Spaces for Solidarity and Individualism in Educational Contexts

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Spaces for Solidarity and Individualism in Educational Contexts

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Foreword

For children and youth, as citizens in a society, being a part of educational systems means being involved in a community. Through participation in educational systems, there is important learning about the self and others, both for individual development and social solidarity. Individual development and social solidarity are interrelated. These are important values in education at all levels. Individuals are social beings and are necessarily interdependent on others. Nevertheless, individualism and social solidarity are values that sometimes can diverge and come into conflict. These values can be defined and interpreted in various ways. In a time of neo-liberalism, for example, where individual choices and rights are put at the forefront of the societal and educational discourses in many countries it is relevant to raise questions on how issues of solidarity and individualism are interpreted and negotiated in education. What kind of shape and definitions do these concepts take when schools and preschools live under the intense pressures for the accountability of educational outcomes (Biesta, 2009)? Under what conditions can values, such as solidarity and individualism, co-exist and develop in multicultural and globalized societies, without one dominating the other?

The background for this book is a workshop initiated by The Graduate Research School in Educational Sciences at the University of Gothenburg which addressed the theme New Life-patterns in School and Surrounding Society. Around 20 persons, doctoral students and senior researchers, were invited to participate in a two-day workshop at the Department of Education at the University of Gothenburg in August 2008. The specific theme for the workshop was: *Children – individuals and citizens: Solidarity and individualism in the context of education and educational research.* The aim was to advance theoretical and empirical understanding of solidarity and individualism in education and educational research. Each participant was required to write a short paper related to the theme and based on their personal research interests. All papers were discussed collectively during the workshop. Four invited international researchers took an active part in the workshop and contributed with their special knowledge.

The workshop focused on moral and philosophical, as well as societal and educational perspectives of the concepts, solidarity and individualism. During two intense days, the doctoral students and the senior researchers from different parts of the world (Australia, New Zealand, United States and Sweden) unpacked these concepts and tried to understand their interrelationships against a background of education and philosophy. Questions discussed included: How are solidarity and individualism related to globalization, citizenship and

democracy? How can we understand solidarity and individualism in educational contexts and what kind of questions are of importance in educational research? How are the concepts of solidarity and individualism understood in educational contexts? How do children and young people construct and understand these concepts in relation to their educational experiences? What questions are important in educational research on these themes?

After this workshop all participants were invited to develop their presented paper from the conference as a chapter for this book: *Spaces for solidarity and individualism in educational contexts*. This resulted in seven chapters in which the authors advocate their theoretical and empirical understanding of the concepts, solidarity and individualism, in education and educational research. The chapters have been reviewed and revised several times in a period of scientific interchange between the editors and the authors.

The contributed chapters focus on moral and philosophical perspectives in relation to the themes of solidarity and individuality or on societal and educational perspectives in relation to the themes. They focus on various practices for education, university, schools, the preschool class and preschool. The chapters deal with issues of solidarity and individualism in a multiethnic society and in relation to citizenship. They investigate the space for solidarity and individualism in teacher education and in early childhood education from the children's and teachers' perspectives. The complex relationship between gender issues and solidarity is at the forefront of one of the chapters. The authors define solidarity in different ways. Yet, there seem to be a core of interconnected understandings that solidarity is concerned with community and trust (Liedman, 1999). According to these authors, other values also come into play, such as friendship, participation, equality and diversity and are interrelated with solidarity. The connections between solidarity and citizenship are also analyzed. The authors within this book advocate, challenge and raise questions about the borders and conditions that distinguish solidarity and citizenship in education and educational contexts.

The first chapter, *Recognizing children as citizens: Can this enhance solidarity*? written by Anne B Smith, connects solidarity with citizenship. She argues that meaningful participation and mutual obligation are connected. She builds her reasoning on theoretical interpretations of citizenship, relating it to solidarity, and drawing on socio-cultural and childhood studies theories. Essential to building a sense of solidarity, according to Smith, is meaningful participation, through shared goals, in communities of practice. A sense of belonging and understanding the position of others are also significant issues. Certain aspects of education are conditional for solidarity to evolve. These are, for example, a

meaningful curriculum and respectful teaching; but also school structures that permit a mix of children from different demographic backgrounds. Not least important are the power relationships that allow children opportunities to engage in caring and respectful relationships with others.

What values should we adopt in the realm of education? This question is addressed by Lawrence Blum in the second chapter: *Solidarity, equality and diversity as educational values in western multi-ethnic societies*. Lawrence Blum approaches the issue of solidarity in educational contexts from the perspective of moral and political philosophy. Solidarity is a complicated value closely connected with values of equality and diversity. We cannot understand what solidarity is, or whether and in what way, it is valuable unless we connect it with equality and diversity. Lawrence Blum identifies two domains of solidarity – referring to in-group (for example, minority groups) and trans-group solidarity (for example, national solidarity). These two domains of solidarity can be valuable. They can support each other, although circumstances may also promote an unfortunate clash between them.

Zahra Bayati is the author of the third chapter, *The space for individualism and solidarity in Swedish teacher education*. She investigates how solidarity and individualism are recognized in the Swedish teacher education system. What is rewarded from a multi-ethnical and multilingual perspective and what kind of factors affect the expression of these values? Solidarity, concludes Zahra Bayati, is a highly regarded value in the Swedish curriculum and in educational policy documents. However, the data from the presented research paints a different picture. Individualism is given more space than solidarity within the system. Individuals have the choice to do things that are more or less individualistic or supportive of solidarity. Nevertheless it is the system itself that gives space for these different attitudes and it is the system that sends signals to the actors in this hierarchical system that individualism will be supported.

In the fourth chapter, Airi Bigsten asks the question: *What problems do teachers face when anchoring individualism and solidarity in preschool*. She addresses the dilemmas that teachers face when trying to help children develop their individuality *and* their abilities to show solidarity towards others. Two different encounters between teachers and children were chosen in which values for solidarity and individualism were communicated. These videoed encounters served as departure points for interviews with the teachers. Teachers reasoning about the events in the videos indicated that everyday life is full of situations where individualism and solidarity may be in conflict. These teachers were not certain that their actions and their choices in directing how they wanted children to act were the 'right' choices. A central dilemma for the teachers is that they

need to consider alternative solutions in the moment when several things may be happening at once. It is crucial that teachers have occasions when they can reflect on their own actions to ensure that the children in their preschool classrooms have more opportunities to understand the values of individualism and solidarity.

The fifth chapter by Helena Ackesjö is titled: *Solidarity with whom? Perspectives on solidarity in the borderland between preschool and school*. The aim of her study was to identify possible dilemmas of solidarity for the teacher of the preschool class as a new arena for practice. How are the teachers engaging in solidarity? What forms of solidarity are they expressing and to whom? Data were constructed with inspiration from dialogue seminars. Preschool class teachers met in small groups discussing various topics of relevance to their work that were identified in advance of the discussion groups. The analyses revealed three "confronting" forms of solidarity. Whereas rational solidarity ties teachers to preschool traditions, norms and values, institutional solidarity encourages teachers to build a pedagogical bridge between preschool and school. The results of the research also indicated that the teachers are involved in a third form of in-group solidarity through their own professional community of teachers of preschool classes.

Democracy among girls and boys in preschool: Inclusion and common projects is the title of the sixth chapter written by Anette Hellman. The author argues that it is a democratic necessity to recognize the complexity in categorizations, such as gender. It is important to take into account that such categories are constructed and reproduced by politics as well as through research. Hellman observed the interplay between children in a preschool class. The study illuminated the complex relationships between solidarity and gender transgressions as well as between solidarity and gender stereotyping. The analyses indicated that solidarity for children, in terms of taking care of and standing up for each other, can be created through "safe" spaces in which children can negotiate gender that make gender stereotypes less significant. Practices of friendship and practices of common projects seem, according to Hellman, can also be significant safe spaces in which children can negotiate gender issues. Friendships and common projects have the potential to build solidarity between children.

The seventh chapter, authored by Donna Berthelsen, Jo Brownlee and Gillian Boulton-Lewis, is titled: *How do young children learn about solidarity? Beliefs of student teachers in early childhood education.* In this chapter, there is an analysis of interview data from students enrolled in a vocational education program through which they will gain a qualification to teach in early childhood programs. The students were presented with a dilemma of teaching practice and to make their responses to the situation. It posed a dilemma that forced the students to

consider the importance of young children's learning to be a member of the classroom community as an issue of learning about solidarity versus meeting a child's individual personal needs. There was strong evidence in the students' responses that they valued solidarity and in helping children recognize their membership of the community of the child care group. It was concluded that these student teachers would support learning about solidarity in their early childhood classrooms.

With this publication, we would like to contribute to the discussion about education by bringing values of solidarity and individualism into the forefront of discussion. All authors of this book considered in one way or another an important question that is often unaddressed in the current educational agenda that focuses on accountability of educational systems and measurement of educational outcomes: What is the purpose of education and what is good education? Our aim with this book is not to produce answers rather it is to inspire discussion on the importance and necessity of understanding and researching values that underpin education system and, in particular, the values of individualism and solidarity.

Eva Johansson and Donna Berthelsen
Editors

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Chapter 1
Recognizing Children as Citizens: Can this Enhance Solidarity?[1]

Anne B. Smith

Abstract: The concept of solidarity overlaps with a contemporary perspective on citizenship for children, as both emphasize meaningful participation and mutual obligation. Children's citizenship involves entitlement to respect and recognition, opportunities for belonging and meaningful participation, the right to express voice and agency, and the fulfillment of duties to others. This chapter offers a theoretical interpretation of citizenship, relating it to solidarity, and drawing on sociocultural and childhood studies theories. The chapter argues that children learn about citizenship and solidarity through participation in communities of practice with shared goals. If schools are to promote children's understanding of, and capacity for solidarity and citizenship, they should recognize them as capable agents who can contribute collectively and individually to solving the serious problems that face their society and the planet.

This chapter focuses on children's citizenship, and discusses the relationship between citizenship and solidarity, and whether current moves towards the recognition of children as citizens, are likely to strengthen children's inclination towards solidarity. I argue that meaningful participation of all citizens, including children and young people, is an essential ingredient in building a sense of solidarity within families, communities and democratic societies. I use examples from recent research to show that given appropriate guidance and support, children are well able to exercise their citizenship, and in the process demonstrate solidarity in action.

[1] This chapter draws on, and is in parts similar to, the following publication: Smith, A.B. (2010). Children as citizens and partners in strengthening communities. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 80*(1), 103-108.

Citizenship for Children

Citizenship for children has been defined as "an entitlement to recognition, respect and participation" (Neale, 2004, p. 8). This implies a sense of togetherness, connectedness, and a sharing of common interests, but also of difference and uniqueness (Heater, 2004). The nature of citizenship is determined by the relationship between individuals and the societies in which they live, and the rights and obligations which are inherent in those societies (Ben-Arieh & Boyer, 2005; Sweetman, 2004). Citizenship is based on social processes rather than in legal rights or a formal relationship between individuals and the state. It is viewed as:

> A more total relationship, inflected by identity, social positioning, cultural assumptions, institutional practices and a sense of belonging. Part of that total relationship is the relationship between individual citizens, something that has been more prominent in the Scandinavian literature hitherto. *It also involves responsibilities towards the wider* community [emphasis added] (Werbner & Yuval-Davis, 1999, cited by Lister, 2007, p. 694).

According to Lister (2007), there are four main building blocks of children's citizenship, all of which involve social interactions and relationships: membership, rights, responsibilities and equality of status, respect and recognition. Membership involves being part of a community and taking part in individual and collective decision-making and action. Rights are entitlements which are realized within the context of social interaction and are applicable to others (including collectives) as well as to self. Responsibilities assume that children are active participants in their homes, schools and communities, and that they contribute to joint goals. While children as citizens struggle to achieve equality of status, especially if they come from marginalized communities, they participate in multiple relationships, resist oppression and challenge normative assumptions.

Another important aspect of citizenship for children is agency, without which they cannot exercise their rights and responsibilities. Instead of being the passive recipients of other people's teaching, care or protection, to be shaped and socialized, children are social actors and participants in society (James & Prout, 1997; Mayall, 2002). Their identity as citizens emerges out of engagement in everyday experiences. Educational settings are one important place where children may or may not have the opportunity to exercise their citizenship (Smith, 2007). Being treated like citizens casts them "as full human beings, invested with agency, integrity and decision making capacity" (Stasiulis, 2002, p. 509) and reduces their previous invisibility, voicelessness and passivity (Covell &

Howe, 2000). Both voice and agency help children to make sense of their world, to "grapple with serious questions" (Pufall & Unsworth, 2004, p. 9) and to act on their own and others' behalf to modify the world that surrounds them. Being and becoming a citizen, involve the acquisition of identity, through a reciprocal process of coming to share meanings, interests, values and a way of life, with others. Agency is also necessary for solidarity, as it enables children to be aware of others' needs, feel a sense of responsibility towards others, and empowered to act for their good.

Solidarity

Solidarity involves feelings of belonging to, interacting with, empathizing with, knowing about, and relating to a group of people. It has been defined variously as "the extent and permanence of social ties and the degree of collectivism in society" (Durrant, Rose-Krasnor & Broberg, 2003, p. 587); "the social structure that identifies and characterizes a group" (Mark, 2001, p. 91); cooperation, harmonious relationships and mutual support within a group (van Gaalen & Dykstra, 2006); social relations based on justice and reciprocity (Adair, 2008); and group cohesion based on the joint recognition of a common good and shared interests and values (Rehg, 2007). Solidarity, according to Harvey (2007) involves a bond, which is formed through shared knowledge of unfairness and injustice. Empathetic understanding as well as information, is the basis of solidarity. It is:

> … a knowing that transforms the self who knows, a knowing that brings new sympathies, new affects as well as new cognitions and new forms of intersubjectivity (Barkty, 2002; cited by Harvey, 2007, p. 27).

The African concept of ubuntu is related to solidarity, and this quotation by Bishop Desmond Tutu (2004, cited by Melton, 2010, p. 91) seems to encapsulate the various meanings for solidarity.

> [Ubuntu] Is the essence of being human. It speaks of the fact that my humanity is inextricably bound up in yours. I am human because I belong. It speaks about wholeness, it speaks about compassion…. [People with ubuntu] have a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that they belong to a greater whole and [that they] are diminished when others are… treated as if they [are] less than who they are.

Melton (2010) argues, that the dangers of isolation and alienation for families and children, can be reduced by a rebirth of community, and the nurturance of close and caring neighborhood relationships. His Strong Communities research helped families to reconnect with their communities, with the help of volunteer

outreach workers, and this led to an increase in families' sense of efficacy and social support, and more positive parenting.

> Loving care for, and respect of, children both leads to and prospers in a community in which is there a norm of care for one another, whether inside or outside one's own family (Melton, 2010, p. 91).

Relationships of caring and concern towards other members of local communities and neighborhoods, seem to incorporate many of the elements of solidarity. Solidarity involves belonging, reciprocity, shared knowledge, empathy and support for other members of communities. Concerns for justice and fairness, and joint recognition of a common good are shared features of solidarity and strong communities. In Melton's Strong Communities research, the safety and well-being of children is elevated into a common good valued by all. But children are not just the recipients of the support and empathy provided by caring families and communities; they can also make an active contribution to the common good and ongoing solidarity. Young people's capacity for conceptualizing solidarity is demonstrated in this definition from a young Brazilian, who was part of the landless movement. "Community is a gathering of many people, united in the struggle for one common goal – such as the Landless movement" (14-year-old adolescent; Public School, in Rizzini, Butler & Thapliyal, 2009).

Sociocultural theoretical perspectives

Solidarity is associated with reciprocity, important from sociocultural theoretical perspectives, and in understanding children's citizenship (Smith, 2002; 2008). Reciprocity is an important aspect of solidarity because it involves establishing trusting and positive relationships between people, through which they become bound together affectively and share feelings of mutual obligation (Molm, Schaefer & Collett, 2007). Reciprocity is also critical in the development of children's citizenship, as it is the foundation for early relationships of trust between infants and their caregivers, which help children develop relationships of mutual care, to a gradually widening circle of adults and children. Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggested that children's ability to form relationships begins in infancy, when adults engage reciprocally in progressively more complex interaction with babies.

Children construct their own understanding, but in partnership with other people. Thinking and problem-solving develop through participation (to the extent of one's abilities) in activities with other people. Children internalize the tools for thinking they have practiced in social situations through participating in

shared activities with skilled partners (Vygotsky, 1978). Space and collaborative opportunities with others, are necessary for children to develop their voice and identity.

Children's development is profoundly affected by people, culture and the tools of culture (especially language), institutions and history. Children gradually come to know and understand the world through their own activities in communication with others. Development is generated through ongoing learning in social situations. The greater the richness of the activities and interactions that children participate in, the greater will be their understanding and knowledge. This is not a one way process from adult to child, but a reciprocal partnership where adults and children jointly construct understanding and knowledge. The sociocultural system within which children learn will influence how they come to formulate and express their views, and the extent to which they develop feelings of solidarity with others in their communities.

Relationships and social interactions between adults and children, and between children, are a key component in supporting children to be citizens and achieving solidarity. Within communities of practice, participants are sensitive to the understanding and experience of others in the group, which helps to develop a sense of belonging (Wenger, 1998). Close and trusting relationships and sensitivities are the basis for intersubjectivity, which is based on negotiation and co-construction of meaning. Jean Harvey (2007, p. 27) discusses how solidarity involves shared knowledge of and empathy with others, "new forms of intersubjectivity".

Knowledge, according to Wenger (1998, p. 4) is a "matter of competence with regard to valued enterprises" such as singing in tune, writing a story, or growing up as a boy or girl. Knowing is a matter of actively engaging in such enterprises. Through shared participation in activities within social communities, identities are constructed in relation to those communities. Joint involvement with others in challenging learning activities, feeling comfortable, accepted and tuned in to the other participants in a group (and group members being sensitive to you), is likely to contribute to solidarity. There has to be social engagement before children can learn and gradually take on more responsibility for the wellbeing of others.

> Learning transforms our identities: It transforms our ability to participate in the world by changing all at once who we are, our practices, and our communities (Wenger, 1998, p. 227).

Sociocultural theory recognizes that agency arises out of social relationships (Smith, 2002). Joseph's study of children in Lebanon showed that children were

nested in webs of family relationships, and that their rights and responsibilities were influenced strongly by who they were related to, and who they knew. "[C]hildren's rights and responsibilities were delicately negotiated possibilities which had to be constantly worked through known relationships was everywhere evident in practice" (Joseph, 2005, p. 2). Children were included in the many social visits made by their parents. They listened to and participated in almost all of the conversations during such visits, and engaged in after-visit reflections and commentaries, providing them with information and education about who had what, who did what and who knew what locally: "To have rights, the children knew that they had to know who had the resources, skills, and services to offer them rights" (Joseph, 2005, p. 11). The study suggested that children have to be part of social processes if they are to become active participants, and develop feelings of solidarity towards others in their communities.

Childhood studies theory

Childhood studies theory emphasizes that the nature of childhood and beliefs about what children are capable of, vary at different times in history and in different cultural contexts (James & Prout, 1997). There is no immutable and unchangeable entity called childhood. Childhood and children's needs are socially constructed. One of the problems of promoting citizenship in educational contexts is that in many educational settings, children are not constructed as capable, competent, responsible citizens who are able to contribute to decisions. Instead they are likely to be seen as 'citizens in the making' who are being shaped for their future roles in society, rather than citizens contributing to society today (Cockburn, 1998; Lister, 2007).

Most of Western discourse about children and childhood is about their role as dependents whose futures are shaped by others (James, 2004). James (2004, p. 25) points out the exclusion of children today from "even quite elementary decision making about the shape and structure of their everyday lives at home and school". Yet children's responsibilities vary greatly across the world and in the different contexts of their lives. In the majority world children's responsibilities are vital to supporting their families. In Vietnam, for example, many children make a living by selling postcards and cleaning shoes, while living on the streets and sending money home to their families (Burr, 2004). And even in the minority world, most children have major responsibilities outside of school (Stainton-Rogers, 2004).

Children's exclusion from citizenship and from social and political processes has been explained by Thomas (2007) using Bourdieu's concept of

habitus. Habitus is "embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history…the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product" (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 56, cited by Thomas, 2007).

> ... [Ch]ildren's subordinate status, and their assumed lack of concern with public affairs, are continually reinforced in subtle and not so subtle ways, through embodied habitus as well as the prevailing discourse (Thomas, 2007, p. 21).

Social interaction and discourse thus affect the dispositions of both children and adults to speak and act in certain ways which reinforce the subordination of children. Children often lack the social and cultural capital which would enable them to be taken seriously. Thomas (2007) argues that to achieve political change it is important to understand not only institutional and legal contexts, but cultures and the dispositions which frame them. If achieving solidarity is an important educational goal, these discourses of exclusion must change.

Solidarity and Citizenship in Practice

The following examples of citizenship being recognized or not, are drawn from an international study which explored children's understandings and experiences of citizenship (Taylor & Smith, 2009). A case study from Norway (Kjørholt, Bjerke, Stordal, Hellem & Skotte, 2009) illustrates the lack of political power held by some students at school, and the practices that reinforce children's subordinate status. Children in a Norwegian secondary school spoke to researchers about their frustration at not being listened to at school during a recent class reform process. The children explained that a new structure had been introduced into the school that changed the existing classes (of about 25 students each) and divided them into larger groups (of about 40 students). These were then divided into smaller groups during school hours. The children protested that they had to change groups all of the time, and that they had to adjust to 8 different groups. One comment was: "We are like animals used for research purposes" (Kjørholt et al., 2009, p. 123). The students disagreed with the school's decision to change structure in this way, and felt badly about having their views ignored.

> I think it should have been a majority decision, or like a democratic system. We could have had an election. It is we who are going to learn something, not the teachers. (Secondary school boy, Kjørholt et al., 2009, p. 123.)

The students had signed a petition, which, according to them, was not even considered. Even the student council had not been allowed to discuss the issue. They were angry and wanted to hold a strike but a teacher persuaded them to let

the matter drop. They were told that the decision had already been made by politicians. Yet the children described the effect of the change as chaotic, complained that they had lost contact with many of their friends, and that their grades had been affected. They felt sure that if they had been adults they would have been listened to.

Brazilian children from marginalized groups, such as those living in the favela, experience overt discrimination in their local neighborhoods (Rizzini et al., 2009). Young people spoke of daily occurrences where their social class influenced the way that they were treated, resulting in alienation. For example public school students received free urban transportation, but this depended on the goodwill of the bus driver, who limited the number of children who could get on the bus, and placed time restrictions on when they could use their free transport cards, lengthening the time it took the children to get to school. Other municipal benefits included school uniform, which caused children embarrassment since the uniform was similar to that of city cleaning crews. Young people also reported being discriminated against because they could not afford fashion accessories such as backpacks or tennis shoes, and many had only one pair of pants they wore all week long. These young people from the favela spoke of their experiences.

> Some people are prejudiced ... like on the street, if we go to a mall, we have a way of dressing and people notice your sneakers and say 'Look they're from the favela'. (Group of street children and adolescents, Rizzini et al. 2009, p. 76.)

> To walk into the mall wearing the uniform is like you're naked. They look at you as if you've just got out of jail. (Mixed group of 14 and 15 year-old adolescents, public school, Rizzini et al. 2009, p. 77.)

