Thematic Editor
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Editorial

The nexus of the linguistic and the visual has been part of European intellectual production and pedagogical practice since at least the Middle Ages, with writings taking the form of beautifully illuminated manuscripts and the earliest mnemonic techniques being based on translating lists of words into pictures. In fact, the close relation between language and the visual arts has been inscribed in the very nature of both concepts for – unlike speech which is primarily an aural/oral medium – language uses visual means of communication in the form of words, symbols and signs, while visual arts – in contrast to more functional and mundane kinds of manufacture – are known to serve as a vehicle for narration. Both verbal and visual representations play a pronounced role in education and it is their educative potential that will be the central focus of this issue.

The scene for the discussion is set by the first two articles which address both aspects of the central theme, with the opening article by David Carr focusing on the word, especially the good word, and the subsequent article by Marta Mitjans Puebla considering arts, fine arts in particular. Tracing the history of human enlightenment back to Plato's thoughts on an individual's capacity for knowledge on the one hand, and the biblical concept of logos on the other, Carr underlines the epistemic dimension of knowledge construction and through that anticipates the discussions to be held during the forthcoming conference Word in Education: Good Word, Bad Word, or no Word (28–29 September 2020 at Ignatianum) and on the pages of the next issue of our journal. Carr has kindly agreed to deliver the keynote address during the conference and to share it with the readers of this edition, which we are honoured to do in the hope that it will offer a preliminary and welcome foretaste of what is to come. Mitjans Puebla's article in turn in its emphasis on artistic creation takes us back to the impressionist painting of Pierre-Auguste Renoir who, it is argued,

served as inspiration for the American contemporary painter Edwin Parker "Cy" Twombly. Drawing upon the concept of word-painting on the one hand and the sublime on the other, Mitjans Puebla shows how the works of both artists convey not only artistic, but also poetic messages, offering aesthetic and emotional education in beauty.

The next two articles examine how visual images accompany or supplant narration, historical narration in the case of Aeddan Shaw's article and cinematic narration in the case of Jorge Martínez Lucena, Rosa Iannuzzi, and Cristina Rodríguez Luque's article. In his analysis of the relation between the linguistic and the visual, Shaw focuses on the images contained in official history coursebooks and tries to determine to what extent they are integrated with the text, thereby serving as sources for the narration and encouraging student engagement in those classroom activities that are based on critical reflection. The juxtaposition of the Polish and British coursebooks exposes differences between these two educational contexts. Lucena et al. in turn examine the use of cinematic images as a pedagogical tool in the Italian educational system, tracing the history of the Italian cinema – with a particular focus on educational production – from the early twentieth century until the present day, the latter being marked by a series of technological shifts (digital media, new technologies) and referred to as the "post-cinema" era. The authors discuss legislation concerning media education passed by the Italian government, as well as different solutions adopted by the Italian schools, including image education programs for students and training for teachers.

The next section of the volume, Reflections on Teaching, opens with Anna Bugajska's discussion of cognitive enhancement in the classroom setting, including reflections on online and blended learning, which have never been more relevant than now. Maria Szymańska, the author of the subsequent article, also focuses on cognition, albeit from a different perspective, with her main focus being on the role of reflective teaching in fostering the students' cognitive capital and contributing to their personal and social formation. Szymańska's article is followed by the reflections of Aneta Kamińska on the education of gifted children, in particular the roles and responsibilities of the teacher. This section closes with an

examination by Teresa Maria Włosowicz of the advantages and limita-
tions of translanguaging in teaching third or additional languages. Each
of the articles in this section concludes with recommendations that can
be implemented in the educational space for the benefit of both the stu-
dents and their teachers.

The Miscellaneous Articles section of this issue is dedicated to the
cognitive development of children diagnosed with delayed speech
development, which is examined by Krzysztof Gerc and Marta Jurek in
the context of the family system. The results of the investigation will be
of interest to diagnosticians, therapists – including speech therapists
and family therapists, educators – including school counselors and early
education teachers, as well as parents, and as such may lead to relevant
practical application.

I would like to conclude by evoking the central theme of this issue for
the final time and express the hope that the collection of articles will extend
the linguistic and visual knowledge and understanding of our readers.

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Thematic Articles

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Word in Education:
Good, Bad and Other Word

Abstract

St John's Gospel identifies *logos*, translated as English 'Word', as the divine source of the wisdom or truth of the Christian message, if not with the god-head as such. However, given the cultural and intellectual influence of Greek thought on early Christian literature, one need not be surprised that these (and other) theological or metaphysical associations of Word are almost exactly replicated and prefigured in the dialogues of Plato, for whom formation of the divine aspect or element of human soul clearly turned upon access to or participation in the wisdom of *logos*. This paper explores the moral and spiritual connections between *logos* or Word, reason and soul in such Platonic dialogues as *Gorgias*, *Republic* and *Theaetetus* as well as the implications of conceiving education as the pursuit of such Word for ultimate human flourishing.

