emphasises both teachers’ and students’ well-being: in order to support others you need to be at ease with yourself. Physical and spiritual well-being again demands that you get rid of the western idea of compartmentalisation, the dualistic mind/body split. According to hooks (1994, 21)

“Engaged Pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process.”

This line of reasoning widens the walls of the classroom making it an open space for people’s spirits – and bodies – to move about. This also contributes to a holistic view of people working in the academy, to the insight that students and teachers alike are whole

5. Engaged Buddhism can be juxtaposed with more orthodox Buddhism. Engaged Buddhism emphasises participation and involvement with a world beyond oneself.
human beings, striving not just for knowledge in books but knowledge about how to live in the world.

Building the learning community that favours Engaged Pedagogy sets certain demands for educational institutions. It is obvious that the notion of progressive change and engagement threatens the institutionalised practices of domination. Ultimately, it is precisely the institution that is the decisive factor: if it favours the banking system of education and its factory model of educational processes, it does not support the students’ and teachers’ growth, neither does it encourage a shift in teaching practices. The latter is necessary as the engaged classroom is always changing, it is fluid and it is dynamic. (See hooks 1994, 158, 160.)

**The Engaged Curriculum: Action and Reflection**

When speaking of mutual labour, bell hooks repeatedly refers to the Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hahn⁶. Both Thich Nhat Hahn’s and Freire’s educational work focus on practice, in conjunction with contemplation, linking awareness with practice. (See hooks 1994, 14.) Both have an educational philosophy that emphasises Praxis, that is action and reflection upon the world in order to change it.

In educational settings, it is precisely the concept of Praxis that must be regarded as one of the corner stones when aiming at a true emancipatory quality in education. Therefore, continuous, self-critical evaluation of curriculum is of utmost importance. In fact, I see curriculum as an essential instrument in the teacher’s work for transgression. The curriculum that is constantly being updated offers support to individual teachers so that they will not lapse into the banking system of education. If the curriculum accepts the banking system, it also allows the teacher to remain as a mere outsider in his or her own classroom.

Promoting the idea of combining action and reflection, Engaged Pedagogy finds its roots in critical learning theory with emphasis on experience: the objective is to help students grow into active doers, culturally and politically committed teachers. Here I come to think of David Purpel (1989) who claims that students should not be educated only to become teachers but to become cultural leaders in their communities. The curriculum of the International M.Ed. Programme in our faculty also emphasises the significance of experience; we are convinced that it is beneficial to the students to be exposed to different cultures by studying and practising abroad. This development is best supported by tuition that is right from the beginning emancipatory-oriented. When speaking of the emancipatory quality⁷ of the engaged curriculum, I want to emphasise the fact that including both students’ and teachers’ personal experience may be more constructively challenging than simply changing the curriculum and adding into it radical subject matters. The essential notion then is that sharing personal narratives and linking

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⁶. The Nobel Prize nominee Thich Nhat Hahn is a representative of Engaged Buddhism. He advises people to dedicate their lives not only to meditation but also to compassionate action as a means of taking care of people’s lives and society. (See Carolan 1998, hooks 1994, 158, Thich Nhat Hahn e.g. 1999.)

⁷. As for the concept of emancipatory curriculum I refer to Shirley Grundy (1987).
that knowledge with academic information is the most effective way of enhancing our capacity to learn (cf. hooks 1994, 148).

**Developing a World Perspective**

When looking back to her school days, bell hooks (e.g. 1994, 1996a) describes her and her schoolmates’ commitment to a vision of social transformation rooted in the fundamental belief in a radically democratic idea of freedom and justice for all. They tried to change their everyday lives so that their values and habits would reflect this commitment. Today, the growing social and economic apartheid separates white and black, the wealthy and the poor, men and women. We live in a chaos, says hooks, uncertain about the possibility of building sustainable communities. She refers to Martin Luther King Jr., who already some decades ago demanded a shift from a “thing”-oriented society to a “person”-oriented society. This shift he called a revolution of values, and it was needed because of the dominating “giant triplets” of racism, materialism and militarism. (See hooks 1994, 26—26.) No doubt, King’s words are relevant even today.

How can we, first of all, make our students see the global injustice being done all over the world? And how can we show the reality to our students without paralysing these young people with the gigantic world-wide problems, without making them cynical which would only promote passivity? We have been looking for answers to these questions in several directions. First, we see that today’s students need to be well read in theoretical and applied Ethics. They also need to know different theories of development and theories of intercultural education with anti-racist strategies. To give a wide perspective to our students, we invite guest speakers to lecture on global issues such as peace and conflict research, human rights and theories of development. However, separate courses on all these issues are not enough: as David Purpel (1989, 123) has pointed out, it is critical that these themes of emphasis “permeate the entire spectrum of educational activities – hidden, overt, planned, implicit or otherwise”. I find Purpel’s words wise; academic work needs a philosophical idea running through the curriculum and its implementation, an ideology if you like, a carefully thought-out orientation, and a particular atmosphere in the classroom that favours ethical and intellectual contemplation amongst the staff and students, in and out of university.

Another way of helping the students deal with global ethical problems are, for example, simulation programmes such as ICONS which put the students in the position of citizens of a country other than their own. I believe that acquiring a vast amount of information on a developing country, its history, social affairs and present economic and political state, and then representing this country as one of its citizens is, especially at the beginning of the studies, an efficient way of centering the national Finnish subjectivity, in fact, centering the whole western subjectivity – as far as it is possible in a Nordic welfare state. Students’ intellectual and social process during ICONS is even more intensive if there are some students from outside Europe taking part in the project.

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8. ICONS (International Communication and Negotiation Skills) includes a five week intensive study period and a six week simulation period. In our faculty the course is run by Gordon Roberts.
Sadly, bell hooks (1994, 28) claims that what we are witnessing today in our everyday life is not an eagerness on the part of neighbours and strangers to develop a world perspective but a return to narrow nationalism, isolationism, and xenophobia. Ironically, long before the word *multiculturalism* became fashionable, Martin Luther King Jr encouraged people to “develop a world perspective”. Also Thich Nhat Hahn (see Carolan 1998) speaks of violence and lack of communication between people. “Suffering continues, pain increases”, says the elderly Vietnamese monk.