Private school children on the other hand, described street children as begging on the streets, having no families, no manners, and no place to live.

> We have good manners and street children don't. Our parents pass onto us what they learn in church, in classes and from their parents. This is passed down through generations. They [street children] don't do that. (8 year-old boy, private school in Rizzini et al., 2009, p. 17.)

It is not surprising that children become alienated from their communities when their voice, agency and personhood are not appreciated, as these examples show. Children were not respected and listened to, and they were not allowed to play a part in decision-making that affected their lives. Possibly some of the children's sense of solidarity within their own peer groups may have been strengthened by their experience of unfairness and injustice. Yet their sense of solidarity with the larger school, community or neighborhood suffered, since they were not

accorded dignity and respect. It is unlikely that they will be inclined to feel responsibility and empathy or solidarity towards groups of people, who disrespected them in these ways.

Supporting Children's Citizenship

New perspectives about children and young people, and their ability to contribute and participate, has had a major influence on the inclusion and participation of children in their communities, resulting in a wave of participation projects in both the minority and majority world. In the United Kingdom children are being invited to participate in the planning, delivery and evaluation of many local and central government policies and services (Davis, 2004; Marchant & Kirby, 2004). In New Zealand there are many examples of participation projects especially at local government level, and a few examples of children's participation in decision-making structures, such as School Boards of Trustees, where young people are voting members of each school board by law (Smith, Nairn, Sligo, Gaffney & McCormack, 2003).

According to Shier (2009), children and young people's participation projects in northern countries tend to focus on participation around one particular issue (such as young people's use of public services). His work in Nicaragua with coffee plantation workers opened up for him a much broader perspective on child participation. Nicaragua employs thousands of child workers on coffee plantations in often difficult and dangerous conditions. Despite this, Nicaragua has a well-constructed legislative framework for children's participation and gives them voice and representation on various bodies, such as school councils, and children and youth committees. (Children in Nicaragua vote at 16 years of age). Shier worked with an NGO (CESESMA) an environmental education action group, whose aim was to help children and young people take control of their own development and organize themselves. They trained and supported young community education activists ("promotores") aged 12-18, to work with younger children in their communities on children's rights issues. Children join local out-of-school activity groups (such as organic farming, youth theatre or craft making) run by other promotores. Heyling (13 years) joined a folk dancing group and Deybi (12 years) a radio project. Then they joined a training course involving group work, leadership and communication skills (a one year courses of monthly two day workshops) and become promotores themselves. They were then ready to share their knowledge with others and organized groups in their own villages.

This was a long term project where young people became skilful community leaders with the support of adults. It involved mentoring of younger children by older ones so that when the older ones move on to other activities younger ones have the skills and confidence to take over as promotores. Shier (2009) described this as a bottom-up process where children gradually learn to organize and mobilize and become 'a force to be reckoned with'. None of the children were paid, as the aim was for the benefit of their local community, helping them to become active members of it.

Hygiene is a huge problem in India with 1000 children dying per day from diarrhoea, and other diseases (Gale, 2009). More than half of India's 203 million households lack a toilet. Acharya (2009) describes a development project involving child reporters from poor areas as agents of change in hygiene practices in Orissa, India. One hundred children aged eight to fourteen years from ten schools were given workshops in basic news reporting skills and on development issues in their local area. The children noted down their daily observations in diaries, and the views and thoughts of other children in their school. The diaries were collected and made into a newsletter and the children made special presentations of their writings in their villages and at local forums and conferences. One of the child reporters, Nila, talked with villagers to campaign for better hygiene in her village. At the beginning villagers were defecating in open fields, but after repeated persuasion and discussion with the children, they constructed toilets in their houses. Nila's village eventually had a toilet in every house. These children initially were shy but became very articulate through making independent presentations. They established a blog to air their views on a wider platform and more than 5000 children became involved. Acharya points out that one reason the project was successful was that the children saw many things at the local level which the organizers did not see, which enabled intervention to be more effective. It also gave the local authorities a good idea of how their schemes were working at village level.

Projects designed to encourage child participation, have, however been the subject of criticism. Kjørholt (2002), for example, argues against universalizing and normative assumptions about the self-evident value of children's participation. In her view, there needs to be critical scrutiny of the implementation of particular projects, which focuses on the actual experiences of child participants in these projects. Others have criticized the limited one-off nature of child consultations, the lack of resources, the lack of respect for children, and refusal to act on their input (Neale, 2004; Davis, 2007; Sinclair, 2005; Theis, 2009). Davis suggests that it is necessary to create more effective long-term methods of creating dialogue with children, which build on strong

relationships and interdependence between adults and children. Children should not be thrust into responsibility if they do not choose to participate (Roche, 1999) as this may cause them to disengage. Participatory structures which are modeled on 'adult' democratic structures are often not very useful to children and these are often not particularly effective in engaging constituents (Thomas, 2007), although they may contribute to adult political involvement. There is, however, little enthusiasm amongst young people for structures like youth parliaments or school youth councils, which can easily be manipulated or ignored and have no influence on 'real' politics (Theis, 2009).

Nevertheless successful examples of participation projects (such as the ones described above) show that children can learn a great deal, and be empowered by the process, and that the community benefits from their expertise. Children can help to make communities safer and healthier and practice solidarity in action.

Implications for Education and Fostering Solidarity

Efforts to enhance children's citizenship are likely to foster children's solidarity with their everyday communities. At school (as in families) children see citizenship enacted in their daily lives. Perhaps the most important way that children learn about citizenship at school is through the 'hidden curriculum' at work in how children's rights and agency are respected at school, and how much responsibility and control they are accorded (Taylor, Smith & Nairn, 2001). Considerable research has shown that children greatly value participation rights in every aspect of their lives, including school. Authentic opportunities to engage, participate and contribute as citizens are often sparse in school settings, because of dominant adult power and control, and lack of respect for children citizenship status (Taylor & Smith, 2009). Lack of opportunities for reciprocal interaction, sharing meanings, values and responsibilities, being listened to and listening to others, are unlikely to foster solidarity.

Another aspect of schooling, which affects children's understanding of citizenship, especially ideas of equality, is the socioeconomic mix of the school population, and the degree to which school communities are inclusive of students from a range of cultural, socioeconomic and ability groups. When children are separated into different institutions by background (for example, in private schools) they may be less tolerant of others who are educated in different institutions. The Brazilian research, which included both wealthy children in private schools and poor children from the favela attending public schools (Rizzini et al., 2009), highlighted how school could be a place which created injustice, or at least heightened awareness of it. While solidarity within sub-

groups aware of injustice might be strengthened, children are unlikely to feel solidarity with wider society or those groups who oppress them.

The formal curriculum of schools may also influence whether children feel as if they are treated as citizens, and the extent to which their feelings of solidarity are strengthened. Children's awareness of civil and political rights is likely to be influenced by what they are taught. In New Zealand there is a National Curriculum that guides curriculum aims, objectives and assessment, and human rights education is an important component of it. Understanding about social organization (including rights, responsibilities, laws and rules) is an important part of the curriculum for Social Studies and Health. The curriculum also emphasizes respect for indigenous peoples through the Treaty of Waitangi,[2] biculturalism, multiculturalism and gender equity. Teachers in New Zealand are expected to teach children about these issues, and children expect to be aware of them. New Zealand children in all age groups are highly aware of rights, and this is possibly at least partly due to exposure to these concepts at school (Taylor, Smith & Gollop, 2009).

In Australia, since 1997, there has been a major drive towards and expenditure on citizenship education in primary and secondary schools, which has centered around a program titled Discovering Democracy (Graham, Shipway & Fitzgerald, 2009), so citizenship is a feature of the educational landscape. This program has been criticized, however, for teaching children to show respect for government and law, rather than protesting against injustice where it occurs. Australian research (Graham et al., 2009) showed that there were major gaps in children's knowledge and understanding of citizenship, but it was clear that they valued participatory processes, such as being given a sense of personal responsibility and being involved in decision-making. The Australian curriculum would be much more effective in advancing students' theoretical understanding, if it was framed more within Australian students' current understandings of citizenship ideas in the social processes of their everyday lives. The researchers urge that students should be supported to participate in a much wider range of civic activities (besides singing the national anthem or attending ANZAC[3] day ceremonies). Australian children mentioned helping the elderly and caring for the environment as responsibilities for citizenship, yet there was little

[2] The Treaty of Waitangi is a treaty between the Maori (the indigenous people of New Zealand) and the British Crown, signed in 1840. Maori ceded sovereignty to the British Crown under conditions which were meant to ensure that ownership of Maori land and other assets were retained by them.

[3] A day when Gallipoli, a battle which involved Australian and New Zealand soldiers, is commemorated.

opportunity for engaging in these activities in school limiting their opportunities for demonstrating solidarity.

Projects in the majority world, such as those I have described in Nicaragua (Shier, 2009) and India (Acharya, 2009), show that even in countries which lack material resources, children can demonstrate solidarity with their communities, and play an important part in strengthening them, provided that they are given sensitive guidance and support. Children both learned and were empowered by the process of being active citizens and contributing their expertise to their communities. Melton's (2010) work in the southern United States, illustrates that it is possible to build solidarity and strengthen communities in parts of the world where community cohesion and networks have broken down. His research also suggests that where solidarity in communities is nurtured, everyone, including the most vulnerable members, is likely to benefit.

Conclusion

Both citizenship for children and children's feelings of solidarity with others, require opportunities for children to acquire a sense of belonging, and the ability to empathize with and understand the position of others. Early reciprocal social interactions based on joint engagement, foster children's sense of trust in others and their capacity to take into account the views of others, and develop relationships. School and community settings can provide further opportunities for children to acquire empathy and a sense of mutual obligation to others.

This chapter has demonstrated both how children's citizenship can be fostered and supported, and children's oppression, silencing and exclusion, reduced. Exclusion and discrimination fosters alienation, but inclusion and respect for children's citizenship, fosters solidarity under certain conditions. Aspects of education likely to enhance solidarity, include good quality curriculum and respectful teaching, school structures which mix children from different demographic backgrounds, and power relations in schools which allow children the opportunity to engage in caring and respectful relationships with others. Authentic opportunities to work with other people collaboratively for the common good, in schools and communities, are necessary. While children may need adult guidance and support to successfully engage in such collaborative projects, there is ample evidence that they have the capacity to make lasting contributions to the common good and the well being of their communities. Children have the capacity, given the right circumstances, to be good citizens and to demonstrate solidarity in action.

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Chapter 2
Solidarity, Equality, and Diversity as Educational Values in Western Multi-Ethnic Societies

Lawrence Blum

Abstract: This chapter examines the value of solidarity and applies the analysis to the Swedish context as a multi-ethnic society. Solidarity as a value in a multi-ethnic society is closely related to the values of equality and diversity. The chapter considers the meaning of these three values and their relationship to one another. The analysis concludes that solidarity comes in forms of in-group and trans-group solidarity. Each has its own particular value. The value of trans-group solidarity in a multi-cultural society is increased if there is an appreciation of positive diversity for the different groups in the society. In-group solidarity is a good in itself although it has a complex relationship to trans-group solidarity. If all parties are cooperating then in-group solidarity can be an important partner to trans-group solidarity. The two forms of solidarity do not have to be at cross purposes to one another. However, in-groups can manifest tendencies that can harm trans-group solidarity, and instrumentalities outside the group have a responsibility to counter those tendencies.

I will approach the issue of solidarity in educational contexts from the perspective of moral and political philosophy. What values should we adopt in the realm of education? Moral and political philosophy can help us identify those values and their meaning.

Solidarity is a complicated value. It has a different set of associations in the American context from the European one. In Europe, solidarity generally refers to a sense of connection among all citizens of a nation-state, and is taken to provide a normative foundation for social welfare. In the United States, it is generally used to refer to solidarity among members of minority groups within a nation-state. These two domains of solidarity might seem to pull in opposite directions, since many think that the solidarity of minority groups is harmful to national solidarity; and vice versa. I will argue, however, that both forms of solidarity can be valuable and that they can support each other, although circumstances may also promote an unfortunate clash between them.

Let me begin with some terminology. We can speak of "in-group" solidarity as solidarity within a particular group, distinguishing that group from an "out-group," which simply means those who are not members of a particular in-group. No value judgment is implied in this usage. There is nothing wrong with "out-groups," nor insulting in referring to them in this way. "Trans-group" solidarity refers to solidarity across different groups, that is, between members of in-groups and out-groups. The European idea of solidarity is thus "trans-group" when the nation-state is multi-ethnic, which currently include every European and Nordic nation, for the solidarity will then extend beyond one's in-group, either minority ethnic groups (Iranians in Sweden) or majority ones (ethnic Swedes in Sweden) to encompass members of out-groups. I use the language of "ethnic groups" here to refer to groups that differ in culture, religion, race, language, and/or national origin.

I will be looking at education in the context of a national community that contains distinct ethnic groups within it, that is, groups that see themselves and are seen by others as distinct from one another. Solidarity in multi-ethnic societies is closely related to two other values that are relevant to educational contexts. These are equality and diversity. I will discuss the meaning of these three values and their relationship to one another. We cannot understand what solidarity is, nor whether and in what way, it is valuable unless we connect it with equality and diversity.

Equality Values

Let me begin with equality. Equality can operate in interpersonal contexts and these are particularly important for education. We wish to teach pupils not to be prejudiced against out-group members, and not to discriminate against them on the basis of their group membership. We wish students not to stigmatize ethnic out-group members. That is, on the interpersonal level, we wish pupils to learn to see ethnic out-groups as equals to themselves, as equally worthy of respect and concern. This value applies to members of all groups, not only the majority, for example, ethnic Swedish people, toward ethnic minorities. Being a minority does not insulate a member of a minority group against prejudice toward another minority group – for example, Moroccans toward Turks or Sami – so the equality values must be taught to all students toward all others. At the same time, we must also recognize that because the majority group has the most power to exclude, stigmatize, and harm minority groups, its prejudices should be of the greatest educational concern.

Interpersonal equality values are perhaps the most familiar ones. However, it is no less important to teach pupils to be concerned to promote equality of condition and opportunity among different groups in society, not only to treat their schoolmates as equals. To do so they must understand the social processes which create inequality, and the social barriers to inequality. Some of those processes are simply discrimination on a wide and systemic scale. For example, one study of discrimination involved sending job resumés to Swedish employers. The resumés were matched with equal qualifications, but some had Swedish names and some had Muslim or Arab names. It was found that many employers treated the "Swedish" applicant more favorably, even though the "Muslim" applicant had the same qualifications. Interestingly, when the researcher tracked down the employers to tell them of the results of the study, the employers did not consciously express prejudicial attitudes; either they were not telling the researcher the truth, or they were deceiving themselves into thinking that they lacked prejudice (Carpenter, 2008).[1] But the study suggests that Swedish employers are discriminating against Arab and Muslim jobseekers without necessarily realizing this; and learning about such systemic discrimination is important for students.

Pupils should learn about the range of social processes that create inequality in society. Discrimination is not the only cause of inequality. Some inequality is caused by the simple fact that recent arrivals to a society generally begin with fewer resources than the average population of the receiving country. There is no injustice in natives having greater resources than immigrants; injustice arises only if the immigrants are treated in a discriminatory fashion once they arrive. Therefore, not all inequality is unjust. However, inequality is still unfortunate, since equality is a more ideal condition. Other inequality can be caused by changes in the economy, for example, jobs in which certain immigrant groups are clustered disappear or diminish. But institutionalized discrimination is certainly a problem, and pupils should see equality as a value that they are committed to as a matter of justice; their education should teach them the tools to analyze their societies to understand what stands in the way of such equality, and, in practical terms, how they themselves can help to move the society from a state of unjust inequality to one of justice and equality.

[1] The resumé study is by Dan-Olof Rooth of the Linneaus University.

Reluctance to Speak about Race

One difficulty in education for equality is that educators are sometimes reluctant to speak about the characteristics of populations that are part of the reason why they are treated unequally. For example, in both Sweden and France there is a reluctance to speak of "race" and to recognize that a person's racial characteristics may be part of the reason why they are treated unequally. (By "racial characteristics" I mean visible physical characteristics that are associated with ancestral origins in a particular continent, e.g. Africa, Asia, Europe.) But unless we name race as an inequality-generating characteristic and process, we cannot teach students how to deal with race in a constructive way – that is, how to avoid racial prejudice and racial injustice, and how to reduce it in their schools and in the wider society.

Teachers' reluctance to talk about race is somewhat understandable and it is worth looking at some of the reasons for it. Often race is invoked by right-wing groups to stigmatize and incite hatred against groups seen as racially different from the white majority population. This may make the language of race itself seem stigmatized and inappropriate to use. Yet refraining from talking about race does not erase it from people's consciousness. Forbidding the use of race would not prevent people from thinking about their fellow citizens and fellow students in racial terms. On the contrary, naming race is a first and necessary step toward eradicating its negative effects.

A second reason for the reluctance is a fear that if one talks about race, one will reveal one's own prejudices to others, for example by using the word "black" in a way that seems to express distaste or antipathy, even if one does not intend to do so. Yet here too, if teachers do hold such prejudices but keep them inside themselves, they are not going to be effective in helping students to recognize their prejudices. Naming is the first step toward teachers taking responsibility for doing something about their own prejudices, and thus being better educators for their students (Tatum, 2008).

A third reason for the reluctance to talk about race is the correct belief that race is an unscientific category that masquerades as a scientific category. It corresponds to no significant characteristic of groups or individuals other than the superficial ones of their skin color, hair texture, and so on; in this respect race is unlike religion, language, and culture, which do refer to real and humanly significant characteristics. However, although race is not a scientifically real characteristic, racialization is. That is, groups are treated as if they are or were races, and this affects their experience in society.[2] To put it another way, race is

[2] A discussion of the way that race is not real but racialization is can be found in Blum 2002, Chapter 8.

not real, but racism is. And to recognize the reality of racism you have to be able to use the language of race to refer to people and groups.

Some people also think that no one would desire to have a racial identity, in part because they think that race is an identity that is imposed by others, while culture, religion, and language are self-chosen. This may be true in a historical sense, but, to take one example, black people in many different countries have embraced a "black" identity as a positive and self-chosen one, signifying pride, an assertion of dignity, and personal meaningfulness. It may be helpful to think of this as a "racialized" identity rather than an actual racial identity, since the idea of race is scientifically unsound.

The French have articulated most officially the view that that the state should be entirely race-blind (what is sometimes called "color blind"), a view that seems common in Sweden also. In their 1958 Constitution, the French affirm "the equality of all citizens before the law without any distinction of origin, race, or religion (Sabbagh, 2008)."[3] By forbidding the state to take these factors into account, they bury the distinction between using race to victimize and discriminate, and using race to prevent and rectify victimization and discrimination. It may be that one day the world will be able to get "beyond race" and race will become as insignificant a bearer of identity as hair color is now. People may differ as to whether that would be a desirable ideal. But even for those who desire it, getting from where we are now to that ideal requires taking race into account now, and so we must be able to use racial language now, including in educational settings.

Solidarity does not always guarantee equality among groups. A strong feeling of identification with fellow citizens, fellow "nationals," is compatible with a great deal of inequality of status and condition. Indeed, the idea of "community," which some see as very similar to solidarity, has historically accepted traditional hierarchies of class and status, as in the older German term used for community, Gemeinschaft. Appeals to national community or national solidarity have often, as in wartime or other times of crisis, been a way of discouraging disadvantaged or marginalized groups (workers, racial minorities, and women) from pressing for their own betterment, on the grounds that such activities undermine national community or solidarity. And so if we want equality, we have to go beyond solidarity to ensure it.

Equality can be thought of as a "cold" value, while solidarity or community is a "warm" one. You can believe that out-groups should have equal rights

[3] Banting, Johnson, Kymlicka and Soroka report that among European and North American countries, France and Sweden have the weakest policies that give recognition to cultural minorities (2006, 68-70).

without actually caring about those persons. But solidarity and community imply at least some degree of caring about the others in question. So equality does not necessarily bring solidarity with it. Again, we need both.

Despite what I said earlier, when certain people think of solidarity, they usually do think of it as involving a kind of equality. In this understanding, for example, solidarity is understood as supporting a robust welfare state, and thus state provision for a high minimum of health, education, and welfare; all would be equal in that sense of being guaranteed the same minimum. But this shows that solidarity may imply equality – but it does not have to. To put it another way, equality and solidarity are two different things, and if we wish to have a form of solidarity that involves equality, and a form of equality that involves solidarity, as we should, we have to make that explicit, and teach both values to our students.

Positive Diversity Values

European and Nordic countries now accept that their nations are multiethnic in character, and also recognize that minorities of various kinds deserve certain kinds of protections that recognize their status as both distinct and vulnerable. A number of conventions and agreements, such as the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, have been either incorporated into domestic law in the Nordic nations, or given legal standing in other ways (Hannikainen, 1996). Sweden (along with other Nordic countries) has traditionally distinguished between long-standing "national minorities" such as Sami, Tornedalians, and Roma, and more recent immigrants.[4] Nevertheless, the idea of cultural rights of immigrant groups and individuals is gaining some ground, as it follows the logic of rights for national minorities in some respects.

The legal protections afforded minority groups by these developments are based on a certain value judgment – that the cultures, languages, religions, and heritages of these groups are valuable to their individual members and deserve protection because of that value. Thus in-group solidarity is implicitly recognized

[4] I use the word "immigrant" in a purely descriptive way to mean someone who leaves one country to enter another, with the intention of staying. I understand that in Sweden "immigrant" is often a stigmatized term, and that its use has been replaced in recent years with "foreign-born." That might better express contemporary linguistic sensibilities in Sweden. But from an American point of view, the language of "foreign-born" emphases a difference and somehow makes the non-native seem "other" in a troubling way; whereas "immigrant" does not carry this association in the United States. (This is not to deny that there is some hostility to immigrants in the U.S.) Of course either "immigrant" and "foreign-born," used as general categories, mask socially important distinctions, such as those between Nordic and non-Nordic immigrants or foreign-born.

as valuable, as it preserves the group as a locus of these values. But I would suggest that in the educational domain, value to members of the groups themselves is not the only reason for recognition of minority groups. I would therefore propose several distinct "positive diversity" educational values.

One, just mentioned, is the value of recognition to the members of a particular minority group. Incorporating into school curricula the history of minority groups, both in their ancestral homelands and in their land of immigration, such as Sweden, is a particularly valuable form of such recognition. Allowing for ethnicity-based organizations and recognizing these as expressions of the views and experiences of the groups in question is another. There can be smaller, day-to-day ways that members of society, and pupils, can accord such recognition. For example, a Muslim student of mine once said that he felt positively recognized when a supermarket set aside a particular section of the store for foods related to the Muslim festival of Id.

A related value is teaching students from minority groups to have respect for their own heritage. No doubt much of that learning will, and should, take place in the home, family, and ethnic-based community. But there is a role for the school also, in representing the public face of respect. Teachers should help minority children to know about and have respect for their own heritage.

A third value is the learning of respect for ethnic out-groups, that is, for groups other than one's own. The curricular dimension of this is evident. The more out-group students learn about a given group, the more informed they will be about it, and the less they will hold ignorant views about the group. But educators whose schools and classes are multi-ethnic must also help students in the day-to-day practice of respect for the particular other students who are their classmates and schoolmates – for example, showing a genuine and respectful interest in the cultural and religious practices of other groups. Showing such respect must be learned, because there are ways of asking others about their heritages which are patronizing, "exoticizing", or even stigmatizing. Teachers should help students, especially from the majority culture, to have and show such respectful interest, and to express it appropriately. A mere generalized respect is not sufficient. Learning to respect those who differ culturally, racially, and religiously from oneself requires particular moral understandings not guaranteed by an "I respect everyone" stance. Some of these moral understandings involve being aware that certain groups have generally suffered prejudice and misunderstanding and that members of those groups carry such memories with them.