   Keywords: Education; Word; Soul; Reason; Plato; Christianity; Knowledge

> '…to the Greek, there was something inexplicable about *logos*,
> so that it was a participation of man in the divine'
> (Eliot,1950, p. 433).

Education and human nature

If our present concern lies with education, then it must also be – by implication – with *learning*: indeed, in received Anglophone usage, 'learned person' is quite synonymous with 'educated person'. That said, not all useful or even complex learning is a matter of education and it is important to appreciate the respects in which the former may fall short of the latter. Thus, it is clear that while learning is a significant feature of many non-human lives, we should hesitate to speak of all such learning as *education*: it would be odd, for example, to speak of (the canines) Fido or Rover having been educated in shepherding sheep or guiding the blind in the West Bromwich Kennel Facility, even though they had learned and been taught these 'skills' by human trainers. Indeed, it is hardly less odd to speak of human agents who may have learned such complicated skills as juggling, cookery or driving to have been precisely *educated* in them – though we need not doubt that such activities may have significant educational aspects. To cut a longer story short, the reason for withholding the term education here, in both the human and non-human case, is substantially the same: it is that such learning may involve little rational *understanding* – if it needs to involve any whatsoever – and that any understanding in which it might be implicated is largely a matter of grasp of instrumental rules for the mastery of practical procedures.

These points are by no means original and closely follow a widely influential account of education developed by an important school of British educational philosophers around the sixth and seventh decades of the twentieth century (see, notably, Peters, 1966; 1973) – though the basic ideas are significantly anticipated in the work of such nineteenth century pioneers of so-called 'liberal education' as the great poet and schools inspector Matthew Arnold (Gribble, 1967; see also Newman,

1976). While this perspective has been subject to considerable elaboration, its broad lines are soon stated. The basis of the view is that, regardless of traditional etymological disputes over the origins of the term, distinctions between education and such related concepts as learning and training are fairly well marked in English and other established usage. Thus, while we speak of the *training* of agents in the more practical skills of sporting activity, or in vocations such as joinery or nursing, the term education is more usually applied to that broader understanding or consciousness of ourselves, the world and our place in it that marks the development of human mind for no specific further end – or, as it is often (if a little misleadingly) said, for its own *intrinsic worth*. So construed, education is concerned to foster a markedly *human* perspective on the world – a perspective that, in default of distinctively rational powers, other non-human creatures cannot have – rather than to develop those practical or instrumental abilities or capacities that human agents no doubt also require, along with other naturally evolved creatures, for basic natural survival.

Different perspectives on human nature and agency

On this view, education concerns the promotion of knowledge and understanding for accurate *discernment* of the world, though such intelligence has significant implications for the ordering and discipline of those less rational affective and appetitive aspects of human nature that are also integral to personal growth. Still, in this light, education may be considered inherently concerned with the growth of what it means to be a *person* – or, perhaps, in a rather older terminology, to have a *soul*. But how might we best understand or explain the peculiar possession by human beings – but not their non-human cousins – of an educable mind or soul? Indeed, while the term 'soul' has far from disappeared from common English usage (see, on this, Morris, 2019), it may seem less than illuminating to invoke this archaism in an era of advanced modern scientific understanding of both human physical and psychological nature. On such

understanding, human life is evolutionarily continuous with that of non-human nature and any higher mental capacities that human agents may seem to possess might differ only in degree from those of their non-human relatives, not in kind. Indeed, it is not uncommon for some of the more highly evolved of non-human creatures – such as apes and por-poises – to be credited with as much if not more natural (notably prob-lem-solving) intelligence than human agents and even supposed capable of the linguistic capacities required for conceptual thought. At all events, modern science largely considers human mind and knowledge to be no less conducive to empirical explanation than anything else and would have little time for talk of souls.