In *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks (1994, 28) asks what forces keep us from moving forward, from having that revolution of values that would enable us to live differently. She reminds us of King’s teaching people to understand that if we are to have peace on earth, “our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation”. In spite of the obvious progress that has taken place in different parts of the world (also in the US) since King’s days, his message is still valid. In the Nordic countries, we should not pretend that these words do not concern us. It is in fact highly recommendable that young people who want to become professionals in intercultural education spend some time outside their home countries even though it is important to remember that travelling as such does not necessarily increase awareness and openness of the mind.

While working abroad, some students meet poverty, injustice and oppression. However, to me it seems that these experiences contribute to their growth and raising awareness which only makes them stronger: idealism together with a good knowledge base and a realistic view of the world gives most students a good shield against depression and pessimism. Most young people seem to believe in the promise of intercultural change, and so should we: there are ways of making the world a better place, the revolution of values is possible.

### Theory as a Liberatory Practice

In her autobiographical writings, bell hooks speaks of theory as a “healing place”:

“I found a place of sanctuary in theorising, in making sense out of what was happening. I found a place where I could imagine possible futures, a place where life could be differently.” (hooks 1994, 61.)

However, theory as such is not inherently healing, liberatory or revolutionary – which is a statement that we can easily verify by thinking of academic work and production. The concepts of theory and practice are, namely, linked with power relations within the academy: the privileged act of naming often affords those in power the access to important modes of communication. This enables persons up in the hierarchy to project an interpretation, a definition, a description that may obscure what is really taking place in society, outside the academy. Interestingly, hooks argues that when theorising is fundamentally linked to processes of self-recovery and collective liberation, no gap exists between theory and practice. Ideally, theory and practice meet in a reciprocal process in which one enables the other: the lived experience makes the bond between the two. (hooks 1994, 61—62.)
When checking the epistemological basis and the social practices in the academy, it seems obvious that even today universities manifest a great deal of hegemonic conservatism. Indeed, the theoretical establishment keeps up the old ways of theorising through systematic dissection, combination and recapitulation. bell hooks (1994, 64—65) claims that there is a lot of “theory” which turns out to be useless in spaces outside academic exchange, theory that is nonprogressive, a kind of narcissistic, self-indulgent practice so as to perpetuate class elitism. Theory can in fact be used as an instrument of domination if the purpose is to divide, separate, exclude and keep at a distance. For this reason I find it important to remind my students of the fact that after all, theories are no divine truths but narratives that have been constructed by certain individuals – mostly by white, western, heterosexual male members of privileged societies. As David Purpel (1989, 126) has put it, we educators need to be aware of the fact that even “child-rearing theories have histories”. In other words, both language and social practices are historical constructions and need to be treated as such.

When examining teacher education in particular, the gap between theory and practice often appears when the curricular emphasis lies heavily on the practical. This may lead to a situation where the institutional discourse does not encourage but perhaps mitigates or even ignores the significance of students’ (and the staffs’) intellectual work. It is indeed critical that the false dichotomy of theory and practice be out-rooted from teacher education. As bell hooks (1994, 65—69) has pointed out, the academy should not be internalising the false assumption that theory is not a social practice, nor should the academy promote the formation of a potentially oppressive hierarchy where all concrete action is viewed as more important than any theory written or spoken. By reinforcing the idea that theory and practice make the opposite ends, both groups (theorists and practitioners) deny the power of transformative education for critical consciousness.

In her Engaged Pedagogy, bell hooks (1994, 69) claims that theory emerges from the efforts to intervene critically in one’s own life and the lives of others. It is precisely this intervention that makes transformation possible. Therefore, theory should be understood as necessary practice within a holistic framework of liberatory activism. A truly liberatory theory challenges the students and teachers to renew the commitment to an active, inclusive struggle for a more just world in and outside their own country.

**Conclusion**

In this paper I have introduced bell hooks' Engaged Pedagogy which has its roots in transformative Latin American pedagogy and in the philosophy of Engaged Buddhism. The basic claims of Engaged Pedagogy are striving for dialogue across all social boundaries, building a learning community with the idea of mutual labour, and bridging the gap between theory and practice by employing theory as liberatory practice with an emphasis on experiential learning.

9. Activities that hooks (1994, 70) refers to are e.g. need for literacy, an end to violence against women and children, women’s reproductive rights, health, and sexual freedom.
The framework for the discussion in the article is my own working context, the international teacher education programme at the University of Oulu in Finland. In the near future, my intention is to work systematically together with my students to apply the ideas of Engaged Pedagogy to our own teacher education programme. I am convinced that this plan is worth realising though I find it somewhat problematic: is my enthusiasm in applying a feminist African-American woman’s educational philosophy one form of colonialism? This is the dilemma that follows naturally from my being, by definition, a representative of white supremacy. Here I can only refer to bell hooks’ own voice: in some of her writings (e.g. 1994) she speaks of constructive black and white (as well as female-male) dialogue – provided of course that the shared aim is to transgress against all oppressive practices in society.

In order to rewrite the educational policy, we need to examine critically, and from global perspectives, institutional discourses and curricular activities in our teacher education programmes. When doing this, we need to focus on sites where the interplay of agency, power and struggle takes place. After all, the ultimate goal of all education should be commitment to joy, dignity and fairness for all. This means that all educational institutions should have as a first priority on their agenda the transformation of society so that all forms of domination (class exploitation, imperialism, racism, heterosexism and sexual discrimination) will be abolished.

References

12 United Nations' Human Rights Documents as the Value Basis for the Teacher's Work

Vappu Sunnari

Abstract

Nowadays, the United Nations is the most significant international forum for human rights. Primarily, this is the case because the area of human rights work has belonged to its activity since its foundation 55 years ago and because it represents nearly all of the world's states. This article will examine United Nations’ human rights documents and deliberations in respect to the kinds of values and principles it offers to the teacher who is constructing social relationships amidst children from various value and cultural groups, is working as a member of the groups and educating the children.