A fourth positive diversity value is the valuing of diversity itself within the school and society. This involves more than being respectful of each particular

out-group, but also being positively and affirmatively pleased that one's nation and one's school is culturally pluralistic. Nostalgia for an earlier more mono-ethnic period in the nation's history must be left behind. This value very obviously goes beyond the European Conventions mentioned above, for the rest only on the value of the group language, culture, religion, and so on to in-group members. By contrast the value I am speaking about now concerns the value of the diversity to out-group members. This value involves pupils learning to place positive value on the plurality within their societies and their schools, and feeling that their own lives are enriched by that plurality. They should learn to feel pleased that Sweden now contains a greater range of cultures as part of its national life than it has in the past.

The more comfortable cultural enrichment is at the level of "saris and somosas," of foods and music; but it also involves a richer, though more challenging, appreciation of the diversity of human experience and human possibility that comes with exposure to differing cultures, religions, languages, and experiences. So, while Muslims are often regarded as a "problem" in contemporary Europe and Scandinavia, the fourth diversity value I am discussing here takes a different point of view, and sees the presence of the religious, cultural, and historical differences of Muslims as a source of enrichment and mind-expansion. (This is not to deny that these differences can also sometimes be a source of challenge and difficulty, but is only to say that to see only difficulty is a one-sided way to look at the situation.)

Even racial difference can contribute to this enrichment of experience, because the experience of racism, of being racialized, is an important human experience of the modern world; a deeper understanding of it contributes to the civic and moral enrichment of the individual student, even if, at the same time, we look forward to a day in which racial difference loses its significance.

One objection that someone might raise to positive diversity is that cultures cannot be assumed to be entirely positive, so it would not be appropriate to place positive value on all cultures. This is certainly true. Cultures can tolerate or valorize immoral practices. Nevertheless the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor was surely correct when he said that all human cultures that have existed for a long time speak to the human condition in a way that has something to teach to out-group members (Taylor, 1994). The question of how one assesses cultures from the outside is a complex one. And from an educational point of view, we do not want to teach students that their critical faculties have to be put to sleep when faced with cultures or religions other than their own. At the same time, we also need to recognize the ethnocentrism and cultural arrogance that so often accompanies European responses to non-Western cultures. This chapter is

not the place to find that middle ground which Taylor mentions, between ethnocentric condemnations and a total cultural relativism that refuses to render any judgment of on cultures other than one's own. I wish only to affirm that the middle ground does exist, and that educators must continue to seek it.[5]

Again, positive diversity presupposes the value of in-group solidarity, since the existence of the group is affirmed in such solidarity, and solidarity is required for its existence and protection, and for the affirmation as well. The relation of in-group and trans-group solidarity will be discussed below, but first we must clarify the relation between equality and positive diversity.

Positive Diversity versus Equality

Positive diversity and equality are two distinct values. So in a sense equality overlooks identity, simply making sure that the identity does not count against the group or individual holding that identity – for example, making sure that an employer treats applicants of different ethnicities the same, looking only at their qualifications and ignoring their ethnicity.

But positive diversity affirms that diversity as a positive good, and does not merely overlook it. It is sometimes thought that positive diversity goes against equality–that it involves unfair discrimination against the majority group, by favoring the minority group. For the most part, the European and Nordic responses to difference recognize that this is not true (Hannikainen, 1996).[6] For example, the fact that certain languages require affirmative support from the state in order to be maintained, while the majority language does not require this support, does not mean that support for the minority languages discriminates against the majority language.

Perhaps something more should be said about this complex matter. Let me use the American expression "affirmative action" to refer to any policy that is meant to protect or enhance the standing of a minority group. There can be two different foundations for an affirmative action policy – equality and positive diversity. The equality basis is used when the purpose of the policy is to rectify an unequal situation that has been produced by historical or current discrimination. Examples of this are when universities make a special effort to enroll members of historically underrepresented groups, as a way to try to "make

[5] Recent studies that explore the "middle ground" advocated here are Modood (2007) and Klausen (2005).

[6] See p. 15: "The parties undertake to take measures to promote full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority. Such measures shall not be considered to constitute discrimination (Article 4 [of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities])."

the playing field equal" – that is, to create a situation in the future in which members of such groups are made equal to others or are given equal opportunities.

By contrast, an affirmative action policy based in positive diversity is when the goal of the policy is the protection, integrity, or enhancement of the group's existence in its distinctness from other groups. Providing instruction in a national language, or protecting an aspect of a traditional way of life (for example, Sweden's Reindeer Herding Act of 1971 that protects traditional Sami reindeer breeding) are examples of affirmative action based on positive diversity, not on equality.

Equality-based affirmative action is not concerned to protect groups as such, but only to bring members of those groups into a state of equality with others. If in that state of equality, members of the previously disadvantaged group choose to assimilate to a dominant group and to give up their distinctive identity, equality as a value neither approves nor disapproves of this. Thus diversity-based affirmative action is focused on the preservation of group distinctness but equality-based affirmative action is not. A given policy can sometimes have both purposes – equality and distinctness. But they are distinct purposes.

This means that the group identities of persons in the society, or the school, can be taken account of in two very different ways. In one we recognize that identity because others look at that identity in a negative light; they stigmatize it, or discriminate against it, as in the case of ethnic, racial, immigration-status, or religious prejudice. The identity in question does not have to be personally important to the individual discriminated against. It is important only because others see it negatively. For example, a person of Turkish ancestry in Germany might not care about being Turkish; he might be indifferent to his ancestry. But the prejudice of others against his Turkishness forces him to have some concern about it. And that prejudice provides an educational challenge which requires a certain recognition of that identity. In teaching students not to stigmatize the identities of others, we must often refer to the particular identities that are vulnerable to being stigmatized by those students. This recognition of identity is framed by the value of equality.

A different view of identity occurs when someone positively embraces her group identity, wishes to maintain it, and desires for it to be recognized and acknowledged as important to her in the contexts in which she lives, for example, in school. For example, a Swedish person who is originally from Iran, or whose parents are from Iran, might wish that Iranian part of her identity to be acknowledged and respected by her fellow students or she may wish her Muslim

religious identity to be acknowledged. Here absence of discrimination is not sufficient; she does not wish merely not to be discriminated against for her Iranian origins or Muslim religion. Rather, she desires positive recognition of that identity. But in the equality case, positive valuing and recognition of the identity are not important to the person in question; she simply wants not to be stigmatized and devalued for that identity. Beyond that, she is indifferent to that identity.

Thus teachers should avoid the temptation to think that they can avoid referring to students' specific identities when teaching the wrongfulness of prejudice and discrimination. In practice a group vulnerable to discrimination and stigma is generally an indispensable element in such teaching. This is partly because the victims of discrimination and prejudice are most sensitive to when it is taking place. In my experience students from majority groups often do not notice when students from minority groups are discriminated against by other members of majority groups. The voices and experiences of the minority groups generally must be part of the lesson.

More generally, a group can be and often is a prime mover in bringing to the attention of the wider society discrimination and injustice directed toward it. In his book "We Who Are Dark", the African American philosopher Tommie Shelby argues that solidarity among African Americans has historically been mobilized politically to struggle for justice for African Americans, while they have also needed white allies for that struggle to be fully successful (Shelby, 2005). There is a lesson here for minority and majority groups in Europe.

The European human rights tradition has generally viewed the bearer of rights as individuals rather than groups. Individuals have a right, for example, to instruction in a home language other than the state language of their adopted homeland. It has not generally been thought that groups had the right to be maintained as groups. However, in practice this line is difficult to maintain and has led to so-called "3rd generation" rights, which have a group-based character. It is of no value to an individual to be instructed in a home language if there is no group for him to be part of that speaks that language. So there must be a group dimension of that right.

To summarize: Equality and positive diversity have different relationships to the value of solidarity. Equality does not require the maintaining of in-group solidarity among the component groups of the nation. It does recognize that the members be treated equally, but beyond that is not concerned with their identity. But positive diversity does require that in-group solidarity. On the other side, trans-group solidarity *without* equality among the groups is deficient. What is needed is trans-group solidarity *with* equality. Positive diversity would encourage

us to maintain the distinct identities of the groups that compose the trans-group solidarity, that is, the ethnic groups that make up the classroom, the school, or the nation. This is not incompatible with equality. It is just a different value.

In-Group and Trans-Group Solidarities

Both in-group and trans-group solidarities can be humanly valuable. Both provide a sense of belonging and identity, and enable mutual trust and concern. However, some believe that these two forms of solidarity are at odds with one another – that the in-group solidarity of an ethnic group must detract from solidarities that go across ethnic groups. In schools, majority students have expressed concern that students from minority groups "stick together" and this makes the school feel less like a community for all. In the larger societies of Europe and North America, some feel that if members of minority groups feel a strong loyalty to their ethnic group, they cannot also feel a strong loyalty to the national community, and that this is detrimental to the creation of a necessary sense of national solidarity. We might call this the "national" critique of multiculturalism (Blum, 2008). And on the other side, some minority groups or their members worry if some of their members become attached to wider groups, including the national community, fearing that this will result in assimilation with a loss of identification with the ethnic group.

As Amartya Sen (2006), the Indian philosopher and economist, has argued, these views oversimplify the nature of identity. Normally, most people hold multiple identities, and loyalties to a range of different groups. An individual may simultaneously hold a religious, ethnic, professional, regional, and national identity, without experiencing any tension or difficulty between them, except that the activities connected with each may compete for her time. A strong ethnic identification does not have to detract from a strong national one, or vice versa (Sen, 2006).

Perhaps it is worth spelling out in a bit more detail how in-group, such as ethnic minority, identities and solidarities can be compatible with and even positively contribute to, larger trans-group identities, in various contexts. For minorities, in-group spaces can be places to discuss and deal with the harassment, discrimination, and stigmatizing they may experience from the outer society. It can help members of such groups sort out whether certain experiences they have had are due to discrimination or not, a process that is itself stressful and challenging, but very helpful to living as a minority.

To be sure, this process of in-group discussions of possible discrimination can solidify a resentment toward the outer society and thus hinder trans-group

solidarity; but if appropriately channeled into political action, it can be also be a way of challenging the outer society to be more inclusive and less discriminatory, making a more welcome national community.

In American universities, ethnicity-based groups often play an important role in helping members of such groups to gain the confidence they need to compete and participate with majority group members in the larger university community. Without such groups, these minority members are deprived of an important resource, feel more isolated, and thus find it more difficult to do the work necessary to stay at university. Such students deserve a comfort zone that is available automatically to students from the majority group but may have to be specially created for members of minority groups.

As mentioned earlier in a different context, minority solidarity groupings can serve as an important agent in a society's commitment to reduce discrimination against that group, or against minority groups in general. In a similar spirit, minority solidarity can be a force for promoting positive recognition of that group on the part of others, for example, through public displays and ethnic festivals, and, in schools, through curricular attention to the groups in question.

Forms of solidarity that provide confidence and self-respect to members of minority groups can lead to the members' greater participation in the wider world beyond the group, and thus to be more open to trans-group solidarity. At the same time, we have to recognize that ethnicity-based organizations and spaces can also contribute to "staying in one's comfort zone" rather than venturing out beyond the in-group. Of course it is not possible to stay within one's group entirely; one has to go to work, walk on the streets, and interact with people who are different. But in-group organizations and spaces may still retard trans-group development.

Whether in-group organizations and spaces, with the solidarities that go with them, facilitate or impede trans-group solidarities is a function of many factors. A major one is the behavior and attitudes of the majority group. If the majority group is more welcoming, exemplifying the value of "positive diversity," and more committed to equality, obviously this will facilitate the development of trans-group solidarity, in school and society among minority groups. In-group institutions can also be monitored to make sure they are not deliberately reinforcing a hostile stance toward the outer society. Abolishing those institutions and organizations would not be helpful in integrating the minority group members into the society.

In his influential 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture, the American political scientist Robert Putnam reports a study of the United States that finds that when

ethnic diversity increases in a given neighborhood, trust in others (and even in one's own group) is reduced, at least initially (Putnam, 2007).[7] But he assumes that despite diversity's short-term harm to solidarity, in the long run ethnically diverse societies are stronger and more vibrant than mono-ethnic ones. He calls for building of shared identities, that is, the forming of trans-group solidarities. He says (of America, but with implications for European and specifically Scandinavian countries):

> [W]e need more opportunities for meaningful interaction across ethnic lines where Americans (new and old) work, learn, recreate, and live. Community centers, athletic fields, and schools were among the most efficacious instruments for incorporating immigrants a century ago, and we need to reinvest in such places and activities once again, enabling us all to become comfortable with diversity (p. 164).

Schools can contribute importantly to the process Putnam calls for. Filtering his point through my distinction between solidarity, positive diversity, and equality, schools can promote among its students trans-group solidarities that also exemplify equality and positive diversity. School-wide assemblies that both feature a particular minority group's history and heritage while also reinforcing a sense that all students are equal members of the school community can help to accomplish this. We have mentioned curricular initiatives aimed at reducing prejudice (Blum, 2009), and others that involve studying the histories, experiences, and contributions to the national life, of particular groups. Students can also take initiative to form "anti-discrimination" (or "anti-racist") groups; and in those groups can be members of different minority groups, and so in their composition, as well as in their goals, such groups promote solidarity, diversity, and equality.

Thus, to summarize, solidarity comes in both in-group and trans-group forms. Both have their own particular value. The value of trans-group solidarity is much increased if the resulting group – for example, a multi-ethnic nation – promotes equality among the component groups, and also if it promotes "positive diversity," that is, an appreciation of the distinctness of the different groups that compose it. In-group solidarity is a good in itself, but it has a complex relationship to trans-group solidarity. When all parties are cooperating, in-group solidarity can be an important partner to trans-group solidarity. The two types of solidarity do not necessarily work at cross purposes to one another,

[7] Putnam is not talking about policies toward minority groups, but only the existence of minority groups themselves. And so his view does not imply that ethnicity-based organizations harm trans-group trust and solidarity. His research does not speak directly to that issue.

as some have thought. At the same time, in-groups can manifest tendencies that do indeed harm trans-group solidarity, and members of those groups, and instrumentalities outside the group that have responsibility for monitoring them, must take responsibility for countering those tendencies.

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Chapter 3
The Space for Individualism and Solidarity in Swedish Teacher Education

Zahra Bayati

Abstract: Sweden has become a more multicultural society in the last 40 years. This change places new challenges on the Swedish teacher education system. Studies show that 'global south' students who have origins which are not Swedish or Anglo-Saxon experience feelings of otherness and marginalization in the higher education, teacher education system. Voices are raised about solidarity and individualism. In this study of Swedish teacher education I will discuss how these values operate. It is argued that a lack of solidarity in the relationships between Swedish students and 'global south' students is not the main problem. Far more important is that individualism and self-interest are rewarded and given much more space than solidarity in the education system. More flexibility and space for students' and teacher educators' perspectives is needed in the education system to encourage greater solidarity.

There are different definitions for solidarity and individualism in dictionaries. In my understanding, individualism is a doctrine in which self-interest is the proper goal of all human action (Webster's New World Dictionary/Gurlanik, 1990), while solidarity is a doctrine about unity that is based on shared interests and standards (Penguin, 1988). In a value system in which solidarity and individualism are recognized, how do these values operate in the available space in the Swedish teacher education system? What is rewarded from a multi-ethnical and multilingual perspective? Which factors affect the expression of these values? This chapter discusses these questions. Depending on the context and how these concepts are defined, how they operate and affect different actors' lives in an inter-relational perspective; they can be contradictory or complementary in their expression and functions within any system.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, industrialism was advanced as the main economic system in countries in the West. This economic shift was an important aspect in changing society's structures from collective working and living that was the norm in agricultural societies to a way of life consisting of

nuclear families and greater individualism. In countries, outside Europe and North America, the development of socioeconomic conditions have been different. There are many countries that have both an industrialist and an agricultural system/culture operating side by side. These different systems have affected how common values are expressed in contemporary and social environments.

Cox, Lobel and MacLeod (1991) cite literature indicating that "Cross-cultural studies have shown that northern and western Europeans and North Americans tend to be individualists … and that Chinese people …, other Asians, Latins, and most east and west Africans tend to be collectivists" (p. 828). However, the changing nature of economic systems from industrial to post-industrial, as well as a transfer to more neo-liberal political systems, is happening across the world including in Sweden (Reinfeld, 2008). This makes it very complex to try to divide the world and its people into different geographical zones that have specific norms when it comes to attitudes and values specifically, for this chapter, about how solidarity and individualism are expressed within any country and in this case in Sweden.

Swedish Teacher Education in an Intercultural Perspective

Across the last three decades, immigrants and refugees have arrived in Sweden as a consequence of wars and economic and political problems in their home countries. In teacher education today, students with Swedish origins study together with students who have ethnic origins other than Swedish. Most of these students are refugees or immigrants.

In the processes of university education, there are many tasks that require team and group work. This is considered to be a way of encouraging models for collaborative learning and understanding that will inform the student teachers' future work in schools. For many of students, this is the first time that they have been required to collaborate for extensive amounts of time in professional relationships with persons with different ethnic backgrounds.

There is little published research on how students experience such teamwork in mixed ethnic groups in the Swedish context. There are a few research reports from Sweden (Åberg-Bengtsson, 2005; Fazlehashemi, 2002; Fridlund, 2008) and from other countries, including the work from Australia by Jonasson (2009) on the challenges facing international students from non-English speaking backgrounds and their teachers. The difference between these international students from non-English speaking backgrounds in the study by Jonasson and the participating students in my study in Sweden is that the former

usually return to their country of origin after completing their studies in a foreign country, whereas the students in my study will continue to live as citizens in the country in which the studies take place. I will hereafter refer to both these groups as 'global south' students. What these different sets of students have in common is only that they are not Swedish or Anglo-Saxon in their ethnic origins. They may have different ethnicity, religion, class, gender, academic background and more. However, they are placed in a common category as immigrants, to be treated as 'the other' in a Swedish context.

When it comes to an intercultural perspective, I use the definition of Lahdenperä (2007) to include three different aspects of this concept. First, the normative aspect, which is also the moral one, where the intercultural relationships are based on democratic values and respect for other people and minority needs. The second aspect of an intercultural perspective is, according to Lahdenperä, the critical aspect. It is about "... relating critically to one's own history, culture and cultural values and developing a critical self-awareness" (p. 30). The third aspect which she calls the innovative aspect addresses:

> ... the possibility of creating something new and innovative through interculturality. Interculturality involves cross-border, where different cultural barriers are processed and expanded. /.../ [The third aspect also involves] negotiations about, or reconstruction of, the owned ethnicity and identity, which therefore is not given or constant over time but changing and also somewhat unpredictable (Lahdenperä, 2007, p. 31).

Regarding the difference between a multicultural perspective and an intercultural perspective, especially in a Swedish context, I understand a multicultural perspective as a concept that has been used to address a static composition of people who are not Swedish, often denoting otherness (cf. Gruber, 2008, p. 50). While an intercultural perspective, taking account of the previous definition presented, is based on democratic and egalitarian values, is critical of historical descriptions, and has, at the same time, the capacity to change and evolve in its meaning.

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the space of individualism and solidarity in teacher education in a Swedish context through an intercultural perspective and their effect on participation in group work within groups that are ethnically mixed. The main data for this chapter is drawn from my ongoing doctoral study, "Construction and reconstruction of 'the other' in teacher education in an intercultural perspective".

The Study

The empirical data presented in this chapter is drawn from data obtained in one-to-one interviews and research circles. The study is not broad in terms of the number of participants. Nevertheless it offers an in-depth, qualitative analysis of the perspectives of a group of teacher educators with 'global north' origins who participated in a research circle. Also included are the perspectives from one-on-one interviews with some global south students. I conducted student interviews with a total of eight students with a global south background from three different universities. They were all permanent Swedish residents. Parts of these interviews were reported in the research circle as input to the discussions with the teacher educators about the students' experiences of teacher education. In the process of working with the student interviews and the research circle, the need to include the perspective of other actors in teacher education became apparent. For this, I also interviewed other persons responsible for aspects of the delivery of the teacher education courses, such as internship consultation and language tutorials.

Action research is a central approach within the study. In action research, various tools are tested and developed over time so that a systematic improvement can occur in the context of interest based on the questions the practitioners are asking themselves. They thereby create new knowledge to understand and improve their own practice (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Rönnerman, 2004; Walker, 2000). In this particular aspect of the study, the research circle served as a tool for the participants to raise issues about their own concerns related to the challenges they meet in teaching to ethnically mixed, teacher education classrooms.

A primary method for data collection was through the research circle. The choice of the research circle as a method is based on the idea that participants should formulate the problems they experience in relation to the circle's focus topic, in this case, these teachers' experiences and the challenges that they encounter in ethnically mixed, teacher education classrooms. The research circle is a methodological approach that Holmstrand and Härnsten (2003) note is rare in hierarchically structured higher education. Research circles have their roots in study circles, a Nordic tradition that is popular in adult education which was initially used by unions to increase the competence of under-privileged social classes so as to equip workers with the necessary knowledge for a greater participation in the social system.

The research circle in my study consisted of six teacher educators and a student counselor. All seven had a Swedish background, in other words, from

the global north. The discussions were about the general challenges that most participants meet in ethnically mixed teacher education classrooms. The eight of us met seven times on a monthly basis, with a break for the summer, and once three months after the regular period of the circle meetings. All meetings took place during one year. Mixed-ethnic study and workgroups were one of the hot subjects for discussion. The general problem is that most groups created during group studies are not mixed but segregated. They usually consist of a high percentage of either Swedish/Anglo-Saxon students or global south students.

Student interviews

The issue of segregation was noted by most of the eight global south students who were interviewed in my study. The feelings of marginalization and not being welcome in study groups were shared sentiments among the majority of the global south students. There are similar findings by Fazlehashemi (2002) in a Swedish study and by Jonasson, (2009) investigating students' experiences of integration in the Australian context. When global south students took the initiative and asked Swedish or Australian students to work with them, many felt that they were not welcomed (Fazlehashemi, 2002; Jonasson, 2009). For example, Jonasson (2009) reported students' comments such as: "I like group work, but there is no opportunity to work with Australian students" (p. 80). And "Ah, it is quite okay now but somehow I'm scared to talk [to Australian students] because they're not very friendly" (p. 80).

According to the students in my study because of the recognized segregation, they were expected to create work groups with students of various ethnic backgrounds. However, the result was not always the expected as we can learn from the comments below. Banome who was one of the students whom I have interviewed said:

> From the first day of the course, the Swedish students said, "We have decided to be in these groups together, because we have worked together, we know each other, we don't want to work with people we don't know." And it all became chaotic. For me personally … what can I say … it was a discouragement in continuing that course (p. 1 in the interview transcript with Banome).

> We were standing on the other side; some succeeded in asking the Swedish students that had fewer people in their groups if they would accept them in their group … I did not succeed (p. 1 in the interview transcript with Banome).