Regardless of such modern scientific dogma, however, the term 'soul' – still familiar, at least to modern students of philosophy and theol-ogy, from the works of older western thinkers of enduring interest and influence – harks back to an older and rival way of conceiving such pow-ers and their provenance. On this view, perhaps most deeply rooted in the dominant religious traditions of near eastern and western European cultures, human agency needs sharply distinguishing from that of all other creatures by virtue of its position between *two* metaphysically dis-tinct realms of being – a divine world of immaterial spirit and a created material world – in both of which it participates by possession of an im-material mind or soul and a material body. Moreover, it is only by partic-ipation in the former world that human soul is capable of the knowledge and choice – notably the choice between good and evil – that appears to be the hallmark of the divine. This conception of human soul and agency also draws upon striking metaphysical narratives purporting to explain the human possession of these and other divine qualities. According to one such familiar narrative, on which orthodox Christian faith is based, an all-powerful divinity created humankind in 'his' own image. Despite this, humans first lived not unlike other beasts of divine creation in an original state of innocent bliss from which knowledge – especially the moral intelligence of good and evil – was absent. Under the influence of God's evil adversary Satan, however, the first humans were persuaded to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree of knowledge and were in consequence

exiled by God from their happy paradise to a natural realm of pain and toil. That said, this myth has long been open to alternative (gnostic) Christian and pagan interpretation – from antiquity to more recent times – according to which the knowledge communicated to original humankind was actually granted or gifted by an agent of true divine wisdom seeking to liberate them from the ignorant and oppressive tyranny of a less divine providence of natural or material necessity.

Still, on either more or less orthodox readings of such narratives, the divinely gifted self-conscious intelligence and reason that distinguishes human agents from unthinking beasts is the essential nature of soul, which – if not corrupted or misused – may aspire to ultimate spiritual salvation. And while, again, such ancient narratives are likely to be dismissed by those of modern empirical scientific temper as fairy tales fit only for children, the general metaphysical drift of such ideas has clearly influenced some of the greatest philosophers from antiquity to the present. Thus, the great genius of medieval scholasticism, Thomas Aquinas, sought to recast the key ideas and claims of the Christian narrative in terms of the largely naturalistic philosophy of Aristotle. That said, the success of this enterprise rests mainly on an essentially (Aristotelian) naturalist *teleology*, which – entirely at odds with modern scientific naturalism (as well as with much latter-day neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics) – is able to recognise human and divine ends and goals as legitimate features of the natural order. For Aquinas, Aristotelian virtues – already defined in terms of a *telos* of human flourishing – were ripe for supplementation by Christian theological or spiritual virtues of faith, hope and charity as further means to human and divine ends and purposes.

Plato's cave

Without doubt, however, it is Aristotle's own great teacher Plato – arguably the founding founder of western analytical philosophy – whose work is most deeply inspired, albeit no less critically, by pagan gnostic and other narratives of human enlightenment and liberation via acquisition

of an essentially divine knowledge. As memorably imagined by Plato's *cave* allegory (Plato, 1961b), the human condition is one of dismal entrapment in a 'sensible' realm of empirical appearance or sense experience which is also thereby a world of ignorance, delusion and vanity. The attachments that human agents form on the basis of sight, hearing and touch – and the affections that such senses engender – are almost wholly deluded and sources of misconduct, wickedness and/or misery. The only means of escape from the cave of ignorance and delusion is via the right use of *reason* that enables access to the 'intelligible' world of real knowledge. It is just such truth-seeking use of reason that Plato – much influenced by his own great teacher Socrates – sought to clarify and cultivate. However, there is a significant sense in which the reason that enables knowledge – as well as the intelligible world to which such knowledge gives access – is for Plato *not of this world*. Again, for Plato, human agents are not wholly of the natural or material order to which other animals and plants belong, but are positioned between two significantly different worlds: while one of these may be experienced by the senses, the other can be accessed only via cultivation of an empirically transcendent form of knowledge or wisdom.

Indeed, Plato's distinction between these two worlds rests primarily on argument to the effect that sense experience cannot account for the rational powers that knowledge requires. It is also important to see that while this dichotomy or dualism is clearly at odds with any modern natural epistemology, Plato gives powerful *arguments* for it which have been essentially restated in more recent days (see, for example, Geach, 1957). The key point turns on the distinctive human capacity for *conceptualization* which requires the use of general terms or *universals*. To have knowledge of anything requires its precise individuation via attribution of general features: so, for example, we see a particular ball as red, round and bouncy. But if it is now asked *how* we come to possess such individuating terms or universals, the standard empirical answer is that we come by the concept of 'red' by noticing lots of red things, the concept 'round' by noticing many circular things, and so forth. The basic – fundamentally Platonic – response to any such explanation, however, is to ask how we

might come to recognise lots of red or round things if we do not *already* possess the concepts of redness and roundness: in short, any account of concept acquisition in terms of abstraction from sense experience seems to beg the crucial epistemic question and to put the empirical cart before the conceptual horse.