Introduction

An individual's personality is defined by the social experience that s/he lives in and the social relationships to which s/he is bound (see Meyer 1987, 249—251, Lave 1991, Näsman 1994, Nummenmaa 1996, Aittola & Pirttijärvi 1996, Sunnari 1999). In an emphasised manner these factors are present in the school. Firstly this is due to relationships in the school being long term ones. Secondly, this is affected by the factor that the school is not merely a part of the child's daily activity, but it is a learning environment where the child is a continual “object” of observation, comparison, evaluation and assessment.

According to the goals set for the comprehensive school, the school should support each child's growth and development equally in the best possible way. However, research results indicate that the school gives different resources for the child's development e.g. according to her/his sex and on the basis of whether s/he happens to come from the city or
the country or whether s/he happens to live in southern or northern Finland (e.g. see Tarmo 1991, Sunnari 1997, Kannas 1995, Jakku-Sihvonen et al. 1996.)

The fact that teachers’ work environment has diversified increases the danger to construct and maintain inequality between children and it also increases the danger of misunderstanding children. In the basic document of the comprehensive school, The Foundation of the curriculum (Peruskoulun 1994), the multiplicity and the danger are identified. The document states that broad consideration of values and concerns from different perspectives and their clarification are needed in a changing world and that the tools required for this task can be found mainly in the United Nations’ universal declaration of human rights. Other United Nations documents are not mentioned in this document, although the organisation has drawn up various other declarations of human rights and agreements which are of a great importance while trying to construct equal and just human relations in school classes. Relevant documents in this context are at least the following: the covenants on Civil- and political rights and on Economic, social and educational rights (1966); The covenant for the prohibition of racial discrimination (1970); The convention to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women; and The convention on the rights of the child (1989).

The United Nations’ human rights documents do not give answers to such fundamental questions as the origin of the good or values, or whether life has some fundamental goal, and if so, what it is. In societies of multiple cultures you have various answers to such questions. What the teacher may – and should – do in respect to this questions is to acknowledge the multiplicity of the answers and to teach children to recognise and respect their complexity. This does not mean, however, that in the name of multiple values one should allow and respect questionable practices that violate human value, dignity and justice, even if they occurring in the name of cultural characteristics.

The Source and Formation of UN Human Rights Deliberation

Kevät Nousiainen names three historical stages in Western human rights deliberation. The first stage coincides with the birth of the sovereign national states in Europe in 1500—1600 and is connected with the strive to define the relationship between the state and the citizen. The starting point of the definition was the individualist liberal supposition regarding the natural state of the person. According to the supposition, the natural person was an individual that was free and independent of other human beings. On the justification of having been born a human being, the person was seen to possess certain natural and inalienable rights. These were seen to include ones’ own life, body and natural resources essential for the sustenance of the body. These were seen to be endangered, however, in their natural state and were in need of protection. For this reason, it was argued, states were needed. On the other hand it was seen as necessary to agree upon certain principles which would protect the citizens from possible abuses by the state. (Nousiainen 1998, 35.)

Kevät Nousiainen sees that this doctrine of inalienable rights has remained unchanged in essence in later Western human rights deliberation. (Nousiainen 1998, 33.) The views of who are citizens and to whom these inalienable rights thus belong have, nevertheless,
changed: originally the rights did not belong to children and women, nor to the indigent people and slaves. Only free, and sufficiently wealthy and influential men were citizens.

The concept of basic rights is associated with the second stage terminology of Western human rights work. At that stage human rights began to be adopted as part of the national state’s rights, and human rights were recognised as only those rights that were included as basic rights in the national judicial system. (Nieminen 1987, 21.) Even now the term basic rights is used for rights that are included in state legislation.

The third – and current – stage of human rights consideration includes the concept of international human rights. This stage is international in the respect that it indicates the Right composed by human rights documents based on agreements between sovereign states. The Right obliges the states to uphold certain international principles. (Nousiainen 1998, 32.) This type of deliberation makes it meaningful to discuss the equal rights and respect of different cultures and children from various parts of the world.

In accord with the general development of Western human rights deliberation, the United Nations’ work on human rights also includes phases of different emphasis (Nieminen 1987, 26, Karjalainen-Teittinen 1985, 10—11) even though the entire United Nations’ history can be considered to reflect the views of the third stage of human rights deliberation. The first phase of United Nations’ work on human rights is seen to have begun in 1945, when the UN charter was approved, and to have lasted until the end of the 1950’s. In that time the majority of countries that were members of the United Nations were Western countries and thus putting the stamp of a western, individualistic liberal approach to relationships between the individual and the state. The focus of human rights considerations was on civil and political rights. The United Nations’ human rights declaration is a product of this stage.

The second phase of the United Nations’ human rights work that lasted until the early 1970’s, signified the weakening of Western dominance in the dialogue as developing countries became independent and members of the United Nations. During that phase, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Covenant for Economic, Social and Educational Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination were adopted. (Nieminen 1987, 26.)

The year 1974 was considered the beginning of the third phase, when the United Nations’ General Assembly declared The new international economic order to be the general goal. The status of the states of Africa, Asia and Latin America had significantly strengthened in the United Nations, which could be seen in the focus of human rights shifting from the individual sphere to the area of national rights, and to considering the economic, social and educational conditions of human rights. (Nieminen 1987, 25—26, Howard 1985, 8—11, Varis 1987, 14.)

In addition to these three phases of the United Nations’ human rights, it seems to be relevant to separate a later fourth stage, which could be called human rights in the spirit of global fellowship. Currently, women’s participation in the United Nations has strengthened, more attention has been paid to special groups, and human rights questions have begun to be examined on a large scale as an aggregate of civil, political, economic, social and educational rights. During this phase, among other things, actions concerning the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, as well as the safeguarding of rights for children and refugees have expanded.
Values and Principles Connected to Education in the Human Rights Declaration and Other Human Rights Documents

The United Nations’ human rights declaration regards the inalienable rights, according to the earlier Western views, as the basis of rights. The inalienable rights in the human rights declaration do not, however, belong only to certain people but are possessed by all. According to the declaration, all people born should have the possibility of a worthwhile life. To reach this goal all should have an equal right to life, to express oneself and to feel safe, valued and respected.