The students expressed strong feelings of despair for the lack of reciprocity from the other students. The wish for inclusion seems not to be shared. The picture of experienced 'otherness' from the global south students is evident in these

quotations. Before starting their university education, many of global south students were very hopeful of finding Swedish friends. However, the majority of these students were disappointed, as was noted similarly in the research work of Åberg-Bengtsson (2005) and Fazlehashemi (2002). Fazlhashemi (2002) described the perception of one global south student in his studies:

> He feels it is very difficult to form close friendships with the Swedes, since he experiences no reciprocity in this context. It is always him, in the capacity as the newly arrived that has to adapt and let himself be integrated. The native Swedes do not consider themselves having to go through a similar process. Then, he thinks it is useless to even try (p. 56).

There were also positive experiences which the students in my investigation had in their group collaborations in their teacher education programs in Sweden, even though these experiences were less frequent. Nezhat, one of the students in my study, had this to say:

> But I can say that in this group I felt like a part of them. It worked as a whole, we weren't divided as a group. We thought that this is how we should work: "Is this part okay? [the other group members would ask]" … It's like there was a relationship in the group because we understood what we wanted to achieve in the group … Every person was lifting up the whole group together ... everyone was engaged and everyone's opinion was valuable. You got heard, they listened … what you said was valuable (p. 3 in interview transcript from Nezhat).

Construction of groups

Let us now look at how these groups are created and how they are transformed as reported by the participants in this research (i.e., the research circle participants and students who were interviewed) and how the findings align with the Australian study by Jonasson (2009). The participating teacher educators in the research circles had deployed or had come into contact with different strategies for constructing study groups that included:

- Create multi-ethnic groups;
- Study groups created by choices of the students;
- Study groups created according to the topics of the group task.

Groups, as described above, based on the data from the research circle with teacher educators in my study, could all be comprised of different mixes of students when it comes to ethnicity, gender or study orientation. In Model 1, the group stays with its original composition if the teacher does not allow students to change groups. If the teacher educator allows students to reorganize group constellations, usually this model turns out like Model 2 where the students

themselves choose with whom they will work – referring to friendship, home location or other similarities in how the groups are organized. The results from the interviews with the global south students in my study showed that the general tendency is that these groups follow a pattern of segregation like the demographic pattern of the surrounding society. This means that the groups are most commonly comprised of either only global north students or only global south students. In my interviews with global south students and, also in the studies of Jonasson (2009), Fazlehashemi (2002) and Åberg-Bengtsson (2005), these global south students claim that they had not created groups with exclusively global south members by choice but because they had felt rejected by the Swedish or Australian students who had chosen to create their groups amongst themselves. This means that the Swedish or Australian students made the true choice, forcing the global south students to build their own multiethnic groups. One of the students in Jonasson's study in 2009 said: "Australian students want to work with Australians. If we are friendly to them, they'll talk, but otherwise they keep to themselves" (p. 80). Banome, one of the students interviewed in this study, recalls how the Swedish students chose each other for group work:

> We four immigrants were left out, so we created a group ourselves" (p. 2 in the interview transcript with Banome).

These students had different strategies for handling this situation. Some of them did not want to feel humiliated anymore and preferred to create their own groups with other global south from the outset. Hiba, another student in my interview study says:

> I remember at that moment that a foreign girl came up to me and said, 'Don't you get that they don't want you?.' She wanted us foreigners to create our own group. They didn't dare to tell the teacher that nobody wanted us (p. 2 in the interview transcript with Hiba).

This reaction is common in the American education system. Tatum (2003) has problematized this phenomenon in her book, "Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?" There were other global south students who said that they did not want to work in groups and preferred to work alone because they knew that they worked more slowly than other students and they did not want to slow down the progress of the group to complete the task. There were also those who insisted on being in the group that the teacher had created rather than being left 'group-less'. As I stated previously, if the teacher does not try to maintain the group that she/he created, it is common that students change groups, resulting in compositions that again resemble the segregation in the society.

According to the teacher educators in the research circle who used the model, the groups that worked most flexibly were the groups that were created on the basis of subject topics. One precondition for this type of group work is that there were routines through teacher-initiated scheduled discussions that monitored how the group's work was proceeding. These groups were unusual in the regular course of events because there were not many opportunities for students and teachers to choose their topics and schedules often did not allow the time needed for discussions about the group processes.

Discussion

When students with Swedish mother tongue or Australian teachers and students talked about the problems of working in groups with global south students there are three issues on which they constructed their arguments. These arguments centered on language issues, issues of competition for better grades, and the importance enhancing opportunities for future employment. These arguments are discussed here with a focus on solidarity and individualism.

Language issues

Teacher education students who have a mother tongue other than Swedish are required to have a Swedish language certificate qualifying them for university studies; something the global south students in my study had. While the issue on multilingual and bilingual aspects of teacher education has not had a strong focus in previous research, the research that does exist is more about bi/multilingualism in teaching school students who have other languages than the one of the majority society.

Carlson (2009) noted that there is a lack of focus in teacher education on bi/multilingual students in government legislation and policy, such as "A renewed teacher education" (Proposition 1999/2000: 135) or "A sustainable teacher education" (SOU, 2008: 109). In a recent document, "Best in class" (Proposition 2009/10: 89), I also discovered similar lack of attention to bi/multilingualism, as in the former policy documents examined by Carlson (2009). The difference in the latest document is that there is a statement that says: "The participants represent an actual diversity; at Stockholm University [where] there are students from 78 different ethnicities studying teacher education" (Proposition 2009/10: 89, p. 46).

One of the informants in Carlson's (2009) study is a teacher educator who was also a language researcher. This educator noted that, while there is talk about

bilingualism and multilingualism in teacher education, this discussion reflects the status of the persons addressing the question. Global south students are the ones discussing this issue and they are lower in status. According to this teacher educator there is more talking than doing.

In most universities where there are teacher education courses there is usually a department called Language Guidance or similar for which there are language mentors/advisors to assist the students. Two language advisors were interviewed in my study. They were asked about their assignment as 'language guides'. They explained that they helped students to organize their written text and to become more scientific in their writing. This guidance is for all students without any specific focus on bilingualism. They do not help with proofreading but they provide, for example, the students with information on how to format their texts. The global south students interviewed in my study believed that the help that they get is necessary but far from the level of help that they needed (see also De los Reyes, 2007, p. 23). They wanted to know what the nature of the discrepancies were between Swedish academic writing and their own writing skills. They said that there were many times when they did not know what the problem was. In order to be able to solve it they asked their language advisors to show them the aspects where they needed to focus their efforts. Most of these students say that the level of Swedish language that is required to get the certificate needed for university studies is too low in relation to the language skills needed in order to cope with their university studies.

Bosse was one of the teacher educators in the research circle with experience of living in countries where he hadn't had the language of the majority. He stressed the importance of the majority's willingness to communicate in order that one's personal language skills and confidence to speak developed.

Competition for better grades

One of my Swedish colleagues told me that she had noted the problem of native speaking Swedish students avoiding collaboration with global south student when it came to group work and that she had tried to discuss this issue in her classroom. Many of the Swedish students reacted claiming that nobody had the right to tell them what to do when this was a matter of getting the best grades possible because it would affect their future employment. According to these students, the imperfect Swedish of global south students might lower a group's marks and affect the overall grades of individuals. Amanda, one of the research circle participants also noted this:

> What I recognize from the various stories is the frenetic hunt for good grades. There are some people who may be faster […] and they follow what the teacher says, like they did in elementary school, respond to what the teacher has said about what to do [referring to the students who are brought up in the Swedish educational system and know how to play its rules].

One of the teacher educators in the research circle thought that some of the Swedish students helped the global south students a lot, leading to a lack of challenge in their own work.

> Laila: They have helped and helped and assisted. There is no challenge for themselves. They are just involved in helping others.
>
> Stina: That's not a bad challenge.
>
> Laila: No, but that's not how they experience it.
>
> Stina: That's what is most important in the teaching profession. It is precisely their profession to help other people. People who say that they are 'done helping'; they make me wonder. I have a lot of discussions like that [with the students].

As we can see from this discussion, teacher educators also have different perspectives in dealing with these arguments. On one hand, there is the right to embrace self-interest which has a lot in common with what I understand of the concept of individualism which is a doctrine that the interests of the individual is the proper goal of all human action (Webster's New World Dictionary/Gurlanik, 1990). On the other hand, there is the value of solidarity that is a doctrine about unity that is based on shared interests and standards (Penguin, 1988). The global south students interviewed in my study had many positive experiences from group work when they had been treated as an equal and not as 'the other'.

Global south students felt that their experiences were positive when their ideas and points of view were heard and discussed in the same manner as everyone else in ethnically mixed groups (Swedes included). They considered it very constructive when they were able to help each other through mutual relationships within the group. It was not help that they wanted from the Swedish students, it was equality.

What motivation? Who gets the job?

According to the teacher educators in my study, one of the reasons that the students with Swedish as a mother tongue gave for why they were not willing to do group study with global south students was the fear that these students' weaker language skills and lack of motivation would affect the quality of the group's work, everybody's grades, and consequently their employment prospects.

They argued that a lower grade would weaken their chances in the competitive labor market after their studies. There are many reports about discrimination of people who lack Swedish or Anglo-Saxon origins in the labor market in Sweden (De los Reyes, 2008; Franzén, 1999; Knocke, 2000; Knocke & Hertzberg, 2000), with examples of many cases where global south job applicants had better grades than the individuals who got the jobs. One of the informants in the research by De los Reyes (2007) who was a global south female academic said:

> In order to get as much as a Swedish man you have to be twice as good as a woman. And as a foreign woman you have to be four times as good to get the same ... well [to] end up at the same level or get the same benefits (p. 45, author's translation).

Jonasson (2009) noticed that, in many cases, grades are just as important to international students because of the employment situation in their home countries. They are seen in their home country as very privileged having been given the opportunity to study in a western country. They are expected to make the best out of it and be amongst the top students. In reality, they have to work much harder than their classmates in order to understand and learn in a language that is not their mother tongue. Jonasson also noted the attitudes that Australian university teachers and students have about the international students from non-English speaking backgrounds:

> Students were generally not willing to participate during tutorial and group work, with most teachers believing that this unwillingness stemmed from cultural background. ... The students however said that they wanted to participate in classroom discussion and group work, but were hindered for various reasons, including a lack of confidence with the English language and/or what they perceived to be racist behavior by some local students or teachers (pp. 89-90).

One of Jonasson's conclusions was that teachers had misperceptions that were based on the nature of these learners as members of 'other' cultural groups. This issue is interesting when we look back to the Swedish students and how they talked about their own study ambitions compared to the global south students. One teacher educator, Matilda, in the research circle in my study commented:

> For some reason, I listened to them [Swedish students] who alleged they were more motivated to study but then it turned out that the others [global south students] did take their studies as seriously, but in a different way … they [the Swedish students] had tailored themselves after our purposes and our time, they had adjusted themselves – one hundred percent.

The global south students whom I interviewed explained how they have to read and reread many times and use a dictionary to understand the course literature. It

takes them a long time to formulate the topic that they want to discuss or write. Mitra, one of the students in my interview study explains: "If the Swedes can sit and write a text in two days, I really have to sit for a whole month. I want it [the text] to be good. You have to put in a lot of energy."

This goes against the idea of global south students having lower aspirations, or working less than Swedish students. First of all, motivation, ambition and willingness to work are not ethnically bound and, further, the most important things are the living conditions and the privileges that one has/does not have access to. For example, global south students face a great challenge when it comes to the Swedish/English language, considering it is not their native language. Also the fact that the global south students are generally older than other students and often having larger economic and family responsibilities, gives them an extra incentive not to take their studies lightly. This makes their choice to engage in teacher education as an even more active choice when there will be higher demands on their spoken and written language skills.

One of the teacher educators in my study, Matilda, also made a point that for the global south students working hard is very important but in a different way from the Swedish students. The Swedish students through their many years in the Swedish educational system have learned how to study in the way that gives them good grades. A report from the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (2008, 30R p. 7) showed that university graduates with a foreign background have for decades had higher unemployment rates than native Swedes (25% higher); at the same time, being overqualified for the jobs that they have obtained; but having lower wages than the native Swedes for doing the same job.

Conclusion

During the last 40 years the world has undergone dramatic demographic and socio-economic changes in the shadow of globalization. The Swedish educational system does not sit outside these global conditions. There is much research that provides evidence about the benefits of multi-ethnical or cross-racial interactions (CRI) and collaborations, from which many multinational companies derive advantage. Chang, Denson, Sanez and Misa (2006) noted that:

> Overall, the effects of students' frequency of cross-racial interaction on all of the three outcomes tested (Openness to Diversity, Cognitive Development & Self-confidence) are significant and uniformly positive. Students who have higher levels of CRI tend to report significantly larger gains made since entering college in their knowledge of and ability to accept different races/cultures, growth in

> general knowledge, critical thinking ability, and problem-solving skills, and intellectual and social self confidence than their peers who had lower levels of interaction (p. 449).

In Sweden, 2006 was named the year of multiculturalism. During that year the government supported different projects aimed at societal integration. Gothenburg University had a multicultural program as well as a three-day seminar in the teacher education department for the staff. According to some of the participants in this seminar, three days was not nearly enough time for this subject, to understand the effects and consequences of multiculturalism on the education system. They also commented that there was little follow-up to this seminar. Despite many studies being conducted nationally and internationally about diversity and that intercultural competence is very positive for a society, serious attempts to reorganize the educational system from an intercultural perspective, especially for teacher education, are lacking. Thus, many education and social planning programs are divorced from reality.

Solidarity is a highly regarded aspect of the values that are encouraged in the Swedish curriculum and in educational policy documents. However, this data from this study paints a different picture. Individualism is given more space than solidarity within the system. Individual competition and the frenetic hunt for good grades are reasons why students with Swedish as their native language do not collaborate well with global south students. It is unrealistic and unfair to expect that Swedish students should compensate the shortcomings that the educational system has when it comes to responding to the conditions of globalization. Even though individuals have the choice to do things that are more or less individualistic or supportive of solidarity, it is the system itself that gives space for these different attitudes and sends signals to the actors in this hierarchical system (De los Reyes, 2008). According to the teacher educators in my study, the system is too 'top down' organized and lacks the flexibility and space needed for students and teacher educators perspectives to influence it in order to encourage greater solidarity.

Teacher education in Sweden is organized after a society system which is based on homogeneity emphasizing adaption to the mainstream. The teacher education system is too inflexible to meet the human conditions of globalization. For example at Stockholm University there are students that have 78 other languages than Swedish as their native languages (Proposition 2009/10: 89, p. 46). The asymmetrical relationships in the everyday life between citizens in the same society because of the gaps in access to power and privileges, is not something that, in the long run, leads to sustainable societal development. Because of this, I am doubtful that we can put a strong emphasis on the need for

attitude change at an individual level amongst the students when it comes to endorsing solidarity.

It is important to be observant about how the system of which we are a part presents different groups in society with different opportunities when it comes to obtaining significant positions of power. The task is to give space for solidarity actions – no matter who needs it – in an intersection of time and space. Despite the divides created by the colonial powers, north and south, east and west, there are internal heterogeneity within groups that is bigger than the difference between these groups. The heterogeneity issue is not only about the language or ethnicity. In an education system which is adapted to a mainstream model, there is discrimination against students and pupils who have any qualities of difference and these are treated negative by the system. Understanding structural discrimination and restructuring this is a lifelong action that the actors in the structure should pursue; particularly, those in central positions of power, such as teacher educators.

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Chapter 4
What Problems Do Teachers Face when Anchoring Individualism and Solidarity in Preschool?

Airi Bigsten

Abstract: The Swedish preschool curriculum (Lpfö 98) brings forward a focus on the individual child's development as well as a focus on children's ability to show solidarity towards other children. The meaning of these goals is handed to the teachers to interpret. In this chapter, two different situations are described in which teachers communicate individualism and / or solidarity. The purpose is to show the issues that teachers deal with in order to anchor these goals. The results indicate that individualism and solidarity are mutually dependent. The findings also illustrate how teachers reflect on their actions by asking themselves if what they are doing is right or wrong. The teachers reflect on alternative solutions and the consequences of alternative actions.

One area[11] in the Swedish preschool curriculum (Skolverket, 2010) is focused on norms and values. The curriculum states that it is important for the preschool to work with the values[12] on which our society rests. These values should be anchored and kept alive in daily work with children. Preschool seeks for each child to "develop their identity and feel secure in themselves, develop self-autonomy and confidence in their own ability" (Skolverket, 2010, p. 9). All who work in preschool shall "show respect for the individual and help in creating a democratic climate in the preschool, where a feeling of belonging and responsibility can develop and where children have the opportunity of showing solidarity" (p. 8). Teachers should also "stimulate interaction between children

[11] Other areas are: development and learning; influence of the child; pre-school and home; and co-operation between the pre-school class, the school and the leisure-time centre. Accessed from *http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/193/url.* [About the curriculum for the pre-school].

[12] The inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between the genders as well as solidarity with the weak and vulnerable are all values that the school shall actively promote in its work with children (Lpfö 98, revised 2010 p. 3).

and help them to resolve conflicts as well as work out misunderstandings, compromise and respect each other" (p. 8). The curriculum places emphasis both on the individual child's development and on the child's ability to show solidarity towards other children. This is a task with complex meanings for teachers. Teachers cannot choose whether they want to work with those goals because these are explicit goals for teachers to achieve. However, the meaning of these goals is handed to the teachers to interpret.

The first concept of importance for this chapter is individualism. How can it be understood? Liedman (1999) says that, in a simple way, it can be argued that there are two kinds of theories about the individual and society. According to the first theory, individuals work together to build families and societies. In other words, it is the individual who comes first. In this theory, individuals are seen as quite similar who, through their interactions with others, develop a specific disposition. The philosophies of Hobbes and Locke are representatives of this theory. Hobbes had a pessimistic view of the human nature. He argued that if all people did what they wanted, they would become each other's enemies with chaos as a result (Sorrell, 2005). Therefore, individuals must give up their freedom and abide by the will of a sovereign with absolute power, either a king or a group of people. The sovereign is the only one who can guarantee the individual's well-being and secure their safety. Locke on the other hand had a more positive view of the human nature. According to Locke every individual owned what they had worked for as long as they needed it and there were enough resources left over for others (Ayers, 2005; Nordin, 2003). Every human being has the right to their own body, thoughts and the fruits of their work. To protect people's properties[13] you need laws. Therefore, individuals need to build societies for maintaining order. If the government fails to protect people, then the people have the right to overthrow the government.

According to the second approach, all human beings are a part of the collective or the group from the beginning. This means that the individual is not the focus. Individuality is not a starting point but a goal to strive forward to. It is through a long process of education (*bildung*) that individuality develops (Liedman, 1999). In this theory, the thought of man as a social person goes back to Aristotle. This theory, in its modern version, is a reaction against the form of individualism which Hobbes and Locke developed. The dominant issue in this debate, over the past few decades, has been whether the individual comes before society. "The starting point has, however, been about an individual's private

[13] Locke's definition of property is wide. It includes a person's life, freedom and personal property (Nordin, 2003).

property rather than the individual's own thoughts, body and the fruit of his/her work" (Liedman, 1999, p. 72, author's translation) which was Locke's idea of individualism. Society's obligations are to protect the individual's interests with respect to their private property. It is not about what individuals do with their possessions.

Orlenius (2004) argued that there has been a change in the values that are given priority in today's society. In the past, in a peasant society, it was important to rely on authorities. In today's postmodern society, it is instead individual freedom and autonomy which are given highest priority (Henriksen & Vetlesen, 2001; Orlenius, 2001, 2004). Many people no longer have to worry about having food on the table to be able to survive. As a consequence of this change, the focus is on personal development. Today, we are talking about "lust children" who are doing what they want, not of duty but for pleasure. Individual autonomy is seen as a value standard for all values (Bauman, 1997; cited in Orlenius, 2004). To argue that individual autonomy is an overriding value [as in Western societies] can lead to the idea that the individual is independent of other people (Henriksen & Vetlesen, 2001). In such a case, preschools might end up with the child deciding what he/she wants to do or how to act, regardless of other group members.

I see each person as a social being who is born into a community. By interacting with other people, the child, as an individual, is also learning to communicate, to negotiate, share and respect others. According to the theories presented, I see the individual and the group as mutually dependent.

The second concept of importance in this chapter is solidarity. The word, solidarity, has historically been used and defined in different ways (Liedman, 1999). For Durkheim (1893; cited in Liedman, 1999), solidarity is a fact and not an ideal to be achieved. Morality and reality are connected with each other. For Durkheim, solidarity is about the fundamental structures that exist in society. By distributing work among people, ties between them are strengthened. People realize that they are mutually dependent. This sense of dependency is an expression of their morality. Solidarity affects the whole nation. For Marx (cited in Liedman, 1999), solidarity is expressed among all workers in all countries. It is related to the working class and has nothing to do with morality. Common interests are the focus. According to Comte (1839; cited in Liedman, 1999), it is the government that actively helps to foster a sense of solidarity among citizens. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the church sought to strengthen family cohesion. This could be done by moving away from the competition that existed in society and instead developing a focus on solidarity. Becker writing about solidarity in 1866 (cited in Liedman, 1999) claimed that solidarity had nothing to

do with good morals. Instead, it was about reciprocity and togetherness. Liedman points out that this distinction is important in order to understand the concept of solidarity.

Liedman (1999) argued that solidarity should be taken as a fact and as a feeling and can be associated with the motto, 'One for all, all for one'. However, it is important to clarify who is meant by all. Is the similarity between all people to be stressed or is it the difference? Should it cover the entire nation, as proposed by Durkheim, or is it about class, as proposed by Marx? Should solidarity be afforded to the person who is having a hard time, as well as to the person with no difficulties, or should it be about reciprocity between all people? The concept is complex. It is not easy to define.

For me, solidarity in the education context is about the fact that teachers and children are mutually dependent on each other. In order for teachers to keep the group together, it is important that all feel needed and are seen. It is not only towards the vulnerable that solidarity be shown but towards all individuals. It is important that a sense of togetherness is created for children. This implies that morality and reality are connected to each other, as Durkheim proposed. In intersubjective encounters in the preschool group, it is possible to experience and give meaning to solidarity.

As mentioned previously, Becker claimed that solidarity had nothing to do with good morals (Liedman, 1999). Instead, it was about reciprocity and togetherness. Mason (2005) noted that:

> Solidarity exists among a group of people when they are committed to abiding by the outcome of some process of collective decision-making, or to promoting the wellbeing of other members of the group, perhaps at significant cost to themselves (p. 848).

Of course, solidarity is about reciprocity and togetherness, as Becker (1866; cited in Liedman, 1999) claimed. However, I argue that solidarity is also about moral values. A child can be a part of a group. As a member in a preschool group children (and teachers) cannot always do what they want. They have to be responsible for their actions so that they, for example, do not hurt or exclude each other. Caring for the group members' well-being and participation will improve a certain group spirit. It is through the intersubjective meetings in the group that children experience and give meaning to moral values. When children are concerned about the group members and care for them the value of solidarity is illuminated.

In this chapter, I strive to make these ideas on morality and reality visible, by describing two different situations in which the values of individualism and solidarity are communicated between the teachers and children. Teachers'

actions are brought to the fore to examine the challenges that they deal with when anchoring individualism and solidarity in their practice. The aim is to understand their experiences and the motives for their actions. The intention is also to explore if, and how, solidarity and individualism are intertwined or if they are two distinct phenomena. The examples presented are a part of my ongoing phenomenological study for a Doctoral thesis which is based on life-world theory, in particular, Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Schutz (1976), through which morality is seen as relational and lived.