The fundamental values in the declaration of human rights are held to be freedom, solidarity and equality with the latter two being connected to the quality of relationships between people. Solidarity has been conceptualised with the term brotherhood, and historically it has also been brotherhood. Currently, alongside with brotherhood, sisterhood and global companionship are stressed. As a by-product of freedom, equality and solidarity, we are able to retain the right to be treated in a way that promotes human value even in problem situations as mentioned in the declaration.

The declaration lists specific factors that tend to set themselves as obstacles to the implementation of human rights. These factors include race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinions, as well as national or social background. People are required to act to eliminate these obstacles.

With race and gender, the matter receives essential clarification in separate conventions for the prohibition of racial and women's discrimination. Firstly, the general convention that touches on the elimination of racial oppression, verifies that each idea which tries to justify the superiority of any race is scientifically wrong, morally reprehensible, socially unjust and dangerous and that the existence of boundaries between races are in conflict with the ideals of humanity. The document concerning racial discrimination names all the seclusion and privileges that are based on race, skin colour, descent, national or ethnic origin to be racism if it has either the intention or outcome of invalidating or restricting acknowledgement, enjoyment or practice of unbiased human rights and basic freedoms.

The general convention on the elimination of discrimination against women and the convention prohibiting racial oppression define discrimination in a similar way. The document on women confirms discrimination against them to imply all exclusion based on gender that secludes and limits with the effect or purpose of weakening women's acknowledgement, enjoyment and attainment of the rights and basic freedoms that belong to them according to the declarations.

According to the spirit of these documents, there is no need to merely condemn an intentional discriminating or oppressive act, but also the act that serves them without having been meant for that purpose. This emphasis is extremely important in schools. Various research results indicate for example that discrimination on the basis of gender primarily occurs unconsciously, without teachers’ intentions (see e.g. Lampela 1995, Sunnari 1997). Even though the educator is not personally aware of discriminating or oppressing happening in the work community, this does not excuse the educator from delving into these questions nor from the obligation to act for the eradication of such beliefs and habits.
The following principles can be raised from the United Nations’ documents as guiding principles for education:

1. A person must be treated in a manner that will acknowledge and respect her/his worth as a person.

2. In any community of people there can exist factors based on diverse beliefs and practices which produce and sustain inequality between people. These factors include for example beliefs about different races, but they could have been constructed on the basis of gender, descent, world view or religion etc. Special attention needs to be paid to these beliefs and practices, and action must be taken for their elimination.

3. Each person has the right to express her/his own opinions, to be heard, to be educated and to educate her/himself.

4. Each person has the right to rest and leisure time, for the sensible limitation of work and, in addition, each child has the right to play and recreation.

5. Offences are not to be brutally or unfairly punished nor in a manner that lowers one’s human value. Children especially need to be treated in a way that advances their human worth and value and strengthens their respect toward the human rights of others.

6. Suspicions of blame must be withheld until the person is proved to be guilty. Special care must be taken if the subject is a child.

7. The child must be protected from violence, neglect, indifference or otherwise negligent treatment.

8. The child needs special protection from sexual exploitation, forced labour and attacks against physical and moral dignity.

9. In establishing one’s own human rights, everyone’s responsibility is to ensure that one does not limit the possibilities of others from establishing theirs, and that she/he does not act against the rightful demands of moral and general order.

10. The supervision of establishing the human rights is not merely a matter of the state but the right and responsibility of each citizen.

From the perspective of value education, the United Nations’ human rights documents include an important principle of undividedness, which means that human rights should be examined in their entirety. The principle concerns the contents of individual human rights documents as well as continuous historical work undertaken for human rights. (See e.g. Eide 1987, 43, Peruskoulun 1998, 16, Kuusjärvi 1999.)

From Representational Human Rights Concept toward Every Person’s Right and Responsibility to Watch the Realisation of Human Rights

At their time human rights were conceived to be the rights of individual persons against possible abuses by the state. In the cases of abuse the state was considered the responsible agent. In practice this pattern of thinking still prevails. Nowadays, however, especially the civil and political rights are considered to be rights against abuse from other individuals, states, and state institutions, including schools (Ericsson & Scheinin 1987, 103, Kuusjärvi 1999, 60. See also Sunnari & Räsänen 1994). This can be observed in the development which has occurred in the monitoring of human rights conventions.
The monitoring of human rights conventions has primarily materialised with the aid of periodical reports. Each state that has ratified the United Nations’ human rights conventions is responsible to periodically give reports regarding the establishment of human rights in its area. The duty to report concerns those legislative, legal, administrative and other measures that states have taken for the realisation of the ratified convention's stipulations. In addition to periodical reports, the documents also include a system of appeal. The appellant in human rights offences has traditionally been another state. Increasingly, the one appealing can also be an individual or a group. This kind of right to appeal is included, among others, in the general convention adopted in 1966 that concerned civil rights and political rights and the general convention that included the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. The convention on women's right has a corresponding right of appeal in preparation. (Pietarinen 1998, 113—114.) That does not apply to children’s rights yet.

The Human Rights Documents Do not Automatically Construct the Value Basis for the Teacher's Work

Work on human rights undertaken in the United Nations and human rights documents offer an important foundation for teachers in their endeavour to establish fair and equal relationships with student groups and also in their effort to maintain them, as well as in teaching children to value and foster equality and justice between people. This, however, requires teachers to know the human rights documents and the human rights conceptions that they incorporate.

The human rights documents also bind the teacher. As representatives of state institutions, teachers need to respect, protect and establish human rights. In addition, there are four special requirements registered in the United Nations’ human rights documents linked to school and education that they must fulfil. Firstly, the human rights documents ensure each citizen to have the right to education that should be exempt from fees at its elementary stage. Secondly, measures are demanded to make education available for all. Thirdly, considerations are required against human rights offences in education, and fourthly, human rights education should be cherished the school.