Merleau-Ponty (1962) claimed that morality is the result of intersubjectivity. We live in a social world where we communicate and interact with each other. By being a part of each other's worlds we understand and experience morality. The intention is to highlight the ethical values and norms reflected in the intersubjective meeting between teachers and children in preschool, both verbally and physically (i.e., how is morality lived?). The overall aim of the study is to increase knowledge about morality in the preschool. What ethical values and standards are apparent when nurturing children in an educational context? The intention is to understand teachers' experiences of nurturing that are apparent in their interactions with children and the teachers' reasoning about these interactions. The purpose is not to evaluate if the teachers act in a right or wrong way nor to compare them with each other. The focus is on their experiences of nurturing values.

Methodology

This research was carried out at four different preschools in four groups of children aged between 3 and 5 years. These preschools are located in areas which had a diversity of social and family circumstances. The reason for choosing these different areas was based on an assumption that the values expressed might depend on the context and the various life-worlds of which teachers and children were a part.

Data consist of video recordings of interactions between children and teachers in preschools. The purpose was to try to understand of the lived morality as expressed between children and teachers. One teacher at a time was observed. After reviewing the video for each teacher, I identified short video clips in which I thought they could be seen to be nurturing children to express and understand certain values. The teachers and I together watched these clips, one clip at the time. The teacher was then interviewed about their motives for the actions evident in the video clip. There were two questions that were

important in these interviews. The first was about what was important for children to learn in the situation and why was it important to learn that.

The analyses of the interview were performed according to a qualitative approach based on hermeneutics (Kvale, 1997; Ödman, 1994). The data was analyzed and interpreted in terms of individuality and solidarity. The starting point was the questions to the teachers about what was important for children to learn and why this was important. Sometimes in the analyses it was not possible to analyze and interpret one value at time since both solidarity and individualism seemed to be intertwined in the teachers' communication.

Findings

In the following section, two situations from my research thesis are described. The first interaction sequence is about solidarity and the second is about individualism. These two situations illustrate the manner in which teachers mediate and shape individualism and solidarity in their preschool classes. The situations allow exploration of the challenges that teachers face in anchoring individualism and solidarity to their practice.

Solidarity

In this section, I will analyze a teacher's reasoning about her motives for communication with children in terms of solidarity. A significant value illuminated in the teacher's justifications is concern for the well-being of the group. The following video observation in Hanna's classroom was discussed with her. After watching it she was asked what was important for the child to learn in this situation and then she discussed her motives for her own actions. During the interview, several clarifying questions were asked.

The value of solidarity was illustrated in the following sequence through the teacher's reflection on her own actions. In the observation, the children had been sitting in a circle eating fruit.

> When everyone had eaten their fruit, it would be time to go and play again. Before the children can go from fruit time Hanna (the teacher) says: "You may think about what you want to play with. Raise your hand when you know what you are going to play with." The children tell, in turn, what they want to do. "What would you like to do?" asks the teacher. Walter raises his hand first. He begins to talk but the other children are talking so loudly that Hanna can't hear what he says. "You know, now I want to hear what Walter tells," says Hanna with a neutral voice and looks at the kids, sweeping her eyes around the circle of children to return to look at the child who was about to speak. When he has told her she nods towards him,

> implying that he can go to play. Several other children tell her about their intentions. One girl says she wants to play with two other girls. "What will you play with?" asks Hanna, looking at all three with expectation. "We will play in the dolls corner," answers the girl who was first asked. "I also want to be in the dolls corner," says a fourth child. "You know," Hanna says with a neutral voice, "Before fruit time you had taken out so many toys it took a very long time to clean up. Only take out what you are going to play with so you will then be able to clean up quickly later." They then go off to the dolls corner.

What is important to learn?

The teacher was asked the question: What was important for the children to learn? Hanna justifies her actions with following reasoning: Before these kids would go off to play, Hanna reminded them that it took a long time to tidy up the toys in the dolls corner. Because of that they came late to the fruit time. According to Hanna, the children should learn not to pick out too many toys. "We want them to understand that they should only take out what they are going to play with," she says. The reason for this is value based and relates to a concern for the other children. When the cleaning process takes so long time, as it did before, the other children must sit for a long time and wait before fruit time begins. The teacher claims that the others often have to wait for them. Using all the toys in the dolls corner also reduces the availability of the toys for other children to play with. In addition, the motive from the teacher's perspective is related to discipline and order. By dragging out all toys, it also creates a mess in the dolls corner. The children are supposed to experience what is the best way of showing solidarity that is relevant to the whole group. What the children are allowed to do also affect the other children.

The teacher was also asked: Why is this value important to learn? Hanna emphasized that she knows from experience that these children tend to pick out everything from the cupboards. She does not want this activity to take a long time because it means that the other children must wait. She also thinks they should only take out the toys that they intend to play with because there may be other children who also want to play with these things. If the toys are on the floor, they are a part of a game, even though they are not being used. If they remain on the shelves, they are available to all. She further argued that: "You want them to learn to keep the place tidy … at home as well as at the preschool. ..." She says, with a laugh, that she knows why these children are taking out all the toys even though they do not play with them. They take out all the toys to build a fence because they do not want other children to come into the room. She understands this. However, "They have to learn that you only pick out what you use," she says.

Hanna sees a dilemma in what she should do in this situation: "What's right, what's wrong?" she asks. If all twenty-one children are present, it may not be possible to take out all toys, but if only a few children present in the afternoon then they can use all toys. She sees a difficulty in how she should act in this situation: "Does it really matter if they take out the things or not? Or is it just that I find it to be so. … I think so; or should they learn to use only what they need?" Hanna has no answers to her own thoughts. She also acknowledges that it is difficult for the children to understand that they should only take out what they are going to use. Hanna is not sure if she should prioritize in the best interest of the individual child or of solidarity for the whole group:

"All children are, of course, different individuals and have different conditions and develop differently over the years," Hanna says. "So you cannot have the goals too high for what children can get done. Those children, you know, will manage and when they are in a hurry you can say to them, I know you can. Take it easy now, 'Do it well and you will be satisfied then." According to Hanna, you can tell those who are always in a great hurry and cannot slow down. But you also have to create a situation for them so they can concentrate and take it easy.

In this teacher's reasoning about her actions, solidarity is to show concern for others involving sensitivity to the group and not putting one's own interests first. This means not letting the others wait a long time for children who clean up more slowly. It is about pointing out to children that toys should be available for all. When toys are not being actively used in the play they are not available for the other children. The teacher's rationale for working towards solidarity is that children should recognize that their actions have consequences for others. Solidarity for this teacher seemed to be very much about community and concern for others. Children should reflect on and adapt to the needs of the others in group. It is also interesting to note that the teacher does not explicitly communicate solidarity to the children rather she refers to tidying up quickly. When reasoning about this event, the teacher identifies solidarity as a basis for her encounter with the children.

Individualism

In this example, both individualism and solidarity are visible. I will focus though on individualism. After watching the following video clip the teacher was interviewed. Two questions were asked: What is important for the children to learn and why. Some clarifying questions were also asked. This teacher is here called Felicia. All the children are sitting in a circle. They sing a song about each

child, in turn, while at the same time the focus child is playing the drum. They have already sung the song for a few children before this sequence takes place.

> After finishing the song, the drum was handled over to the next child. The song begins with the words. "We send the drum to Donald and he plays while we are singing." When the song ends Felicia asks with an inquiring voice while she is pointing from the child who has the drum to the one to whom it is to be sent to: "And he will send the drum to …?" A younger child begins to shake his whole body; he claps his hands and it sounds like: "Aah, aah, aah." "Yes, what is his name," she asks, looking at him. "Simon," answers Mary. "Yes, Simon," Felicia says happily and puts her head on one side and looks at the girl who answered. They sing the song again. Felicia looks at the child who plays. Her eyes slip towards a couple of children who are sitting beside her and watches what they do before her gaze returns back to the boy who plays the drum. "And he will send to the drum to ...?" Felicia asks, pointing at a girl sitting quite close to her. She puts her hand on the girl's head and pats her. She turns to the children on her left pointing to the girls and asks whispering. "What is her name?" "Mary," answers a child. "Mary," says Felicia, putting her head on one side and looking at the child that replied. Mary takes the drum, lifts it above her head and plays. She keeps it above her head throughout the whole song. No one has played this way before. The children have been holding the drum in front of them. While she plays, the teacher looks at her several times and smiles. Mary, however, is looking towards the other children. "Have you seen somebody play like this?" asks Felicia and lifts, at the same time, her own hands above her head pretending to play like Mary did. "You have, haven't you? You play like this in India, don't you?" She faces Mary and they have eye contact with each other. "Yes," replied Mary. Felicia turns towards a boy sitting on her left, looks at him, as he pretends to play in a similar way. She says to him. "Yes. I also believe that you play in the same way in Iran, don't you?" He did not look at her.

What is important to learn?

The teacher was asked with the question: What was important for the children to learn? By asking Mary if she had seen someone play the way she did Felicia wanted to emphasize that her drumming differed from the others. She thought that: "It was important for her to share … those experiences that she might have had." According to Felicia, it is important for a child to be recognized when they do something special. It is important "… to be highlighted as an individual in the collective, so to speak; and carry this forward as important. Then you grow."

In this sequence, the teacher wants to strengthen the individual's self-esteem. In another similar situation, she says, "All human beings, all children need a lot of confirmation in order to grow and feel safe and confident." The children will "grow into individuals who have adequate security in themselves to

give to others ... get an inner peace as well." She thinks that if they get too little acknowledgment, they build up a frustration that they take out on those around them and channel their frustrations into negative patterns. They take these frustrations out on each other perhaps through fighting or saying or calling each other silly names or by exclusion.

According to Felicia, it is important to make children aware of not harming each other. "Not only by saying: No, you may not! But, at the same time, setting boundaries and explaining the reasons, why. And it can be done, with older kids you talk about it. With the younger [children] you might have to show very clearly with your body language. So I strongly believe in giving love and attention to children making them … in a way that makes them more peaceful," she says. To point out to the individual child that you cannot always do just as you want and so make it possible for the child to experience and take responsibility for her/his own actions. These experiences might also lead to actions of solidarity towards the group.

Felicia also explains such a situation in the next sequence that she believes outsiders might perceive as a rebuke. However, according to her it is instead about guidance. Sometimes children can misinterpret another child's behavior as being aggressive or being mean. Through guidance, Felicia wants to help children to communicate well about what they really want. The teacher remarked that one child should not have to feel misunderstood and another child should try to understand what the other meant … that it is not necessarily bad intentions with any action. "In this particular group, I get to spend more time on this sort of guidance because of the language barriers [different mother tongues]", says the teacher. In other situations, the guidance can be about both understanding and limitations. "I understand what you mean but I have to set a limit, for example, how rough the play can be so as not to harm someone else." By guiding the children, she wants them to get an understanding of each other and others around them: "What does the other want in relation to me?"

Felicia argues that it as an important task to help children to understand each others' communications:

> So you can see it in a wider social perspective and how the world looks ... There is still among many people a need for ... rule over and control over and care for certain groups, [and] others less. There is racism, xenophobia, and ... inability to understand that we belong together, even adults thinks so. A preschool like ours where you have a variety of language groups, there are, of course, all the opportunities in the world to understand that diversity is something that enriches. Ensuring that we all belong together but we also have individual differences between us. Or differences depending on where we come from or where we grew up. And it does not always have to do with ethnicity. It may be related to other

> contexts as well – where you live or where you grew up, [social class] or … To be able to cooperate – create an understanding of the other … take the others' perspective, to go into dialogue. It is fundamental for the world to be able to exist beyond how it is today and so ... we are talking about nurturing.

There are some dilemmas in the above example. The limits set for the individual child decrease freedom. On the other hand, it is for solidarity that the teacher sets the boundaries for what is tolerated. To be recognized when playing drums in a different way emphasized that this is okay and the child gets to be the center of attention. A dilemma could be that those children who never want to differ may feel less valuable. Felicia also had been thinking a lot about whether teachers should, in advance, decide for children the specific places where they sit during circle time or whether to give children the freedom to choose their own seats. She argues that: "… with content that captures children's attention and is sufficiently challenging and interesting it makes them sit quietly anyway". However, if teachers decide where children should sit then they can lean on this structure. The risk is that teachers become police officers and then you have to make it an even stricter regime. "It will be an eternal nagging spirit that takes the focus away from the activities," argues Felicia. "Sometimes you have to reprimand the kids, of course, but it means that if I lose concentration and the focus on what I am doing then the children will do the same. It becomes more difficult for children to keep up with what we are doing during the circle time."

Felicia finds giving freedom of choice: "... a tricky thing … how much choice should we give ... when does the structure become too regulating according to children's choices and participation and influence over their own lives? And achieving that balance is very important … I think that a clear structure … gives the space for a harmonious culture in children's groups …" Felicia argues that there are various external factors, like time frames, to take in account that can clash with offering children's choices. Having to stop children playing when it is time to eat lunch, for example, creates at lot of frustration in some children that they carry with them while other children handle this quietly.

The teacher was also asked: Why is it important for children to learn this? According to Felicia, the purpose of circle time is that children should learn the names of their friends and be seen by each other. By giving the drum to one child at a time allows him or her to lead the group and to learn that 'I am in the center. I am unique in the group'. This highlights recognition of each child and strengthens self-esteem. For Mary, Felicia thought it was important to: "recognize her in her difference. In other words, confirm to her ... so that she was distinguished in some way. To confirm a child's experiences show that they are considered as important and that I am taking them seriously."

This example illuminates that both individualism and solidarity are brought to the fore. Felicia's reasoning about children's behavior showed that she wanted to strengthen individuals' self-esteem in different ways. Her aim was to create an understanding of each other, to cooperate, not to harm and to understand that diversity enriches. She believed that it is important to be able to coexist beyond how it does today. The teacher emphasizes individualism by empowering the individual child in various ways. Simultaneously she connects the individual child to a community where diversity is a value. One may ask if it is possible to combine both individualism and solidarity at the same time when interacting with children. In the example described there are times when the teacher gives priority to only one of these values. But, in other situations, tries to find the balance between individualism and solidarity. This can be a difficult dilemma and sometimes not easy to solve. How the teacher acts seems to be dependent on the context, which child/children are involved, and the situation. It seems however, according to this teacher, that solidarity and individualism can go together and that they might be complementary.

Discussion

How should we understand the teachers' actions in these two examples? What kind of problems are teachers confronted with when anchoring solidarity and individualism into their daily work in preschool? Based on the examples provided, it can be argued that the individual is very much in focus. By recalling that they should not pick out too many toys the children are nurtured to take responsibility for their own actions. Other ways to strengthen the individual may be to guide them not to hurt each other or by helping children with their communication to make themselves understood when their actions sometimes could be misunderstood by others. Individuals are seen and heard but almost always in relation to the whole group. For me individualism is about seeing each person as a social being who is born into a community. By interacting with other people, the child, as an individual, is also learning to communicate, to negotiate, share and respect others. According to the two theories presented, I see the individual and the group as mutually dependent.

It is not unusual that the focus is on the individual and the development of particular skills. To be able to become an individual who shows solidarity towards others, children must know the codes operating within social interactions. The teachers in my examples are trying to teach these codes by telling children what expectations they have about children's interactions with each other. One teacher showed that it was okay to be different (the drum

player); that this could be seen as something positive. The idea could be that children learn to accept and perhaps have the courage to do things differently from usual. In another situation, it might not be okay to do this in a way that deviates from the expected, such as tidying up slowly. For solidarity reasons, the other children should not have to wait. Mary's playing of the drum in a different way did not affect the other children negatively. This could mean that if we, as individuals, do something different and remain within what is reasonably expected then it is okay to differ. But if we instead step outside what is expected or what the teacher thinks is 'right' then deviant behaviors are not accepted. Henriksen and Vetlesen (2001) claim that individual freedom and autonomy are given the highest priority today. In order to respond to this issue further examples and analyses are needed. Nevertheless, the situations described indicate slightly different views. Although teachers sometimes prioritize the individual child we can hardly say that individualism is given the highest priority. Teaching children to solidarity with the group seems just as important to these teachers.

Solidarity in the previous examples is seen to be about 'doing good' for the whole group. A society needs individuals who are concerned for both their own and other group members' best interests. Therefore I argue that children need to experience what it means to be an individual child and also what it means to be a member of a group. In the group you share, wait for your turn, and communicate clearly. By experiencing what it means to 'do good' for the whole group, children are able to get the feeling of solidarity as expressed by Sven-Erik Liedman (1999) as "One for all, all for one".

As identified earlier for me solidarity is about the fact that teachers and children are mutually dependent on each other. In order for teachers to keep the group together, it is important that all feel needed and are seen. It is not only towards the weak and vulnerable that solidarity might be shown but towards all individuals. It is important that a sense of togetherness is created for children. In all everyday intersubjective encounters, children experience that morality and reality are connected to each other. The teachers' efforts to guide children to understand each others' intentions give children opportunities to live solidarity and individualism. The dilemma with too much guidance could be that teachers take over the responsibility from the children on the assumption they are not able to handle this on their own. Also the value of discipline and order seems to be involved in these situations. The teachers want the preschool to be ordered and organized. There is also a fear that the situation will get out of hand if the order is not kept.

In relation to this, then how should we interpret the curriculum about showing solidarity with the weak and vulnerable? The children cleaning up

slowly might be seen as less able. If they often get critical comments from the teacher they might feel they lack the ability the other children have. If they are constantly seen as those who cannot do tidying up in the 'right' way their status might be low in the group. On the other hand the teachers' comments might remind the children of what the consequences are if they forget to start tidying up. The teachers' intention could be to guide them as to what is expected of all the children because they are members of the group. This could be a way of supporting these children so they won't get critical comments from their friends who are waiting for them so the circle-time can begin. The dilemma in this situation is whether to wait for a couple of children with a fear of ending up with a chaotic situation or set limits on how many toys children are allowed to play with.

Hanna seems to be sure that the children put the toys on the floor because they want to be left alone. She thinks their intention is to exclude other children from their play. The dilemma for the teacher is if she should let this pass or let other children gain entrance to the dolls corner. Another dilemma in this situation is whether to stop the children's attempt to use the toys in a creative way or to decide that this is not allowed. Could the group's need to use all the toys be seen from a solidarity point of view? Hanna chooses to look at this from the whole group perspective; all twenty-one children's possible need to want to use some of the toys. There are not so many toys in preschool. Therefore children have to learn to share toys so everyone can have something to play with. Hanna does not think they should use all the toys in dolls-corner if all children are present. Another afternoon with fewer children present they may play with all toys because there will be enough toys for those fewer children present. There seems to be fears that if most of the children leave the preschool at the same time that they will leave all the toys on the floor so that the teachers have to tidy up with fewer children present. The reason might also be that it is fairer when everyone will have some toys to play with. Solidarity can be about fair sharing of resources.

A study by Ekström (2006) shows that the educational activities to a large extent are:

> Focused on the preschool group as collective, despite an increase in steering demands for individualization. This may in part be understood as a consequence of the conditions given /…/ the increase of children in the preschool groups means that opportunities to individualize is more complicated because it is difficult to have time to listen to each individual child and fulfill their desires (p. 179, author's translation).

I agree with this to some extent. The dilemma for teacher is to balance between solidarity and individualism. Is it a matter of time in the everyday life of preschool? It is also a matter of awareness and giving room for these concepts. For Hanna, solidarity is about supporting each other:

> If you start with this when they are young then you can give them another perspective. … You cannot say to them that if you use those things then you should pick them up. ... All children should help each other [tidy up together] because the younger children cannot pick up as much as those who are older.

According to Hanna older children are more capable than the younger children. Therefore, those with a higher capacity should help those who are not as capable yet. The individual is a member of the group, at the same time; the group is made up of individuals. Both immediately and, in the longer term, it is necessary for the teacher to constantly balance between whether to let the individual be in focus or the group. Durkheim (cited in Liedman, 1999) argued that, in order to have a functioning society, individuals must through their morality have a sense of what it takes to be able to establish reciprocal relationships with other fellow beings. I argue that sometimes the individual must give up what he/she wants for the benefit of the group and sometimes it is the other way around. The important thing in preschool is that all children should be seen and feel needed. This means that individuality and solidarity are mutually dependent on each other. According to this interdependence it might be possible to create a sense of belonging on the motto of "One for all, all for one".

It is clear from the examples presented that these teachers are not certain that their actions or their choices about how they want children to act are the 'right' choices. They reflect on other options and the consequences that these could give. The kind of solidarity and individualism that each child encounters in the preschool will differ. What children have the opportunity to learn in preschool is very much dependent on the teachers' assumptions about these concepts. The important issue for teachers is to reflect on solidarity and individualism and what these concepts might mean and how they can be lived in the everyday life in preschool.

Conclusion

To help children develop their individuality and ability to show solidarity towards others are two goals to strive for in preschool. In this chapter, two situations have been highlighted showing the interaction between teachers and children. Teachers reasoning and experiences of individualism and solidarity have been brought to the fore. By interviewing the teachers about what they

think is important to learn and why, I have obtained a picture of how the teachers anchor the values of individuality and solidarity. The findings indicate that the individual and the group are mutually dependent on each other.

The discussion about tidying up the toys in the preschool for example, showed the difficulties that the teacher had to consider. The problem for teachers is that they do not have time to think about alternative solutions in the moment when several things may be happening simultaneously (Doyle 1986; cited in Orlenius 2001). The reasoning of these teachers illuminates what these concepts meant to them and how their meanings and experiences about how to work with the children differ. It is important that teachers are able to reflect about their own actions to ensure that children have more opportunities to understand the values of individualism and solidarity in the preschool. The everyday life is full of situations where individual and solidarity values conflict. There are also implications for how to learn to balance the needs of the group and the individuals in the preschool.

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Chapter 5
Solidarity – With Whom? Perspectives on Solidarity in the Borderland between Preschool and School

Helena Ackesjö

Abstract: The voluntary preschool class for the six year old children in Sweden is an arena where the traditions from both preschool and compulsory school should meet. One could suggest that the preschool class is placed in the borderland between these two traditions. This chapter sets out to study if there are dilemmas of solidarity in being a teacher in a preschool class in respect to being in a borderland. The findings of the study imply that the teachers in preschool class are wavering between different aspects of solidarity. On one hand, they express rational solidarity towards the preschool traditions, norms and values. On the other hand, they express the importance of institutional solidarity towards the school traditions, partly in order to facilitate the children's transition from preschool to school. The results also show that the teachers are involved in a third form of in-group solidarity with their own professional community of teachers of preschool classes.

The preschool class is a voluntary educational program for six year old children located in a school. It was created through an educational reform in Sweden in the late 1990s. The purpose was to construct a bridge between preschool and primary school in which the two institutions would create a "new pedagogy" in the merging of two traditions (Swedish Agency for School Improvement, 2004). The Swedish Agency for School Improvement (2006) stated that:

> The preschool class sees the merging of two cultures; two different worlds meet and together create something unique. The preschool class will be a place where obstacles and barriers are dismantled, where occupational status is nullified, inspiration found and where a common understanding of each others' input and knowledge will flourish (p. 63).