The fulfilment of the tasks listed above requires that future teachers gain education in this area, which is also stated in the Finnish government's equity programme (Suomen 1997, 11—12). In practice the execution of this obligation has been very deficient. The existence of the declaration of human rights is familiar through the study of history and social studies. It is also known by the students of teacher education. Nevertheless, other United Nations’ work on human rights and other human rights documents are often unknown to future teachers and may remain so. To make the situation even worse, ethical education as a separate subject or separate period of study is not necessarily included in the teacher education programme and it is not otherwise systematically taken care of in teacher education.
References


13 Teachers’ Ethics, Teacher Education and Changing Horizons

Rauni Räsänen

Abstract
The article discusses the role of ethics and values in people's lives with particular focus on the role of teachers and education in value orientation and ethical discussion. It is pointed out that from many perspectives teachers' work can be considered an ethical profession with its own tasks in society and values to support and cherish. Teachers are also supposed to participate in the younger generation's ethical upbringing. Teacher education should prepare them for the ethical challenges of their profession which is not easy in a versatile and changing reality.

Education, Teachers and Changing Horizons
The turn of the millennium has been characterised by various descriptions: time of transition, period of transformation, era of moving horizons, expansion and transfer of knowledge, movements of people, goods and information. The terms emphasise increasing diversity, uncertainty, and above all change – changes in economic, political, societal and information structures. The structures of families and working life have diversified, people's mobility between jobs and countries has increased. Diversity of cultures includes ethnicity and nations, but also combinations of various beliefs, world-views, social status, life- and sexual-orientations. Values and norms of many groups have become visible and recognised.

Educational institutions are socially and culturally constructed and therefore are inevitably involved with major political, moral and economic dimensions. Increasing diversity is visible also at school; children of various life contexts meet there. How will school and teachers cope with all these changes and prepare their students to live amongst
them and direct them? I tend to agree with Henryk Skolimowski who in his book 
Ecophilosophy (1984) stated:

“The knowledge about electronics and computers will grow old soon. In the future 
important knowledge will be connected with values and wisdom, only that will 
help us navigate in the times of confusion which will be filled with anything but 
human meaning and happiness.”

How will the teacher navigate and prepare others to navigate amongst various 
possibilities, cultures, values and life contexts? How will he/she orient pupils for the 
future? How will he/she react to the changes which he/she maybe does not accept or 
which in his/her opinion would increase inequity and injustice or would be manifestations 
of cultural or human violence or colonialism? The teacher works in the middle of many 
influences and perspectives when he/she decides about his/her professional values and 
orientations. Tolerance and appreciation of cultures is emphasised, but at the same time it 
is admitted that not everything should be accepted. Culturally specific values should be 
understood, but the search for some agreed, global values and principles is essential for 
peaceful co-existence and survival. The teacher has to be sensitive to pupils' values and 
his/her own ones but he/she should be aware of his/her professional tasks and 
professional values as well. In the global village students should be prepared for personal 
and local decisions but also for global duties. When requirements and challenges are 
abundant it is crucial to recognise what is essential personally and professionally in one's 
work and life as a whole.

Teaching as a Moral Profession

The teacher’s job has been understood slightly differently at different times. Many images 
have been used about its main tasks, and various aspects have been emphasised. It has 
been considered for example as a combination of skills, a form of art, applied science, an 
ethical profession, and joint action research. Partly, due to that, also teacher education has 
been understood differently (e.g. Liston & Zeichner 1991, Tom 1984 and 1987, Zeichner 
1983, Niemi 1989, Räsänen 1993, 2000.) It has been asked whether it is teacher training 
concentrating only on necessary skills, or teacher education which also focuses on 
creating autonomous, reflective professionals who develop themselves and their work 
(Beyer 1986, 37-41, Case et al. 1986, 39). It has been asked whether a teacher is merely a 
transmitter and maintainer of the culture or also its evaluator. Is the teacher only a civil 
servant realising what books, curricula and authorities state or should he/she have 
readiness and courage to question values and fight for the well-being of children? It is 
very important for teachers' orientation and practice how they view their work and how 
well they are prepared for the changing reality.

As already stated above, the teacher’s work can be regarded as an essentially ethical 
profession for many reasons:

1. Teaching and education are inevitably value-laden activities, because they deal with 
issues like civilisation, growth, development – the idea is to make or support 
something becoming better. The interconnectedness between values, education and 
school is visible from aims to single details like how many hours of each school
subject we have at school. The aims and practices of school reveal what we consider important and valuable: is it being knowledgeable, sociable, creative, morally sensitive, co-operative, autonomous, critical, and/or responsible…? Teachers’ freedom to evaluate the aims, choose and interpret contents and methods is relatively high. (Strike 1990, 188-223.)

2. What makes a teaching profession particularly morally sensitive is the fact that it is working with children, who are easy to influence and are not capable of defending themselves and their rights like grown-ups. The teacher should be aware of children’s vulnerability and his/her special responsibility for them. The teacher has a lot of power e.g. through the grades and reports he/she gives, and in that way he/she indirectly or directly influences also children’s personality and future possibilities. Through the knowledge and skills the teacher transmits or interprets he/she affects the world-view, competencies, and understanding of the world. Teachers’ positive effects on a child’s life can also be decisive: they can encourage, inspire and open new perspectives and possibilities through their teaching. They can be caring grown-ups who consider both the individual growth of children and the needs of the society.

3. Whether the teacher wants it or not he/she is always a model of a grown-up person to the child. Pupils see daily how he/she faces and solves dilemmas and how logical or sincere he/she is in his/her deliberations and decisions. What also makes the teachers’ task ethically complex is the fact that you have to make decisions in the middle of various values and contradictions. There are a large number of people who have the right to define the direction of the work. In a way the teacher has many colleagues, clients and employers. He/she has to consider his/her responsibilities to and for children, colleagues, parents, and society – still not forgetting his/her own principles and fundamental beliefs about his/her work. It is not uncommon that the values or opinions of the parties involved conflict, even the two parents of a child might disagree on certain issues. Sometimes one has to ask who has the final right to define the child’s best and who is most competent to decide about it.

4. The fourth criterion for considering teaching a moral profession is its wide influence on individuals, society and the future of humankind. There are no other professionals that for such a long time work with all (or majority) of people. Considering the time, the possibilities to influence are incomparable. If education has an effect on people (which I believe it has) the teaching profession is crucial in society: Teachers educate future citizens and decision-makers that more and more are also world-citizens. (Peters 1970, 93-94, Strike & Soltis 1985, 7.) Teachers need many competencies for that task. Some of them may be eternal like basic assumptions and values of one’s work, others can change like how to support students on their value orientations and moral development at the times of moving horizons.

Teachers’ Professional Code of Ethics

Several professionals like doctors and lawyers have very old codes of ethics. These professionals’ role in the society and the basic values of their tasks have been clear: to promote and cherish health and to safeguard justice. Teaching is an old craft but it has not
necessarily been included in the group of professions, which demand special expertise, autonomy and action according to the joint basic value basis.

Teachers’ actions have been controlled by law, but in some countries codes of ethics have been drafted. There are various approaches to forming such a code. It can be published and distributed by the ministry or trade union or can be drafted after thorough value clarification and discussions among teachers. One thing is evident – the more teachers are involved in reflecting and formulating their professional values, the more committed one can expect them to be. Although including all teachers in the process of developing and studying the professional code of ethics is not easy, it is the goal to search for. It should be the topic of discussion in teachers’ pre- and in-service training, in the unions and ministries. Children’s future and human growth should be of upmost concern in these discussions. One of those skills is, in addition to many others, how to discuss value questions with children of different ages.

Although I have emphasised values and norms in the teachers’ ethics, one cannot forget the many skills the teacher needs. Professional activities are based on one hand on professional knowledge and skills, and on the other on the value and norm basis of one’s task. Neither can be replaced by the other. Lack of professional skills cannot be compensated by good ethical principles, and vice versa; both are needed for professionally responsible actions.

Professional ethics is not meant to be a burden but an important source of inspiration in the teacher’s work. It could direct the relation between the teacher and other people and the teacher’s attitude towards work and his/her duties. The purpose of defining some ethical principles and studying them together is to make people conscious of the special ethical nature that is – or should have been – an integral part of the teacher’s work. The principles are meant to encourage professional sensitivity, identity, responsibility and empowerment, to give teachers courage and confidence in their choices when guiding pupils in their orientations and decisions.

**Approaches to Moral Education**

The teacher is supposed to educate responsible citizens and individuals. That is why moral education has traditionally been considered one of the areas of education and teachers’ ethics, but the approaches to it have differed and changed. The approaches have been divided into for example 1) value-transmission, 2) value-clarification, 3) moral development theories, and 4) ideals of a community of ethical inquiry. (Chazan 1985, Hersh et al. 1980, Kay 1975, Lipman et al. 1980, McPhail et al. 1975, Noddings 1987 and 1988, Power et al. 1989, Pring 1987, Purpel & Ryan 1976, Raths et al. 1978, Scharf 1978, Straughan 1988, Wilson et al. 1967, Wilson 1973.)

Direct and efficient value-transmission has been used particularly with young children, and it has been defended by saying that there exist some universal ethical principles or at least values and norms that responsible people agree on. Examples of such principles are the golden rule of ethics or values presented in human rights documents. Others argue that although there are no such principles, it is important for the next generation to learn the values of the society they were born in.
The school of value-clarification emerged as a protest to value-transmission; the dangers of possible brainwashing, the lack of critical consideration and not understanding the principles were emphasised. In the value-clarification approach students are not taught values or norms but they are presented with problems and tasks which they have to face and evaluate. The defenders of this approach argue that uninternalised values which others have given from above lead to double-morality, not to morally sensitive and responsible action. They also justify their approach by pointing out that the world changes all the time, so even values we have considered permanent must sometimes be reconsidered: the list of values is not important but an individual’s active role in finding the values. What is vital is to lead the student to the road of constant value decisions.

Psychologists like Kohlberg (Power et al. 1989) have investigated the moral development of individuals as they solve ethical problems. He and his followers have found out that people go through different moral stages in their lives depending on how their ethical thinking is challenged. The child is reported to be concrete and instrumental in his/her thinking: punishments, prizes and consequences decide the morality of the deed. At the next stage, opinions of the peers, members of the reference group and laws are central in moral decision-making. The last stage is characterised as the phase of autonomous ethical deliberation. The person understands that laws and principles are drafted by people but they should safeguard the good life of everyone. Kohlberg states that people need challenge, discussion and reasoning to be able to develop in their moral thinking.

The representatives of value-clarification school have been accused of value relativism and simplification of the relationship between individual and society. The approach is said to underestimate the influence of environment: people do not act in a vacuum or take part in the value-decision processes out of their social context. The approach has also been criticised because of the lack of ethical theory or knowledge.

Some of the earlier criticism has been targeted at Kohlberg, too, but the main criticism towards him has been his over-emphasis on the cognitive aspects of morality and moral education. People’s ethical sensitivity does not depend only on how rationally they can solve ethical problems in theory. They need also skills of empathy and caring and practice for courageous ethical action.

The individual-centred approaches have given rise to schools, which, in addition to individual processes, emphasise community, joint discussion and knowledge of ethics. The supporters of these approaches argue that morally sensitive individuals and their deliberation of ethical issues is essential, but we live in communities, and that is why joint decision-making based on dialogue and testing of various values and norms is also important. Well-known examples of community-based approaches are for example Matthew Lipman’s and Nel Noddings’s schools and methods. Lipman (1980) emphasises joint moral reasoning based on stories of children’s lives and the relevant skills in wider society. The key-concept in Noddings’s (1987, 1988) thinking is caring. She has planned a school-curriculum to prepare children to care for themselves, other people (close and remote ones), living creatures, nature and constructed society, and dreams and ideals to strive for. She argues that micro-society where caring is both studied and practised is the best preparation for responsible citizenship.