This policy change would suggest that the preschool class is placed at the crossroads between preschool and primary school, as a transition. Through this analogy, I suggest that the culture and pedagogy of both preschool and

compulsory school are encountered in the preschool class and, in this meeting, at the crossroads something new arises. It is important to examine how teachers in preschool classes handle this meeting of different cultures and traditions.

The dilemma for teachers in the preschool can be linked to issues about solidarity. To which culture and traditions do the teachers in the preschool class teachers express solidarity and belonging? Liedman (1999) stated that solidarity is about feelings of belonging, about brotherhood, common interests and connections to each other. Liedman (1999) proposes that "the idea of solidarity is the idea of communities" (p. 45). Solidarity has to do with ties to one another, to communities of common interests and to fellow workers but also to acknowledge similarities and differences between individuals in the community. Does the preschool class in this institutional arena pose dilemmas for the teachers of preschool classes, according to which culture, preschool or school, they feel solidarity?

Previous studies and evaluations suggest that the preschool class has been "schoolified". Thus, the teachers have adopted the ways of teaching in the compulsory school system instead of using and implementing the traditions of the preschool in the school (see Karlsson, Melander, Prieto & Sahlström, 2006; The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006). Previous research has outlined the differences in pedagogical aspirations for the preschool, the preschool class, and the primary school, even if similarities between the different forms also are found (Gannerud & Rönnerman, 2006). Researchers have studied how the environment in primary school affects the activities in the preschool class (Thörner, 2007; Heikkilä, 2006). However, little is known about how the teachers in the preschool class maintain, challenge or reconstruct their traditions and cultures from different parts of the educational system into the preschool class.

This chapter explores if there are dilemmas of identification and solidarity for the preschool class teacher in respect to this arena for practice. Where are the teachers directing their solidarity? What forms of solidarity do they express and to whom?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical starting point for this research is that the preschool class is placed at the crossroads or in a borderland between two educational cultures. Entrikin (1991) noted that place represents a condition of human experience, since we always are "in place" or "in culture". Therefore, our relations to place and culture become vital elements in the construction of our identities (Entrikin,

1991). Of special interest is what happens when we are in the borderland between place and culture and if this borderland challenges teachers' solidarity to their communities.

Borderland theories

We all live in a world where borders control our lives. These borders do not necessarily include fences, walls or borders on a map. They may involve borders invisible to the eye which nonetheless strongly affect our lives. These boundaries give us guidance on how we live and work (Newman, 2006b). Borderlands can vary in their intensity and in how they affect people on both sides of the borders (Newman, 2006a). The boundaries will determine whether we are included or excluded. The boundaries are experienced with various intensities dependent on how they are governed. The majority culture determines how the boundaries will be handled and crossed (Newman, 2006b). Between preschool and school there are clear institutional boundaries, for example, different curricula. When new boundaries are drawn and new arenas emerge, such as the preschool class, this gives rise to revisions of previous roles and positions. Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström and Young (2007) suggests that border drawing and border crossing means that you encounter new experiences when you go into a new territory and face things with which you are not familiar. The search for new roles will therefore be a side effect of border drawing. In this searching for new roles at the crossroad of preschool and school, the teacher's institutional solidarity is challenged. In which culture or institution do the teachers belong?

Concepts such as fronts, borders and borderlands are used in the geographical and political literature in which they have a great relevance to how our lives and the social interactions we experience. Existing borders give rise to an increasing interest in examining the areas that exist around the borders that allow access to people from both sides of the border. Borderlands can create a mixture of groups from both sides of the border, but they can also create distances between these groups when they come into contact (Newman, 2003). Taylor (1989) describes how our positions and roles as professionals are defined by the commitments and the values to which we ascribe but also by the frames placed on our professional roles and the horizons that are assumed. Borderland theories also focus on the power struggles, which can be described as constructions of mental boundaries (Ball, 2005).

According to Brah (2002), borders are powerful lines that are simultaneously social, cultural and physical divisions, which are more than just demarcation in the landscape. Borders also construct "others". Borders create

zones where claims are made on your own and others' territories. The borders can map implicit hierarchies and interpretations of superiority. In this chapter, the borderland is seen as the frame or the horizon that teachers assume in their narratives about their professional identities. The borderland theories provide analytical tools for how we can view teachers' constructions of their positions and roles in the preschool class. From the perspective of borderland theories, the teachers in the preschool class are leaving a place, the preschool, where they had created strong normative and emotional boundaries. In moving to a different place from where their professional identities were constructed, a dilemma is presented to them as to where their allegiances will be placed.

Theories about solidarity

Solidarity is a concept that may have various meanings. Dreiling (2001) defines solidarity as a form of political unity which is founded in cultural elements. Juul (2002) stressed that solidarity is a moral obligation between people when they are dependent on each other, connected to each other or identify with each other. Solidarity is something that ties people together and integrates people as members in a membership or community (Juul, 2002). In this chapter, I use two terms to describe ties of solidarity: rational solidarity and institutional solidarity.

Rational solidarity

The term, rational solidarity, is used by Hagen and Nissen (2008) among others. It is concerned with internalized norms and values and sacred ideals (Jacobsson, 2006). Liedman (1999) stated that solidarity can include both rationality and emotions and that solidarity, according to this standpoint, regulates and affects human relationships. It is the perceived similarities with others that construct the feelings of belonging and identifications with others. Through solidarity, ties are built that hold people together through rational understandings of the ties that bind and feelings of belonging, as well as through shared and common norms and values. It is like seeing oneself in others (Liedman, 1999). In school, there are often competing sets of principal values and norms (Fjellström, 2002). These can be either tacit or articulated. These values and norms constitute, with any local conditions and relations, a moral arena for teachers' considerations, choices and actions. Fjellström (2002) termed this teacher's morality. It constitutes the rational basis for decisions and actions equated with solidarity by Hagen and Nissen (2008).

Institutional solidarity

Institutional solidarity is based on rules of conduct, not on feelings. Institutional solidarity is about the brotherhood of conduct, not about morals, norms and values (Liedman, 1999). Liedman (1999) noted that the institution is the tie that holds people together, and that affect peoples' conceptions and ideas as they adjust and adapt to the institutional norms and values.

Hagen and Nissen (2008) argued, contrary to Fjellström (2002), that solidarity within sociology implies constraints against the individual's freedom of choice. Solidarity within the school would then mean that individuals do not have the freedom to make their own choices because this would go against the community ethics (cf. Fjellström, 2002). Hagen and Nissen (2008) considered that the concepts of solidarity and freedom are pitted against each other in sociology, as either–or. Institutional solidarity is based on the institutional good, rather than the individual good, which decreases individual freedoms.

Institutional solidarity can be linked to what Fjellström (2002) call community ethics. Colleagues' interests, integrity and welfare are to be protected and promoted by switching support to one another within the community. Collegiality can be seen as horizontal and, according to Fjellström (2002), this can be understood as solidarity. Solidarity is about the protections and safeguards of the common profession – "the teacherhood", in order to protect the profession's long-term interests and to promote the profession's prestige and power. Collegiality through solidarity thereby strengthens the cohesion of the profession (Fjellström, 2002).

This chapter examines the dilemmas of solidarity in respect to specific arena of being a preschool class teacher. Knowledge is gained about how the teachers are directing their solidarity, to preschool or school, by using the concepts of rational and institutional solidarity as analyzing filters.

Methodology

Data for the study have been constructed with inspiration from dialogue seminars. Preschool class teachers met in small groups on three occasions so that they had a chance to deepen the discussions over successive seminars. In their narratives, the teachers designed and developed common ideas about their work and their professional identities. The dialogue seminar method was developed by Göranzon, Hammarén and Ennals (2006), as a means to find a common language for articulating and disseminating tacit experience-based knowledge. The dialogue seminar focuses on both writing and reflection. The method is based on group participants' written texts about a given situation or

phenomenon. These texts are then read aloud to the group in seminars as a basis for extending discussions.

In this study, 14 teachers from different preschool classes met in small groups on three occasions. The groups were called L-group, R-group and the N-group. The teachers who participated in the study had from 5 to 20 years of experience working with six year old children. Several of them had been involved in starting and formalizing the preschool class 12 years previously. All the participants were women.

Previous to each meeting, the teachers were given a topic on which to reflect. The assignments were: 1) to write a diary of their own work across one day; 2) to present a metaphoric picture that could describe them as teachers; and 3) to reflect over all the metaphoric pictures in their seminar groups. In the reflection process, the teachers were asked to write texts about their thoughts on the topic. When we met in the seminars, the teachers read their texts aloud to each other and these formed the basis of the discussions at the seminars. After each meeting, I wrote a protocol that summarized the teachers' reflections. This protocol was e-mailed to the teachers so that they could comment on the protocols. These protocols also contained the topic for the next seminar. This became a circular and ongoing process since each of the three groups met three times for seminars.

Approximately 18 hours of recorded dialogues and narratives form the foundation of this research together with the other artifacts from the teachers, such as diaries from their pedagogical work and metaphoric pictures of themselves as teachers. The analyzing of the empirical material has not been linear but more of a "zig-zag" model. Seven different themes were identified from the empirical material and, in this chapter, one of these themes is described. This theme focused on narratives that reflected aspects of solidarity to examine the concepts of rational and institutional solidarity. The focus was to describe the teachers' understanding of belonging and of communities as well as the dilemmas of being in the borderland between preschool and school.

Findings

The teachers argued that they ranged between the two different cultures: the school culture and the preschool culture and that they were marking the borders between themselves and other teachers in the school in several ways.

In the findings, there were two dilemmas that were highlighted by the teachers. First, it was found that the teachers in preschool class, as a conscious and rational act, preferred to base their solidarity with preschool traditions in the

use of language concepts, even if there were a mix of preschool and school concepts. The language they used in preschool classes was a marking sign to indicate that the preschool class was not a compulsory year of school. It was also found that the teachers marked differences between the preschool and the school in their narratives about the activities of the preschool class. The teachers marked their dilemmas in solidarity as a borderland because they did not see themselves entirely in the arena of either preschool or school. These dilemmas were shown in the manner in which the teachers discussed how they wavered between the two standpoints. These dilemmas are discussed in the following sections.

Rational solidarity in respect to the preschool traditions

At first, the rational solidarity towards the preschool traditions, norms and values seemed to be the strongest in the teachers' narratives. The evidence for rational solidarity meant that the teachers carried norms and values from the preschool to the preschool class and those standards were still governing their actions. The differences between the preschool class and compulsory school were often presented as a way of describing their stronger alignments with the preschool traditions:

> Regina: The school has its schedule – to-day we are going to do Swedish assignments! In the preschool class, we also plan like this: "Today it's Wednesday and I'm going to work on the children's language skills." Though, we work with the Swedish language everyday but with more focus on Wednesdays. ... Then something happens, like for me today, when we were done [in circle time] we were working with mathematics instead. We have this freedom to be able to choose!
>
> Rosita: Yes and that [mathematics] is also a form of communication. And the work is dependent on what's in the children's minds. Suddenly, they have seen a dead cat or a squirrel that crossed the road which they want to talk about ... Everything can change! That is the excitement about this work. You never know ... you think you know when you are arriving to work with your planning for the day but you have no idea about what is going to happen during the circle time and what turns the children take during the day. That's the fascination, I think.
>
> Regina: And this can allow us to follow the children's turns during the day.
>
> Rosita: Maybe the teachers in school can't do that. I think that is a big difference. We have a bigger opportunity to be flexible.
>
> (Extract from R-group, Seminar 1)

> Lena: And I think we have the whole progress of the children in mind. Teachers in school have more focus on learning and we know that the whole person is important for children to be able to go a step further.
>
> (Extract from L-group, Seminar 1)

Here, the child-centered flexibility seems to be a focal point in the preschool class in teachers' ways of educating the children. Regina said, "We have a bigger opportunity to be flexible." and "We can allow us to follow the children's turns during the day." which suggests a difference between the preschool class and school cultures. To let the children have influence on the content in the circle time can be in line with internalized child-centered norms and values from the preschool. The teachers also emphasized their rational solidarity with preschool by distinguishing themselves against the cultures in compulsory school. One way to do this was to emphasize that they work in a "different way" in the preschool class compared to school, "We have the whole progress of the children in mind," as Lena said. A mark of this difference was in the descriptive language used to explain practices in the preschool class which showed their alignment with the preschool traditions:

> Rosita: So, we do not have the same ... it has to do with different languages. Like tomorrow when you have the first lesson with the children. Of course you ought to have planning time for that activity which you should have if it was a "lesson". But we call it a circle time. And circle time is not the school language. It has to do with the fact that we do the same activities as the teachers in school, but we use other concepts.
>
> Regina: And it's about that we do it in other ways ... We are working with the children's language skills and mathematics development but we're working with six year old children! We work with preschool education.
>
> (Extract from R-group, Seminar 3)

> Rosita: Teachers [in school] have other concepts. We do not quite use the same language. We use different languages or concepts, though we may mean the same things. I mean, you can almost see the circle time in preschool class as a lesson, but we do not say "lesson". We do not do that.
>
> Regina: Although we do say lesson when we are going to Anna's classroom [the teacher in year one], that is a bit interesting!
>
> Rosita: Yes exactly! When we are taking the children into the classroom in school, we use the concept" lesson"...
>
> Helena: And what about subjects?

> Rosita: We are not saying that we are going to have physical education; we only say that "We are going to have some gymnastics." And we don't say music lesson, we only say, "Now we are going to have some music."
>
> Helena: Is this something that unites you with the preschool traditions?
>
> Rosita: Yes, it probably is, it is a part of our tradition.
>
> (Extract from R-group, Seminar 1)

The preschool class teachers in the study noted that they do not use terms such as lesson, schedule, Swedish, mathematics in the same manner as teachers in school do. Rosita and Regina very firmly emphasized that they are working with preschool education in preschool class in which they use other language concepts than in the school. Germeten (2002) found similar results in a study of how the teachers working with six year old children in Norway talked about their work. In the study, preschool teachers and school teachers used different denominations to describe the pedagogical activities.

This indicates that preschool class teachers and school teachers do not always speak the same language. Maybe this is linked to the teachers' internalized norms and ideals. Jacobsson (2006) noted that the ideals of a community become the guidelines to how members act and are regarded as sacred in the sense of inviolability. These ideals are a part of the community's self-perception and violations of sacred ideals can lead to strong feelings within the group (Jacobsson, 2006). The preschool class teacher's ideals and norms have a basis in preschool discourses. This is a rational choice made by the teachers. By this "different" use of conceptual terms the teachers also challenged the school's cultures.

The fact that the teachers highlighted differences by making use of different language and concepts can be understood through the construct of rational solidarity. Hagen (1999) argued that rational solidarity was characterized by rational choices that are linked to internalized standards. Teachers in preschool class sought to reproduce the standards from preschool and act in line with preschool standards by marking that they did not want to use the school's educational traditions and concepts in describing their teaching. This acting can, according to Hagen (1999), be perceived as a principle to take more control over their pedagogic practice based on solidarity within the group.

The evidence for rational solidarity meant that the teachers carried norms and values from the preschool to the preschool class and those standards were still governing teacher actions, in this case, in the choice of language. By this, they also express a belonging to preschool. These findings also illustrate that the preschool class is in the borderland. The teachers tell us that they are working in

one educational culture that is different from another educational culture. The preschool ideologies are what the teachers in the preschool class have in common, and this unifies them. Solidarity, in this arena, meant that they are taking collective responsibility and collectively worked for the group's interests, in this case, to preserve and maintain the preschool traditions within the school context.

Solidarity in respect to the institution

The cultural significance in the language the teachers used was not evident for all the teachers in the seminars. For a few teachers, the language differences had a greater importance than for others. Some of the teachers implied an adaptation to the concepts in school in order to make the transition from preschool to school easier for the children. This marks a form of institutional solidarity to school:

> Regina: But on some occasions, I feel that we are sort of in-between. Not preschool and not school ... in some denominations. Sometimes we do say "physics", for example. We hear the languages from both sides, so to speak.
>
> (Extract from R-group, seminar 1)

> Nina: Usually we say "indoor play" and "outdoor play", not "lesson" and "break".
>
> Ninni: But if you say "lesson" it becomes a way for the children to understand the situation.
>
> (Extract from N-group, Seminar 1)

Later in these discussions, there was obviously no clear consensus about what language or concepts to use in the preschool class because the teachers agreed that they are influenced by both cultures. Some of the teachers used more traditional "school concepts" in the preschool class activities than others, which can be interpreted as an institutional solidarity in order to create a smooth transition from preschool to school for the children.

Again, the borderland becomes visible in how the teachers describe the preschool class. Regina said "I feel that we are sort of in-between. Not preschool and not school …" Even so, the institutional solidarity also calls for adaptations to school as a means for the teachers to find their way in the borderland and also means to facilitate the transition for the children. This became evident when Ninni said, "It becomes a way for the children to understand the situation." Ninni seemed to suggest that it is easier if the teachers in preschool class used the concepts the children will face later on in school so that they know what is

expected of them in different situations. It implies solidarity with the children. It could also mean institutional solidarity with the school in order to make the children's transition from preschool to school easier and understandable for the children. Institutional solidarity can be a means to clear the way for the children by adapting to school traditions. This places institutional solidarity close to loyalty to the institution. The teachers suggested that there is a mix of cultures and languages in the preschool class, a mix that enhances this institutional solidarity:

> Regina: It is somehow inevitable, since we are talking with the teachers in school, we work together and we have planning time together. You cannot avoid a mix of languages, it is not possible to hold that "Now we only talk preschool language here," but ... after so many years, it easily becomes a linguistic mixture.
>
> (Extract from R-group, Seminar 1)

These extracts shows that there is some sort of linguistic mixture in the preschool class, even if the teachers wanted to emphasize that there are differences in how the concepts and terms are used. But even if they argue for a mix of language concepts and by this enhance the importance of institutional solidarity, they do try to refocus certain norms and values embedded in the school's concepts. This illustrates the placement of the preschool class at the crossroad between preschool and school. The teachers' use of school concepts could exemplify a multi-membership (Wenger, 1998) since the teachers seemed to use a mixed language from both the preschool and school cultures. This adaptation to the institution and to the children is illustrative of institutional solidarity. The institutional solidarity focuses on maintaining the interests of the institution, the school. This is a means of protecting and safeguarding the institution (Fjellström, 2002). Within the institutional solidarity, the institution is in focus not the individual teachers and their interests as within the rational solidarity. The teachers argued that a mixture of both languages and cultures would benefit the children in the preschool class. Here, the teachers set their norms and values aside, in respect to the institutional good and the good for the children.

Dilemmas in being in a borderland

Who to belong to? The findings also show that the teachers have developed a third form of in-group solidarity within their own community. Even if the teachers saw the advantages of a linguistic mixture, the teachers in the preschool class also wanted to show and mark their distance from the school. The narratives showed that the teachers, in fact, were wavering between solidarity

standpoints which could be a dilemma in respect to being in a borderland. This could indicate a third form of solidarity, solidarity within their own community of teachers in preschool classes. It seemed to be of a great importance that there was an argumentative differentiation made between different types of teachers and traditions. Some of the teachers in preschool class seemed careful not to use concepts that were common to the school tradition because they seemed to be afraid of becoming "schoolified".

> Regina: We are very pleased that we have not become more ... We have worked like this for so many years and we have not been, we think, … quite "schoolified"... But maybe we are! Or is it more obvious, at least, that we have not abandoned preschool altogether.
>
> (Extract from R-group, Seminar 1)

In narratives such as this, the rational solidarity with preschool traditions was evident but it also seemed to be essential for the teachers to mark that they are not teachers in either school or preschool in other ways. When new boundaries are drawn and new arenas emerge, such as the preschool class, this gives rise to revisions of previous roles and positions. The theories suggest that through border drawing and border crossing you encounter new experiences. You go into a new territory and face things with which you are not familiar. The search for new roles will therefore be a side effect of border drawing, according to Tuomi-Gröhn et al. (2007). This can be the explanation as to why the preschool teachers seem to be so eager to differentiate themselves as "something else" to illustrate their in-group solidarity with each other (cf. Ackesjö, 2010).

At the same time, the teachers had a problem in describing what the characteristics of the preschool class are. This constructs dilemmas of solidarity in respect to being in a borderland where the borders have been opened and different teacher characteristics and pedagogies have emerged.

> Linda: We are not school and we are not preschool, so what are we? We are the preschool class, and we are here in our own world and it is rather comfortable!
>
> (Extract from L-group, Seminar 2)

Here, Linda marked the boundaries between preschool and school, in an attempt to highlight and possibly retain an identity as the preschool class. She also illustrated the placement of the preschool class in the borderland and by this strengthens the solidarity within their own group. According to Entrikin (1991), we are always "in place" or "in culture". Linda marked that the place for the preschool class is "in the middle" where the teachers can develop their own culture of preschool classes. This also highlights the dilemmas for rational and

institutional solidarity for the preschool class teachers. It seems as if the rational solidarity and the institutional solidarity can be two conflicting positions for the teachers in the borderland. On one hand, the teachers seem to want to follow their inherited preschool traditions, norms and values. On the other hand, the teachers seem to emphasize the importance of the preschool class as a borderland and a transition zone for the children, where the two traditions should meet.

Discussion

This chapter set out to create knowledge about the possible dilemmas of solidarity for the preschool class teacher in respect to this new arena for practice. How are the teachers directing their solidarity? Which form of solidarity are they expressing and to whom?

The preschool class teachers did not seem to want to abandon their ties of solidarity with the preschool culture and concepts but nor did they want to be a full member of it. They also seem to take their in-group community for granted which indicated a third form of solidarity. Previously, solidarity was discussed as a consequence of teachers' rational choices to act in a particular way, as internalized norms, but also related to the teachers' morality (Fjellström, 2002; Hagen & Nissen, 2008). In several ways, the teachers' narratives showed rational solidarity in accordance with preschool standards and, in accordance with preschool values, as if these standards were sacred. Maybe it is the schools embedded norms and values to which the teachers are opposed. Marking this distinction is a way to show their solidarity to the preschool cultures and challenge the school's culture by renaming certain activities.

According to Liedman (1999), "the idea of solidarity is the idea of communities" (p. 45). This understanding of communities implies rational solidarity according to preschool traditions and institutional solidarity to school. Even if the rational solidarity was strongly emphasized, the teachers also marked the importance of institutional solidarity. This aspect of solidarity came in two forms – for the children's good and as an institutional good. It showed that the teachers found it important to stand unified as an institution, to be able to work for the children's smooth transition as a focus. Solidarity towards the institution was a means to ease the way into the school for the children.

Even if the teachers argue for a mix of concepts in the preschool class and, by this indicate the importance of institutional solidarity, they do try to refocus certain norms and values embedded in the school's concepts to emphasize the importance of rational solidarity in line with preschool traditions (e.g., in

narratives about how they are more flexible and closer to the children than other teachers in school). This implies that the teachers in preschool class are wavering between conflicting positions on solidarity. The teachers marked their rational solidarity towards the preschool traditions maybe in order to preserve and protect their cultural base. The results also showed that the teachers' markings of the borders between preschool and school illustrated a third form of solidarity that of in-group solidarity.