It is my experience that teachers use a variety of approaches according to the context, children’s age and their own basic assumptions. It is clear, however, that value-
transmission without justification and deliberation becomes more and more problematic in the multicultural and rapidly changing context. In the same way the individualistic approach of value-clarification seems an important but insufficient approach in the interconnected world.

Teacher Education and Ethics

In the 1960’s and early 1970’s ethics was still part of teacher education curricula in Finland, and it was clearly tied up with Christian tradition and Lutheran ethics. One can criticise its monocultural approach, but it showed that ethical issues were considered important in teacher education. In the 1970’s ethical education disappeared, however, not only in Finland but also in several other countries. It is surprising why it was abolished at the time when changes became faster and there would have been need to reflect the direction, aims and consequences. It is equally surprising that although ethics was mentioned in the documents regulating teacher education that did not seem to lead to practical consequences.

In the end of the 1980’s ethics again became important in teacher education discussion and gradually was included in the curricula. Instead of transmitting values, discussions about ethical principles were emphasised both at schools and teacher education. Teachers’ professional ethics began to interest; experiments to teach it were organised. In spring 1999 researchers and teachers of professional ethics gathered in Helsinki to discuss the aims, approaches and methods of their teaching. Several questions were raised like who has the responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning results in professional ethics. Are the students alone responsible, or teacher education institutions, or employers or trade unions? The general impression seemed to be that although learning eventually depends on the students, all parties involved – and particularly teacher education departments – should take care of the area.

The teaching experiments have helped to develop courses on teachers’ professional ethics. According to experience theory and practice should be closely connected and ethical discussions should run through the whole education. Studying ethics and clarifying values in theory does not help alone, but the studies should be combined with one’s actions and schoolwork. There is a need to reflect one’s deeds and problems confronted at work from the ethical perspective. In this reflection, the tutor’s task is to pay attention to the problems and widen the perspectives to cover areas like teacher-pupil relationship, curricula, textbooks, contents, methods, school environment and the surrounding society. The student needs trust in his/her capabilities to solve ethical problems but also knowledge and skills to analyse situations and structures. He/she needs to clarify his/her own values and ethical principles but also practice in value discussions with pupils and parents.

James Rest (1994) has defined teachers’ moral competency as the combination of three factors: ethical sensitivity, motivation to act morally and skills to solve ethical problems. The teacher should have sensitivity to see problems from an ethical perspective, a kind of ethical reading skill. In addition, he/she has to have will and strength to do something about moral problems. In solving actual problems, experience and knowledge help.
Support from colleagues is also essential in the moral development, deliberation and action. Ethical professionalism requires various skills and search for joint moral basis for education.

Developments in the Teacher Education Department of Oulu

A Pilot Study

Teachers’ professional ethics and ethical education have been important development areas at the Department of Teacher Education in Oulu for a long time. Various aspects of ethics were emphasised by the principals of the department since the very beginning of the institution (e.g. Kaljunen, Kyöstö, Jussila), but as a more collaborative approach it emerged in the 1980’s and 1990’s, and many members of the staff raised these questions within various courses. In spring 1989 a group of students presented a wish for optional studies in ethics. As the request was repeated by another group, a course on teachers’ ethics was started on voluntary basis in autumn 1990, and was realised with special groups three times. The study grew into a many-cycled project in which phases concentrating on theory and practice alternated. The aim of the project was to develop a meaningful study unit together with the students through means of action research, and at the same time to improve the consciousness of ethical issues among those involved. In order to be able to conduct the study unit, one had to get deeply acquainted with the theory of ethics. The realisation of the course tested the theories but also gave birth to several new questions, which led to dialogue with colleagues and returning back to relevant literature. (Räsänen 1993.)

The project proved popular; the students regarded the study unit as central in teacher education and thought the course had broadened their views of teaching. In particular, they stated that the course had deepened their self-reflection and understanding of different viewpoints and increased their consciousness of the complexity of ethical questions. The collected data supported the students’ feedback. The students’ consciousness of ethical questions broadened from immediate interaction between the teacher and the pupil to also considering the context of the school, pupils’ homes, society and global questions. Personal reflection, critical thinking and the need to actively influence the teaching profession, its circumstances and ethical questions seemed to have increased in the students’ work.

During the research process many changes took place in the planning and implementation of the study unit: its main approaches, contents and methods. The nature of pedagogical relationship and approaches to moral education in teacher education began to interest more and more. Although the students seemed to agree about the basic tasks and values of their profession (like working for children’s best, children’s needs and rights), value transmission seemed a wrong approach with adults whose actions would depend on how well they had understood and internalised the chosen principles. Professional ethics is not a question of rhetoric or repetition but personal involvement and determination, which includes cognitive and emotional aspects and striving for corresponding actions.
At the beginning of the action research project the intention was to let students as much as possible clarify their own values connected with their work, and provide exercises and material that would help them in that task. However, that approach alone did not satisfy the tutors nor the students; clarifying one’s own values is necessary for teachers but not enough when we live in a society and work with people of different values. Students demanded discussion about their values, dialogue where they could listen to others’ views and arguments and test their own ones. In that way they could find values – personal and professional – which they might agree on – in spite of many differences.

In addition to dialogue, the students emphasised the roles of practical experience and knowledge about ethics in their professional studies. They pointed out that teachers’ knowledge in the area is often minimal, and tools for analysing ethical issues are seldom satisfactory. Still, that would be necessary for instance in value discussions with parents and pupils and when solving conflict situations at school. The matter that caused a lot of consideration was the question of how to connect studies and reflection more closely with educational practice and students’ own experiences. The best solution seemed to be to include a practice period in the middle of the course, to prepare it beforehand, to ask students to keep a diary and reflect the faced ethical dilemmas in the follow-up meetings. It would be ideal if the tutor could attend the practice and raise ethical dilemmas and open new perspectives. On the whole, the learning tasks that required personal involvement, combination of experience and reflection, studies in ethics and dialogue with people who inquire similar issues, seemed to be most beneficial for the development.