Maybe it is all about horizons, interpretive frames, mental boundaries and professional roles. Taylor (1989) described how our positions and roles as professionals are defined by the commitments and the values to which we ascribe but also by the frame placed on our professional roles and the horizons that are assumed. The dilemmas of solidarity in respect of being in a borderland between preschool and school can be described as a collision between the teachers' rational solidarity, solidarity with the children, and institutional solidarity. The teachers' rational solidarity ties them to preschool traditions, norms and values, in contrast to any discourses inherent in school cultures. On the other hand, the institutional solidarity, in respect to the mission of the preschool class, is to build a pedagogical bridge between preschool and school. This mission explains why the teachers need to move between both cultures because, in this process, they build a culture of their own and an in-group solidarity, in a place that is "in-between" the preschool and the school.

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Chapter 6
Democracy among Girls and Boys in Preschool: Inclusion and Common Projects

Anette Hellman

Abstract: In this chapter it is argued that possibilities for creating a "we" and a space for solidarity is much dependent on whether gender categorizations are challenged and whether they are possible to deconstruct; or whether such constructions of normality remain stable and stereotyped. The discussion draws on some results from a study conducted in one Swedish preschool. Participants from the preschool included three female teachers, one male teacher and twenty children (twelve boys and eight girls, three to six years old). In the examples of practices presented, the possibilities of solidarity will be discussed. The opportunity to feel safe, without the risk of being teased or marginalized by others, seems significant in children's constructions of solidarity. Potentials for solidarity appear when children create their own physical spaces, build friendships and develop a focus on common interests or common projects.

The Swedish national school curriculum states the importance of improving democracy, in terms of gender equality among girls and boys in preschool, by contesting gender stereotypes (Skolverket, 2010). In this chapter, I will argue that it is a democratic necessity to recognize the complexity in categorizations, such as gender, and to take into account that such categories are constructed and reproduced by politics as well as research. This study indicates that solidarity, in terms of taking care of and standing up for each other, can be created through "safe" spaces for children in which they can negotiate gender in spaces that make gender stereotypes less significant.

In order to understand how democracy can be enhanced in preschool, I will outline two examples of practices in this chapter where gender stereotypes were given less relevance, through friendships and common projects. The possibility for children to feel safe seemed to be an important factor in order to make gender stereotypes less relevant (Hellman, 2010). The opportunity to feel safe, without the risk of being teased or marginalized by others, is made possible in three different ways. First, children could create their own physical spaces in

order to escape normalizing gazes and teasing. Second, children could create social spaces of friendship and thereby build a platform of solidarity, trust and safety from which hegemonic norms about gender or age could be downplayed. Third, a focus on common interests or common projects can make gender less relevant. In light of the inclusion and exclusion demonstrated in the examples of practices presented, the limits of solidarity will be discussed. The chapter concludes with some ideas on how to achieve radical democracy in preschool practices.

During the last decade, "we" constructions based on fixed gender categories have become quite common in educational practices in Sweden, often in relation to the discourse on multiculturalism (Nordberg, Saar & Hellman, 2009). Gender, ethnicity and sexuality have been highlighted as important categories, through which to recognize and analyze inequalities among children and teachers. By using these categories, individuals are often placed in a certain and one dimensional category and put in a position where they are seen as representing that category that are often connected to hegemonic stereotypes (Martinsson, 2006; Nordberg, Saar & Hellman, 2009). Understanding of boys and girls as opposites with different needs is a discourse that is dominant in many preschools and primary schools in Sweden, to-day (Hellman, 2003; Nordberg, 2005). This construction of a gender dichotomy is also reproduced in gender research through the focus on differences between boys and girls where small differences are repeatedly reported and published rather than findings about the similarities between boys and girls.

Theoretical Framework

This chapter focuses on situations where conceptions of "boys" and "girls" are negotiated. In these situations gender norms are repeated as well as challenged. The analyses build on poststructural feminism, queer theory, and critical studies of men and masculinity. The analyses are conducted with an intersectional approach where categories (such as gender and age) are regarded as "made" in social relations, in specific contexts and in interaction with each other (Crenshaw, 1995; Lykke, 2005). This means that norms about age and gender, rather than being additional or separate, are regarded as "creating" each other.

In the theoretical framework used in this chapter, gender is understood, not as given, but as a situated and relational process, performed and continually created through language, gesture, and all manner of social signs (Butler, 1990). By this understanding, categories such as "girls and boys" and positions such as "typical boys" are seen as "doing" something rather than merely representing

something. By embodying those fictions in our actions, those artificial conventions appear to be natural and necessary. The enactment of gender norms has "real" consequences, including the creation of subjectivity although this does not make subjectivity any less constructed. What is required for the hegemony to maintain power is our continual repetition of gender acts in daily activities. Categories, such as boys and girls and gender stereotyped positions like "typical boy" and "typical girl", are thus seen as constructed in relation to hegemonic discoursers of power and normality (Butler, 1990). Gender stereotypes in this chapter refer to categorizations that reflect certain specific hegemonic ways of practice of boyishness for boys and girlishness for girls, as more proper than others. Categories and positions are, in addition, to this seen as situational constructions where normative structures are both constraining the situation and invoked by children to influence the contextual understanding of the situation. It is argued that possibilities for creating a "we" and a space for solidarity is much dependent on whether gender categorizations are challenged and whether they are possible to deconstruct; or whether such constructions of normality remain stable and stereotyped.

To discuss democracy from this perspective will be done from Butler's (2004) understanding of democracy as inclusion of marginalized positions and as an ongoing creation of "we" groups are built rather than being based on fixed identities. This means that categories such as "girls" or "boys" need to be deconstructed in order to include individuals that today are excluded and made incomprehensive as gendered subjects (Butler, 2004). It will therefore be a democratic necessity to recognize the complexity in categorizations and to take into account that the construction of categories and how they are reproduced is apparent in politics as well as research.

Methodology

This chapter draws on some results from my doctoral study (Hellman, 2010). The analysis builds on ethnographic methodology and field periods carried out across two years in a Swedish preschool. Ethnographic methodology can be interpreted and used in various ways. The analysis used in this chapter builds on an understanding of ethnographic methodology as an interpretative act of "thick descriptions" where data are seen as "the researchers own construction of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (Geertz, 1973, pp. 9-10). This interpretive understanding of everyday life means to try to make sense of the structures of significance that inform people's actions.

The methods used for this chapter are participant observations over time and in different contexts, together with data from interviews and observations. The study was conducted in one preschool. Participants from the preschool included three female teachers, one male teacher and twenty children (twelve boys and eight girls, three to six years old). The preschool was situated in an urban area of mixed social and cultural background. When observing play and other activities I made notes of conversation as well as non-verbal practices and of how teacher and pupils placed themselves and moved between different areas. All interviews were taped and transcribed.

Analyses

In the analyses presented in this chapter, different expressions of solidarity and gender are presented. These expressions occur when gender stereotypes are given less relevance in order to create safe spaces; when there are spaces for friendship as platforms of safety; and when there are common projects which provide a democratic space where all children can be included. The ways in which gender and normality are manifested in preschool practice are culturally defined and some practices are more influenced by gender than others (Thurén, 1996). Solidarity, in terms of taking care of and standing up for each other, creates a safe space for children who are included in friendship relations through which they can negotiate gender, age and a space in ways that make gender stereotypes less relevant (McNaughton, 1999). The strongest expression of solidarity among children is manifested in friendship. Creating strong bonds of friendship open up possibilities for subduing gender differences in play and transgressing gender norms that apply strongly in other contexts. Friendship will be analyzed here as a form of solidarity among children in play. A second instance in which gender stereotypes and single dimensional identities were minimized occurred during work on common projects. As long as the project was in focus there was a high fluidity in the social relations created in an ad-hoc way around the project.

When gender stereotypes are given less relevance: Creating "safe" spaces

In situations where gender was not emphasized or actualized as an important category, children had opportunities to try out highly gender marked positions as well as for girls and boys to play together. The possibility to do so seems to be connected to being safe from other children's or adults teasing. This safety could

sometimes be connected to the possibility of escaping a normalizing gaze (Foucault, 1975) from other children or from teachers. One of the preschool teachers discussed play as a safer situation than circle time which is a time when children's practices are in focus and whereby they will be noticed and judged by the other children. In more public spaces, like circle time, transgressions can become more problematic.

Linda, one of the youngest preschool teachers, had made some new costumes, princess and knight dresses. She described how she wanted to present the female coded costumes first to give them higher value in order to make them more attractive for both boys and girls:

> But as it turned out I now realize that the circle time was a bad situation to present the dresses. As the dresses were lying in the middle of a lot of children, both boys and girls, asked if they could try them on. The teacher making the decision within the circle time situation gave the girls opportunity to try the dresses first and everybody said, "Oh, how beautiful; Oh how nice…" One boy had been waving his hand in order to get attention, and finally he was chosen and could try the dress. He was so happy, he really thought it was beautiful, but the kids started to laugh at him, the older girls calling him boy princess; I now think that play would have been a better, maybe safer situation for boys to transgress gender borders without being teased, but I would really like to see it work in a public situation as well.

Linda had the intention to give femininity higher value, but in her choice of a princess costume as the female dress she also repeated a well established gender dichotomy. By introducing only one highly gender marked dress, instead of presenting different costumes Linda also, despite her good intentions, both actualized the gender border and reproduced a stereotype and polarized the femininity position. In the quotation, Linda reflects on how different situations, like play or circle time, give different opportunities for boys to approach or transgress gender borders. In a more public situation, like circle time, children are, as Linda points out, more visible; which also is one of the main pedagogic intentions for that situation.[14] This visibility may however, place a boy picking up on a polarized feminine coded position under closer examination and judgment from teachers and, as in this case, from other boys and girls. This unintended polarization of gender also limits the possibilities for creating a "we" and solidarity among children.

[14] The circle time is shaped by a pedagogic discourse pointing out the importance to make every child visible and give each child the opportunity to speak. See Rubinstein-Reich (1996) for further discussion.

When gender became relevant, children often tried to find strategies to escape normalizing gazes (Foucault, 1975). One way of doing this in the preschool was to build small "huts" with blankets over a table in a corner of a room or among the trees and bushes in the corner of the preschool garden. Girls and boys often played "Batman" by running around in circles with flapping mantles, jumping, shouting and comparing strength and muscles. However, a Batman play could also mean that the children continued to call themselves Batman while they took care of their Batman babies and cooked food. Their movements in this caring Batman play were gentler and they played in more restricted spaces, like a corner of the garden, in the home area or under a table. In this caring Batman play, the boys often played close together, their voices were soft and they communicated with elaborated sentences.

> Jimmy: My little Batman robot needs a blanket. "Sweet dreams," said the Batman daddy to the little Batman robot. "Ahhhh," he said, "I'm a little bit cold, daddy." "Oh, just a minute," said the daddy, "I will get you a warm blanket". (Jimmy gets some toilet paper and wraps it around the Batman figure).
>
> Jimmy: "Here you are. Good night my little Batman."
>
> Lucas: "Shall we sing for our robots?"
>
> Jimmy: "Yeah, but quiet then. Mine is almost asleep."

This kind of play was especially common for the older boys, who also named it "Batman play" when they were asked what they were playing. This "naming" could be understood as a way to normalize a feminine coded caring play and minimize marginalization. Children thereby created a safe space for themselves in order to make gender less relevant in contexts where they otherwise might be at risk of being ridiculed. These situations in which gender stereotypes seem less important have potential for children to create a "we" and possibilities for solidarity to emerge.

The opportunity to feel safe enough to cross gender borders without the risk of being teased or marginalized by others, were made possible in different ways in the preschool that I studied. First, children could create their own physical spaces, such as small huts, in order to escape normalizing gazes and teasing. Second, children could create social spaces of friendship and thereby try to build a platform of solidarity, trust and safety from which hegemonic norms about gender or age could be downplayed. Third, a focus on common interests or common projects in small groups, made both gender and age differences less relevant. Children often created, by themselves, temporary "we groups" built on common interests or projects. Friendship and common projects will be discussed in the following two sections.

Spaces of friendship: Platforms of safety and limitations to solidarity

Play is sometimes described by the teachers as a situation where gender stereotypes are less emphasized, compared to more structured activities where teachers tend to be more present (Odelfors, 2001). In play situations, children as a group tend to have more power to choose and decide activities and they have the possibility to move around and create their own spaces. Play gives children opportunities to escape public gazes in the preschool environment (Hellman, 2010). However, it is important to notice that some children have more power than others to define norms and values in play situations. Even though play can be creative, joyful, inclusive and cooperative it is also a situation where children get teased, marginalized, excluded and bullied by other children (Sutton-Smith, 1997). Thorne (1993) described in her research how children with friendship relations more often than excluded children could cross gender borders without the risk of marginalization.

In my own study, girls and boys, especially the younger 3-5 year old children, generally tended to play together. Older children had quite often begun to learn how girls and boys were supposed to speak, act and feel and tended to restrict themselves, as well as others, according to gendered expectations. One way of "shutting out" normalizing gazes was to use physical rooms. Another was to create social rooms between girls and boys based on friendship and solidarity. Friendship then could have the function as a platform of confidence and solidarity from where children felt safe enough to break gender borders since they knew that they would get help from their friends if they were at risk of being teased by someone. The ability to "be safe" in play creates spaces where gender can be downplayed or transgressed. McNaughton (1999) argued, in line with my own results, that children need a certain "gender safe" and "gender-fair" environment in order to be able to transgress borders without the risk of teasing. Hence, it is not play in itself that creates possibilities for gender to be downplayed or transgressed, but the way in which children might create ties of friendship and solidarity through play that creates a sense of safety that is important in order to understand why gender stereotypes sometimes are given less relevance in play.

Girls and boys who liked to play together, created spaces of friendship and solidarity; spaces that also made gender transgression possible in contexts where gender difference otherwise would be emphasized. One example of this is of a girl, Bella, and a boy, Carl, who were both five years old and who really liked to play with each other. Carl describes his best friend Bella in the following way:

> Carl: Bella is my friend; it's so much fun to play with her. If we want different things when we play, then we do a little bit like she wants and a little bit like I want. We don't care if Tony teases us; we just keep on playing and ignore him.
>
> Anette: Does Tony tease you for playing with Bella?
>
> Carl: No, not always, but if he can't play with us then he will start teasing me for playing with Bella or for playing with dolls. But Bella says: "Ignore him!" And then I just ignore him. Bella say nice things to me and I use to say nice things to her – that's what friends do. Real friends don't tease each other, they help and are nice to each other like me and Bella do.

Bella and Carl, like several other children in the study, frequently played with each other across gender borders. Their friendship often worked as a form of platform of safety for the other children included, from where they could negotiate and play with the norms. To take part in these relationships teaches children how to be a subject together with others. However, this knowledge is something that girls and boys learn rather than something that comes naturally, even if assumptions of children's natural ability to play together are commonly understood among teachers in preschools in Sweden (Tullgren, 2003). This is, as Tullgren points out, a problematic discourse since it tends to make teachers withdraw from play and create "free" play spaces where teachers are less present. Most importantly in order to achieve status and to be included in friendship relations for the children in my study was knowledge about how to play together with others. It is thus important to note that knowledge about how to play together give certain individuals' high status and provides them with access to wider networks of relations where girls and boys can negotiate the dominant norms about age, gender and behavior.

Friendship can then be seen as a space of solidarity that makes it possible for those included to transgress gender borders from a safer position. However, this space is not open for everyone. As Carl said in the previous quote, Carl and Bella protected their friendship by excluding children who are a threat to them. To protect their relationship from others sometimes can be a way to show solidarity to the group.

The safety discussed earlier, is connected to the question of finding friends and to be included in friendship relations in play. Friendship can be seen as a space of solidarity that makes it possible for those included in the friendship relations to be able to transgress gender borders from a safer position.

Gender research has shown how girls and boys tend to have different playing areas (Davies, 2002). My study shows that most children were given access to the "play rooms" that were created among the children and most of them strolled between several play situations. Gender or age separation was

accentuated in situations of exclusion in children's play, and was not primarily connected to physical persons or physical spaces. It is when children ask if they can get access in play that gender becomes relevant. First, in order for the children included to decide if the person who wants to join is suitable and, second, in order to negotiate a suitable position and role in the play. It can therefore be concluded that gender transgression on the one hand becomes possible for children included in friendship relations. And on the other, that exclusion from friendship relations, or discussions about access to play, increased the relevance of gender.

Some children tend to be constantly excluded from children's friendship relations, namely girls and boys that often dominated other children in play, children who were said to make too many decisions or girls and boys who were using violence or teasing as a way to communicate. Other examples included children who never were seen or noticed by the children included in friendship relations. Some of these children were seen as shy, passive or "no fun" while others stayed only a few hours at preschool and this made it difficult for them to relate to other children.[15] Children who were excluded from friendships often negotiated norms about gender from a quite unsafe position which seems to make them more conforming to gender stereotypes. Simon, a six year old boy in a preschool in an earlier study (Hellman, 2003), hardly had any friends at all and he was constantly trying to understand how to "be a boy" in the "right" way in order to make friends and to become included among the children. Simon explained to me how he didn't like to wear pink colors, since they made him slow. He always dressed up in what he described as "fast dark colors" and practiced running and jumping next to the group of "popular" boys, constantly watching them but seldom being seen. Another example reported in Hellman (2010) was Tony, five years, who was often described by the children and teachers as a "fussy" boy because he lacked self control.

Certain positions, such as "typical" and "fussy" boys are given low status among teachers and children and also they are given less influence among children in play situations. The most admired position for children in preschool in my study as well as in other research (Emilson, 2008) was the competent and independent child. "Fussy" boys were discussed by teachers and other children, as individuals who lacked control. Because self-control has high status among pedagogues as well as among children, then self-control is connected to the most admired position for children among the teachers in a view of the competent

[15] In Sweden preschool is usually available about 50 hours/week for all children. But if children's parents are unemployed or on parental leave, their children are restricted to a maximum of 15 hours/week of preschool.

child. Since self-control also was connected to the highest status position among girls and boys, then to become "a grown up", was important for children in order to show that they "could manage" by themselves. Lowest status was given to children who, despite their position as oldest at the preschool, had not managed to achieve the norms about self-control and norms about how to manage by their own.

A position as a "fussy boy", consisting of dominance, uncontrolled aggression or uncontrolled actions, was strongly gendered. Boys became visible, reprimanded and recognized. Even if most boys behaved in other ways, teachers tended to oversee these actions and tended to connect some children's actions to all boys. Uncontrolled actions and violence was at risk of being perceived as natural for boys. When girls practiced it, they became incomprehensible, invisible or made deviant, since they were expected to perform a position as a democratic, solitary and competent child.

Within gender research it has been known for several years, that girls run the risk of becoming invisible in preschool practice. I have shown that this invisibility also is directed towards boys who practice or are ascribed passive positions. This marginalization may even work more strongly because boys, as a group, are supposed to take up space, be active and visible. Just as extroverted girls become incomprehensible these boys became difficult to understand and were even sometimes taunted as being girls (emphasizing the gender confusion to which they gave rise). However, it is important to notice that normality is not naturally given and that some children could be naturally passive.

Certain spaces gave marginalized children opportunities to be visible and communicate with others. One example of this was when common projects created spaces where it became possible to work together in small groups. In such groups, possibilities for solidarity and friendship seem to occur more often as well as providing opportunities for transgressions of gender stereotypes.

Common projects: A democratic space

Gender was often downplayed when common projects were created by teachers or by the children themselves. This is also discussed and analyzed by Ärleman-Hagsér and Pramling Samuelsson (2009). Not only gender, but also age distinctions and hierarchies between children and teachers became less relevant when everyone worked together towards the common goal in a project. These projects could be planned by the teachers, like painting, constructing or investigating a phenomenon. In contrast to friendship relations, common projects are open for all children. In certain situations this is because teachers are

more often present and they provide support to children who are seldom included. They help children who sometimes have difficulties with aggression or self control.

Young (2000) points out that a common project tends to create a "we" based on the goal rather than on fixed categories, such as gender or, as discussed in the previous section, in and out groups according to popularity, status and friendship. Even if common projects often were initiated by the teachers, they could also be initiated by the children themselves. This happened often at outdoor activities when the preschool group made their weekly trip to the forest or when the children played in the preschool garden. In the following observation Gustaf noticed a cat outside the fence and throws over a plastic plate with food. Getting the plate back into the garden became difficult for Gustaf, especially since it was absolutely forbidden to climb over the fence. Gustav then called out for some help. Several boys and girls of different ages came running in order to help and together they used sticks and slowly started to manoeuvre the plate back into the garden.

> Gustaf: Hey, we were really a good working team! We can fix everything together!
>
> Eva: Yeah, we can fix everything! We are the best!

Thorne (1993) exemplifies how teachers might work more effectively to promote cooperative relations, and thereby create gender equality, among girls and boys. Thorne points out the ways teachers tend to divide or count children into gender categories. When teachers direct girls and boys to different competing teams, to different tables or to different rooms they ratify the dynamics of separation, differential treatment, and stereotyping between girls and boys. This kind of daily categorization of boys and girls were also used by teachers in my own study at circle time when the children were counting boys and girls (Hellman, 2010). The purpose was to teach the children how to count but girls and boys also learned that it seemed quite important to categorize individuals by gender and that boys seemed to be more important since every day at circle time they were counted first. By emphasizing that individuals in the group all belong to the same group regardless of age or gender a more inclusive basis of solidarity might be possible among children and teachers. How teachers use language is an important part of this.

Thorne (1993) also pointed out that it might be helpful for teachers to organize children into small heterogeneous and cooperative workgroups since small groups might create "pockets" for less public practices and environments where girls and boys get the opportunities to find new friends as they work together. Sometimes children who are excluded from play because they are being

labeled as "not fitting" because they do not have necessary skills can become included. Thorne therefore suggested that in order to broaden children's access, teachers might take more part in children's activities and make a point of teaching necessary skills for a certain activity to everyone.

Conclusion

I have in this chapter discussed that, in order to achieve democracy among children, it is a necessity to recognize the complexity in categorizations and to work towards the achievement of inclusive and flexible "we" groups. I have explored two practices where gender stereotypes are given less relevance in preschool, namely practices of friendship and practices of common projects. On the one hand such practices seem to illuminate the potential for solidarity between children and solidarity can create for children a safe space where gender stereotyping is of less significance. The study illuminated the complex relationships between solidarity and gender transgressions as well as for gender stereotyping.

Situations, in which gender was not emphasized or actualized as an important category, gave children opportunities to try out highly gender-marked positions and provided opportunities for girls and boys to play together. The possibility to do so seems to be connected to the ability to be safe from other children's or adults' normative gaze. The opportunities to feel safe enough to cross gender borders without the risk of being teased or marginalized by others were made possible in three different ways. First, children could create their own physical spaces, such as small huts, in order to escape normalizing gazes and teasing. Second, children could create social spaces of friendship and thereby build a platform of solidarity, trust and safety from which hegemonic norms about gender or age could be downplayed. Third, in common projects initiated by teachers, or by the children themselves, children have more opportunities to work together towards common goals.

Friendship can be seen as a space of solidarity that makes it possible for those included to transgress gender borders from a safer position. However, this space is not open for everyone. Carl and Bella protected their friendship by excluding children that are a threat to them. To protect their relations from others sometimes could be a way to show solidarity to a group. Children who were excluded from friendship often negotiated norms about gender from a quite unsafe position which seemed to make them perform more gender stereotyped actions.

It is important for teachers to facilitate children's access to social relations. Children, as well as adults, become subjects in social relations. In play, children's most important arena for meaning-making, they also learn how to relate to other children, how to communicate and how to negotiate. As several researchers have pointed out, the ability to negotiate, to be creative and to communicate tend to give children great popularity among other children and access to play situations (McNaughton, 1999; Thorne, 1993). Play as an important arena for social interaction teaches children how to negotiate norms, such as norms about gender.

To conclude, I will give some ideas for teachers about how to achieve democracy in pre-school. First, teachers need to make friendship relations among children possible by teaching them how to play with each other. Second, it might be useful for teachers to reflect on the way normalizing gazes are working in their preschool environments. Third, teachers could create more inclusive practices and "we" groups among the children. Instead of repeating categories such as "boys" and "girls" in structuring rooms, interactions and language; a focus on common interests or common projects between girls and boys in small groups, would make gender difference less relevant. Teachers might also facilitate children's own creation of inclusive "we" groups by building on common interests or projects among girls and boys in preschool.

In order to gain democracy it will be necessary, on the one hand, to counteract normalized gender stereotypes and on the other, to work in order to promote a more inclusive environment in preschool. This has to be done by deconstructing concepts like "normal girls" and "normal boys" and by critically analyzing how a focus on gender difference and a repetition of hegemonic positions for girls and boys might reproduce gender stereotypes. In addition to this, teachers also have to create inclusive "we groups" open for all children and help children to create such groups by themselves.

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Chapter 7
How Do Young Children Learn about Solidarity? Perspectives of Student Teachers in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract: This chapter presents an analysis of student teachers' beliefs about how children learn to be members of the classroom community and how they view their role as teachers to support such learning. The conduct of this research involved the presentation of a scenario about a dilemma of practice in which a child's behavior disrupts the routine for the group. While a number of participants in their responses emphasized the authority of the teacher in ensuring child behavioral compliance in the situation, there was also strong consideration of the need for the child to recognize his role as a member of the group. Most participants acknowledged their duty of care for supervision of all the children as a key response to the teaching dilemma. It is concluded that the beliefs these student teachers held about children's participation would be likely to support children's learning about solidarity in their early childhood classrooms.

In Australia and other Western countries, a major goal for children in early education is to learn to be independent. This individualistic orientation of education is accomplished through supporting children to develop competence and confidence in their individual abilities and to take personal pride in their achievements. However, this focus on independence can be balanced with a focus on learning for interdependence. Within the European tradition of sociological thinking, interdependence aligns with ideas about solidarity as an educational goal (Durkhiem, 1925; cited in Hargraeves, 1980). Solidarity refers to the integration of individuals within institutions and society. It is about the social relations that bind people together. Teaching about solidarity in education systems is a moral endeavor through which children learn values about relating to others and participation within social groups (Ainley, 2006).

Learning for solidarity is at the heart of the social and moral outcomes of education. Solidarity is about learning to live together within societal institutions as well an appreciation of the importance of mutual understanding and respect

for others (Hargraeves, 1980). Since the Delors Report (1996), a report commissioned by UNESCO, there has been increased emphases on the affective and social outcomes of schooling. The Delors Report identified "learning to live together" (p. 20) as one of the four pillars of education with its attendant values of tolerance, fairness, and empathy. Kennedy and Mellor (2006) also noted that the social objectives of education should include building social cohesion, a sense of inclusion, and respect for diversity. A focus on valuing independence should be balanced with goals about learning to understand one's connections with others and societal institutions (Ainley, 2006).

The importance of building solidarity and participation in classrooms will affect how relationships between children and between teachers and children are constructed. In early education settings, teachers have the opportunity to promote a caring and inclusive community (Wisneski & Goldstein, 2004). Children enter early education programs with a relational morality based on the desire to develop connections with others (McCadden, 1998). However, McCadden also identified that an organizational morality can prevail in early education classrooms in which there is a focus on adherence to rules and compliance with the social norms of the classroom. McCadden concluded that both a relational and an organizational morality are needed in order that children learn about their responsibilities. While teachers may support development of the social relationships in the classroom, they also need to communicate important values about being a member and contributor in the classroom community.

Teachers also have an important role as a model and a facilitator so that children learn about taking responsibility for their own learning. Buzzelli (1995, 1996) noted that dialogues between teachers and children reveal how power is shared in classrooms. The manner in which power is shared by teachers with children conveys important values to children about respect for others and of acceptance. Buzzelli (1996) explored how the concepts of mastery, voice, authority, and positionality in how teachers construct their relationships with children and share power, drawing on ideas proposed by Maher and Tetreault (1994). These are important lenses through which moral and social beliefs and values are expressed by teachers and communicated to children in early childhood settings.

Using a common practice scenario, this study explores the meanings and structures of student teachers' beliefs about children's participation in the community of the classroom; how children's concerns and issues are taken into account; and how teacher authority is conveyed. Verification is also sought about

the value of using scenarios to provide insight into the nature of beliefs about teaching in complex situations and the daily dilemmas faced in the classroom.

The Research Study

The participants in this research were students enrolled in a vocational program to obtain a qualification to work in child care and other early childhood settings. The data reported in this chapter comes from a larger project that focused on the development of students' personal epistemology for practice in early childhood classrooms, as the students progressed through their vocational education course of two years. This vocational education course is delivered through the national competency-based training framework mandated for vocational educational programs in Australia (Australian Department of Education Science and Training, 2006). The course focuses on core teaching competencies such as planning care routines; establishing and implementing plans for developing responsible behavior; and documenting, interpreting and using information about children to inform curriculum planning. These mandated core competences and their associated standards do not necessarily address how to manage the complexities of teaching young children in group settings. Staff in many training organizations who deliver the vocational programs strive to enhance students' learning in ways that promote reflective and critical thinking about practice. However, a competency-based training model does not address the subjectivities and multiple perspectives through which the daily dilemmas of practice can be understood by teachers of young children.

Participants

The data for this chapter were drawn from interview transcripts from 34 students. There were 4 male students within this group. The age of the participants ranged from 17 to 47 years. Fifty percent of the students were aged less than 20 years; eighty-eight percent had completed high school; while thirty percent spoke a language other than English at home. Thirty-five percent had some experience in work settings with children (e.g., in child care programs or outside school hours care programs) before beginning their vocational education course to attain a formal educational qualification.

Practice scenario

In their second year of training, students were asked to respond to a scenario-based interview to investigate their beliefs about how children learn to be members of the classroom community and how they view their role as teachers to support such learning. The common practice scenario was based on an observed situation in an early childhood center (E. Johansson, personal communication, January 12, 2007):

> You are the group leader for a class of toddlers in a day care center. There are 12 children in the group. It is outdoor play time and all of the children, including your teaching assistant, except you and David have gone outside. You have put some sunscreen on David and told him to get his hat. He suddenly says, "Don't want to go out!" David repeats in a really loud and angry way, "Don't want to go outside?" You say to him, "What's the matter David?" He throws his hat down and then starts to take his sandals off. You know that you are needed outside to supervise the other children in their play because your colleague is out there by herself. On the other hand, you have David in front of you and you can intuitively feel that something is really bothering him.

Such scenarios enable a multi-layered situation to be explored about how respondents construct meaning about teaching practice (Dockett & Tegel, 1995, 1996; Sudzina, 1997). The students were given time to read the scenario and were informed that there was no right or wrong answers. They responded to the following questions:

- From your point of view, what is this situation about?
- What would you do in such a situation?
- What would be most important to you in deciding what to do?
- What would you like David to learn from the situation?

Data analysis

The meaning and structure of the overall responses to this situation were considered in the analyses. Marton and Booth (1997) proposed that in order to understand an individual's expressed understandings about a phenomenon one must both assign meaning (referential dimension) and identify how the different meanings are related (structural dimension). We drew on aspects of Marton and Booth's phenomenographic approach to data analysis by exploring the meanings expressed in the responses to the questions and how these ideas were structurally integrated across responses to the questions. Previous work by the authors has

utilized this approach in qualitative analyses of teachers' beliefs about practice (Berthelsen & Brownlee, 2007).

Referential dimensions: Important elements of meaning were sought in regard to the following themes: expressions of solidarity evident in acknowledging the classroom group and David's role in the group; the extent to which David, as an individual, was given a voice by the teacher to express his concerns; and the nature of teacher positionality and authority in the situation. Themes were identified with a progression from identifying patterns and summarizing these patterns to a level of interpretation. In this interpretation, there was an attempt to identify the broader meanings and implications in the data (Boyatzis, 1998).

Structural dimension: Students' overall responses to the questions can be considered along a continuum of integration and complexity of ideas. A judgment of low complexity in belief structure was made when the statements from a participant were based on simple, unelaborated premises related to a focus on one perspective, that of the adult. A judgment of medium complexity of belief structure was made when statements showed an awareness of multiple perspectives (the child and the teacher) and also had some elaboration in the meanings expressed. Finally, a judgment of high complexity was made when ideas were integrated, elaborated and formulated as a personally constructed position about the scenario and the actions required. These responses not only showed an awareness of multiple perspectives (the teacher, the child, the group) but the responses were integrated through a theme of solidarity and participation.

Findings

The dilemma in the scenario reflected a tension between children's needs and the student teachers' responsibilities to follow regulations on supervision. Supervision is a very important caregiving strategy and high levels of skills are required by staff in early childhood settings to ensure the health and safety of all children and, at the same time, to support children's learning and development. Any early childhood service must comply with state licensing regulations for the adult-to-child ratios and make sure children are supervised at all times.

Of interest in the analyses were the justifications and elaborations provided about the elements of the scenario; and, in particular, the responses to the question about what David should learn from this situation. This question conveyed the most salient information for the focus of this chapter on the

valuing of group solidarity. The importance of David's learning to be a member of the child care group was conveyed in many of the responses.

Referential dimensions

The teachers' responsibilities and duty of care

As expected by the nature of the scenario, many responses focused on the teacher's responsibilities for "duty of care" to meet the supervision regulations. David's compliance was viewed by participants as important to the safety of the whole group. This was the uppermost concern for 22 of the participants. For Lynne, this situation is about her responsibilities to the regulations.

> … The situation is about the ratio of children because there's one staff [member] out there who can't be all alone with all the children. … The situation is all about the ratio. … Yeah, make him sit outside, not inside, because you need to be outside with the others; so bring him outside of the classroom and make him sit down and not to play around. … He or she has to be [able to be seen] because of the safety of the child. (Lynne)

While Martine articulated her responsibilities for the other children, she also had to convey this to David so that he understood why he had to go outside.

> I'd just want him to understand that there are other children at the centre and that, of course, I want to be sure he's okay but there's still other children outside that need me as well – so just to try and help him to understand that. It's not just him. … There are other children who might need me outside and they could be getting hurt or falling over and stuff and I need to help them as well. (Martine)

These responses exemplify the clear focus that many student teachers had on the safety of the whole group as opposed to a focus on individual needs. The importance of maintaining a focus on the whole group also indicated the emphasis on teacher authority and child compliance.

Teacher authority and position

Many responses made clear that the teacher was the authority in the situation and that children's compliance was important. Twelve of the participants indicated that David needed to learn to do as he was told and manage his feelings and actions.

Melody emphasized David's responsibilities to the group in terms of the value of fairness but she indicated that the authority rested with her to teach "acceptable" behavior.

> … I would have to ask some of the kids to go inside, but that's really unfair for the other children. ... It has to be that it's fair for all the children. … [He needs to learn] that his behavior is not acceptable. He can't just throw his hat on the ground. (Melody)

Anita's response considered David's role within the group but also that he had to learn better ways to participate in the activities of the group.

> Just because he doesn't want to go outside … if he was the only child there it would be different but you've got to help look after 11 other children. He's not the only child there. … He just can't throw his stuff down and have a tantrum and that he's going to get whatever he wants. … He can learn that there are better ways to express his feelings and emotions. (Anita)

These notions of compliance mean that the participants valued the importance of a child learning to participate effectively in group activities. It seems, however, that this participation is based more on needing to ensure safety regulations than a desire to form a cohesive group ethos in the centre. This is also evident in the next theme related to being a member of a group.

Being a member of a group and solidarity

Twenty participants expressed beliefs that it was important for David to learn to follow the routine of the group activities. This was commonly expressed in statements such as: "David must learn to be a part of the group". These expressions implied that individual needs were subordinate to the needs of the group, as illustrated by the following response:

> … He has to learn to be with the other children and maybe if he plays with other children, he will forget, he will learn. Maybe it will make him learn that everybody is there. He just has to be like everybody else. (Narelle)

The importance of group solidarity was expressed when it was emphasized that David had responsibilities as a member of the group. David needed to learn to be accommodating and balance his personal needs with those of the rest of the group, as expressed by Renae in the following extract.

> … I don't know if prioritizing is the right word, but like what matters more. I don't want him to think that he's less important than the other children but I think I'd like him to know that the other children's safety comes above him just sitting in a room and having a little emotional crisis … Like just wanting him to understand reasons as to why other things can come above him. (Renae)

While Janelle also took this position, her response was couched more empathically as a value of solidarity that emphasized that individual needs may not always be able to be met when one is a member of a group.

> … Just because he doesn't want to go outside, everyone else wants to be outside. So sometimes you just have to compromise. Probably [he has] to think of others. Everyone has to do it in everyday life. You might not want to do something but you have to. (Janelle)

These statements conveyed beliefs that "give and take" was required in order to be a member of a group.

Meeting individual needs

Fewer responses referred to exploring David's individual concerns and how they could be accommodated. Twelve participants expressed concerns that it was important to give David a voice and to make an effort to find out the nature of David's concerns and provide him with support to deal with his frustrations.

Alison believed that it was necessary for David to learn better ways to manage his feelings. She also expressed her support for David through the mutuality evident in the use of "we" in her response.

> … To express his feelings without getting really upset and angry and that he could express it to me so that we could solve, you know resolve it. (Alison)

Catherine conveyed respect and support for David and expressed her belief that it was important for the carers to be attuned to children's feelings and be responsive.

> … That he is safe and his opinions are valued, and if he doesn't want to go outside and he is scared of something, the carer knows; and that the carer is able to pick up on it – so that his feelings are being met and his opinions are being met, as well, and [he is] listened to. (Catherine)

This emphasis on responsivity was also evident in Rachel's response:

> … If there's something wrong he can tell me. Maybe something you can't see, you have to ask him … It's okay. Don't be scared. You can tell me what's going on. Don't be afraid. … So I guess, in that sort of situation, I have to be alert and kind of look for what may be hidden there. Something's wrong. I'd probably just tell him that. (Rachel)

These statements conveyed beliefs that attention to the needs of the individual was important. Across the responses there was an emphasis on what David had to learn in terms of the self-regulation of his emotions and also about learning to use language to express his needs.

Structural dimension

Judgments of low complexity were made for 21 participants whose responses had minimal justification and maintained a single focus on how to deal with the situation. This focus could be adult-centered in terms of an emphasis on teacher authority and the responsibilities of the teacher for supervision or child-centered on attending to David's concerns.

For example, Sasha emphasized her authority as the teacher in providing David with specific directions for his behavior.

> … He doesn't have to throw his things around. Ask him that if he doesn't want to go outside, then he just has to say he doesn't want to go outside, instead of throwing his hat and taking off his shoes. (Sasha)

Ruth also expressed her views quite simply with a focus on David learning to express his feelings in words.

> To express what he's feeling inside. To be able to tell us what's on his mind so we can deal with what his problem is. (Ruth)

A medium level of complexity in the structure of responses was assigned to 10 of the participants. These respondents recognized complexity in the dilemma and the need to consider the situation from more than one perspective that included adult-centered and child-centered viewpoints.

For example, Karen saw her supervision responsibilities as significant but also took David's concerns very seriously.

> … You've got to get outside and supervise the other children with the other carer because the ratios aren't going to be met outside. If something happens, people are liable for that. But you've got David who doesn't want to go outside and you've got to be sympathetic and understanding of that. … You try and find other means of figuring out the situation to solve it so you can help him and help supervise the other children. … You have to really think about everyone. … So I would definitely have to get someone else first and then concentrate on David at the same time because you can't just ignore David either. [He needs to learn] … That it's okay if he doesn't want to play. He can do something else. He can sit under a tree and read a book. Maybe he can take something from inside to outside that he likes. (Karen)

Similarly, Sarah expressed concern for David and his individual needs but also emphasized her responsibilities to the group.

> … Well, what we normally do when they're upset, we just pick them up and we'll take them outside with us anyway, even though they're crying and stuff because we've got to get out there, we've got to watch because [there are] 11 other kids or 12 other kids; however many there were, are needing our attention as well; and

> not just one. … [He needs to learn] … Well, one, that he can't get his own way – it doesn't matter how big a tantrum you throw. We can't always be there to say, "Okay, we'll calm you down now, we'll forget about the rest of the children." But yes, just to let him know that when everyone else goes outside then it's time to go outside. (Sarah)

Judgments of high complexity were made for three of the participants. These were more elaborated and multi-dimensional perspectives because these participants looked at the situation from a variety of perspectives. They reflected on their options to meet both David's concerns and their responsibilities. For participants judged as having high complexity in their responses examples are given from Maxine and Susan.

Maxine took account of the supervision issues as a strong concern. This would be most important to her decisions on what to do. However, she also was concerned for David's wellbeing and her support for him. She tried to take the teaching assistant's perspective in making her decisions about what she should do. She considered the need for solidarity and, in this, looks to David's future. She believed that he needed to learn to consider the needs of others in his actions and make compromises in order to be successful in the future.

> [What I would do] I wouldn't leave my assistant out there alone because it is a legal requirement; although you can be absent for ten minutes, it is safer to have you out there. She can't watch everything: "That child is going to fall and that child is going to fall, and which one do I go to?" … I need to be there. It is not fair. It's not fair on her, and it's not fair on the child and the other children as well. Being a toddler room there would only be a few other children, but still toddlers can be a lot to handle and can be very "gung ho" if they want to do that. "I'm not going to fall from up there, I'll climb up there." If I was that assistant, what would I want my group leader to do? I put myself in their shoes.

> [He needs to learn] … I want David to learn that he can definitely tell me things, like he doesn't want to go outside. Learn to express his feelings but that he can't always have things a 100% his own way. You have to make compromises in everything, in schooling, in relationships, friendships, in everything. You have to make compromises for things to work. It is one of the things of life, you can't always be: "I'm doing this and I'm not going to budge." … I want David to learn that we do care for him and we do want to help him, but there are other children and … you can't take up a 100% of someone's time, there are appropriate times for that.

Susan's responses were quite child-centered in trying to see things from David's point of view as well as while recognizing her responsibilities for the other children. She also acknowledged the importance of solidarity within the group.

> [What I would do]… Something has upset him. Something has triggered off this behavior that has happened outside. … He might have had a fight with one of the other children so he has associated that with being outside. … I don't think he is just being selfish. He wouldn't behave like that just to be selfish. Something has triggered the situation off. … Something has obviously triggered him to behave in such a way, and he is only a toddler too. So he is starting to understand cause and effect, that sort of thing. I don't think it is attention seeking. … Maybe it's hot, maybe it's the concrete or sandpit, you just don't know, so I think you need to find out, try and find out what it is. … I would probably try to calm him down and try and find out what is the matter, depending on his abilities. I wouldn't force him out there either. … Well I suppose you could take him out but try and pick him up and comfort him and make him secure at the same time because you have to be out there with the group, trying to watch all the other children and just sit with him for a little while and comfort him and talk to him and try and find out what the issue is.
>
> [He needs to learn] That he is secure and that he is important and that his needs matter. Like if he is having this tantrum, we're not just going to leave him there and ignore him and that because there is something upsetting him we want to find out what it is. … He is important. He is important to the community, the centre community and the group, and that we care about him. (Susan)

Susan and Maxine used multiple perspectives to analyze the situation. They hypothesized and speculated about alternative reasons for David's behavior but they also were clear about what he needed to learn. While there were many perspectives considered, the notion of solidarity was a theme about participation in the classroom group, as well as the need to support David's individual needs.

Discussion

This chapter has explored the meaning and structure of beliefs that student teachers held about a common practice scenario in an early childhood classroom. The analyses examined student teachers' beliefs about how children learn about solidarity and participation in the classroom. When students begin their studies to obtain a qualification to work in early education settings, they often begin with a simple motivation that they want to work with young children. However, as a result of their professional training, it is expected that they will appreciate their role in more complex ways. For optimum performance in a complex professional role, students need to learn to deal with ill-defined problems to which simple responses cannot be prescriptively applied (Biggs, 1996). Through their educational experiences, student teachers need to learn to make informed judgments based on the evaluation of alternative courses of action. The analyses of responses to the teaching dilemma presented in this chapter provided insight

into how these student teachers would make important decisions in their practice.

As appropriate to the situation, many participants saw that their primary consideration was to supervise all children in the group as required by regulations. Many of the participants had adult-centered viewpoints, focusing on the authority of teacher to ensure the focus child in the scenario complied with the directions given by the teacher. There was an expectation that the child depicted in the scenario needed to "fall into line" with the acceptable norms for behavior in the classroom. However, there was also a strong focus that the child should learn about his role as a member of the group. Many of the participants discussed the ways in which they could potentially meet the child's needs and these ideas emphasized that using language was a key to the self-regulation of behavior. While a focus on individual child development is evident in the vocational education program in which these students participate, the responses to the scenario also indicated that they held expectations that even young children can understand their role within their community of young peers – a first step in learning for solidarity. However, much of the focus on group participation given by the participants was more about meeting the regulations as an organizational issue rather than as a higher moral principle about the importance of social relationships with others.

Learning about solidarity is founded in our group experiences. From an early age, children's experiences in child care and preschools provide opportunities for participation in group life. As Durkheim (1925, cited in Hargreaves, 1980) noted, while there is interdependency between the social and individual spheres of life, there are also potential conflicts. Collective experiences can give children a range of social skills and the capacities to "get along" with others while some collective experiences will threaten the rights of the individual. Additionally, it is only through our collective experiences that we learn self-respect, since feelings of self-worth are the result of feedback received by others in social settings. Even in early education, children can come to appreciate that their personal interests must sometimes be subordinated to the interests of group.

This study has two implications for teacher education and professional development. The first implication is that professional courses need to provide understandings of the complexity of the teaching role and opportunities to examine the sort of dilemmas that may arise in daily practice. The use of a scenario as presented in this chapter provided insight into the variety of views that may be held about a single situation. Scenarios can be a vehicle for discussion and reflection by teachers and student teachers. There is value in

using scenarios to understand the daily dilemmas faced in the classroom. While there will never be one single and right answer in responding to these dilemmas, opportunities to analyze and reflect on possible actions build capacities to deal with the ill-defined problems in teaching practice. It is important that students learn to recognize that there may be multiple perspectives to consider for any situation and that effective decision-making requires evaluation of alternative courses of actions; as well as recognizing that there are multiple important decisions to be made in the everyday routine in a classroom with little time available to reflect on courses of action.

The second implication is about learning for solidarity in early childhood classrooms and exploring the ways in which teachers' values are conveyed to children about social participation in the classroom community. "Learning to live together" (Delors, 1996) as one of the four pillars of education with its values of tolerance and fairness are the foundations of social cohesion and inclusion. These moral meanings are embedded implicitly in teachers' daily practices without a lot of recognition that children are learning social values from teachers' actions and reactions. In the case of solidarity, children can learn values in early childhood programs about how responsible participation is important in the community of the classroom. These are values that they will carry with them into their future experiences within classroom groups through their education as well as in group experiences in the wider community.

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