The role of the tutor and the study group became central. A group of people with different views proved to be important for ethical growth, and the students were suspicious about self-directed learning in ethics education. The role of the tutor as the creator of the learning atmosphere, as the guide to learning tasks and discussions, as a perspective-opener, and as an expert in the field cannot be underestimated. All groups are not open to joint inquiry, either. An ideal learning environment presupposes commitment to the tasks and secure, open and democratic learning ethos.

The More Comprehensive Approach

The experiences from the action research project with smaller groups helped to construct theoretical solutions for a more comprehensive approach. Since 1993 the Module called Philosophical and Ethical Foundations of Education has been included in the teacher education curriculum as a four-credit unit compulsory for everyone. The inclusion has inspired to develop the contents and methods as a joint research task as more members of the staff have been involved. One aspect of contents to be integrated has been the human rights documents and knowledge about the human rights process. Most often students are familiar with Human rights declaration and the Children’s rights convention, but the numerous other documents are unknown. The aim has been to give an idea of the whole process and of the applications of the principles in practical school situations. The human rights discussion has raised questions about the universal value basis of education, the various interpretations of rights and duties in different cultures, and about the need to
continue the discussion about the common value basis although respecting also cultural
differences. The question often raised was whether human rights could or should be the
common value basis of teacher education – and if so, what would it mean in the aims,
contents, methods and environment.

Another development area in the latter half of the 1990’s has been the improvement of
teaching methods and taking students out of the institutional context into a more peaceful
learning environment. The chosen place has been a beautiful fishing island near to Oulu.
The change of environment has caused some practical difficulties, but has provided a
peaceful place to stop and reflect outside the everyday worries, hurries and constraints.
The new environment has presented new challenges as to the suitable methods and roles
of tutors. Experiential learning has become important, and drama has been successfully
applied in sensitising activities and moral dilemmas. Environmental education, in
addition to human rights, peace and equity issues, has been included in the agenda.

The action research project among graduate students has been supported by the
postgraduate research group on Encountering otherness, which started its work in the
beginning of the 1990’s (Räsänen & Sunnari 1997). Several other projects have
strengthened discussion about ethics at the Teacher Education Department of Oulu. One
of them has been co-operation with the practice school in connection with UNESCO-
activities; both the department and the school are UNESCO-institutions. Ethical
viewpoints have also been considered both in Women studies and Multicultural studies.
In addition there was a new programme started at the department in autumn 1994, which
offered many new possibilities for long-term ethical concerns with the same group of
students. The programme was called MEd International Programme; in addition to giving
a teacher’s diploma, it aims at developing systematically students’ intercultural sensitivity
through five years of studies. The perspective in the programme is ethical: to raise global
awareness and to encourage action for a more just and equal society for children of all
cultures, countries and backgrounds.

A lot has been done at the department to increase the consciousness of the ethical
dimension. The importance is recognised by a large number of students and teachers.
Some signs of involvement are students’ initiatives in societal participation which have
required courage and moral commitment, and the increasing amount of research including
ethical perspectives. However, the many projects and experiments are not satisfactorily
integrated, and the value-basis of teacher education is still unclear. But after all, a lot of
development and research has taken place, and the long experience has shown that most
students find ethics teaching vital for their professional development, and the courses can
be realised so that they are motivating and meaningful to university level students.

Ethics in front of Moving Horizons

The teaching profession has been symbolised by a light, a torch or a plant. One of the
slogans the Finnish teachers’ union uses is “You are touching the future in your work“.
All the symbols present essential aspects about educators’ tasks: growth, enlightenment,
guidance, caring, supporting, warmth, future. Very often the task requires patience; the
work is rewarding but the results show only in the future.
It is difficult to imagine that ethical challenges would decrease in the future. On the contrary, life seems to get more complex and changes become faster. Diversity has increased in many aspects, which on one hand provides us with enormous cultural richness but also increases the amount of choices and raises questions about the nature of moral education and about universal ethical principles. In the midst of choices and varieties children need more guidance and value-discussion than before. It may be that it is more difficult to find common ethical rules but one can help people to the road of seriously searching for them. The same applies to teachers: value-clarification makes basic orientations easier and knowledge gives tools for teaching moral aspects.

At the dawn of the new millennium I recall two discussions. One of them took place in my home with a group of teenagers a couple of months ago. The group was shocked by an attempt to sell them drugs in the nearby shopping centre. The remark made by one of the young people contains some truth: “Life was easy for your generation: you got jobs if you studied, there were clear rules and there were not all of these dangers and decisions to be made all the time.” The discussion raises questions about the state of society we have provided for young people and how they can be supported, guided and helped in their choices. It raises serious questions about the responsibilities of grown-ups to protect and care for the new generation. One should ask whether educators are still role models and dare to act as responsible adults.

The other incident took place in Nairobi at the professional ethics meeting for African teachers. I was wondering why many of the fundamental questions about the role of ethics and the task and aims of education came up more often there than in western contexts. My Kenyan friend replied that education in industrialised wealthy countries has often become such an abundance of influences and so technological that it has started to live its own life without any touch with the real world and basic questions about its deeper purpose. We have a lot to learn from the so-called developing countries, many of the values and practises we are about to lose. Internationalisation holds many promises for the future if dialogue between cultures is based on appreciation and mutual learning.

The changing horizons both frighten and fascinate. The world of transition empties itself of many dominant modes of thinking and judgement, of acquired, unquestioned ideas and norms. It invites to adventure new paths and the unknown, and forces one to leave something behind and look at things from a fresh standpoint. New situations demand courage and determination. They have their promises and threats; the door is open for both possibilities. That is why, particularly when changes are rapid, we should consider what is essential; that would give wisdom for our actions. Hope gives light for our trip. Values form an important compass for our navigation. A lot depends on whether the navigation is led by justice and care or competition, selfishness and indifference.

References