One should also appreciate the true nature of this point. The point is not that only human agents rather than non-human animals can respond in a consistent way to regular or recurring features of the world or environment: it is clear enough that non-human creatures can also do this. Evidently, predators need to be able to notice members of a particular edible species in order to prey on them and birds or reptiles need to recognise specimens of this or that poisonous plant or insect in order to avoid demise. But such habits of attention are well explained in terms of the selective mechanisms of evolutionary theory or behavioural conditioning: thus, animals that fail to develop such habits of prey-identification or avoidance of poisonous plants will not survive to reproduce the offspring that do possess such survival-conducive characteristics. However, it is one thing to say that natural selection or habituation enables such creatures to accomplish this and quite another to credit them – as one may of human agents – with *knowing* that this is what they are doing. The point is that they do *not* know what they are doing – since, in order to know this, they would require the concepts that are (as one modern writer eloquently puts it) 'presupposed to and exercised in acts of judgement' (Geach, 1957, p. 11) and which are also liable to evaluation as true or false or appreciative of value or disvalue.

To be sure, latter day philosophers and social scientists are now largely agreed that the vehicle of such knowledge-sustaining judgements is not some invisible spiritual entity, but a capacity for describing and evaluating the world that is enabled through the possession and exercise of some human language. In this light, it might now be said that such language acquisition is quite susceptible of natural scientific explanation and enquiry and might even be regarded as just more sophisticated development of the primitive non-human languages of birds or dolphins. But this is evidently mere evasion, insofar as the complex syntax and

semantics of even the most primitive human language is clearly differ-
ent, not only in degree but in kind, from the naturally conditioned grunt-
ing, howling or whistling whereby one non-human (and non-linguistic)
creature warns another or the presence of danger. Once again, the epis-
temic horse needs putting before the cart. For it seems hardly more plau-
sible to suppose that human agents acquire conceptual capacities by
coming to express them through language than that they are enabled
to acquire language by their possession of the conceptual capacities nec-
essary for knowledge of the world. In short, following Plato (and others),
it seems plausible to suppose that there are mental human powers – ca-
pacities for reason and knowledge – that are not readily conducive to
empirical scientific explanation.

In the beginning was the word

As no doubt familiar to most of educated Christian heritage, the New
Testament Gospel of St. John opens with the words: 'In the beginning was
the word and the word was with God and the word was God'. In this trans-
lation of a first century text, 'Word' (from now on capitalised) is English
rendering of the original Greek *logos*. While it is not easy to give any very
precise modern definition of *logos*, its philosophical and theological sig-
nificance in the Greek intellectual culture surrounding authorship of the
Gospels can hardly be overestimated. Amongst other senses, the term
logos has connotations of reason, discourse, opinion, logic, meaning, ex-
planation, account, justification and/or ground and it features as a promi-
nent philosophical idea at least from Heraclitus for whom it seems to have
signified the rationally ordering power of knowledge. However, the idea
assumes enormous significance in the context of Platonic, neo-Platonic,
Stoic and both pagan and Christian gnostic thought and St John's narra-
tive is often referred to as the 'gnostic gospel', by contrast with the other
so-called synoptic gospels. Again, while these diverse ancient philo-
sophical traditions and theological schools tend to rather different ac-
counts of the cosmic significance and role of *logos* as Word, it seems

broadly conceived as a metaphysical bridge between the divine world of soul or spirit and the more natural or material context of human affairs and operations: roughly, it may be construed as the animating power of the otherwise inanimate nature wherein human mind and agency is otherwise situated.

Again, as previously indicated, it is Plato (1961b) who provides the most compelling account – no less influential on subsequent secular than on religious thought – of this metaphysically complex and conflicted human predicament. As noticed, Plato's striking cave allegory depicts human experience and agency as enthralled to inherently vain, foolish and delusive feelings and desires from which there can be no escape except by rational deployment of those powers of human reason that enable access to a higher state of unclouded knowledge and understanding. This vision of moral and spiritual liberation as ultimate intellectual disengagement from 'sensible' experience echoes down the ages in the works of philosophers, theologians and artists. In more modern secular contexts, for example, it is evident in the comic revisioning of heaven and hell of the Irish dramatist George Bernard Shaw in his *Man and Superman* (Shaw 1934) and it informs the more explicitly Platonic ethics of the twentieth century Anglo-Irish philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch (1970; 2003). But the influence of such Platonism is no less evident on Christianity from the earliest Greek composition (cultural no less than linguistic) of New Testament books to much later Christian theology. Thus, when the Christ of St. John's gospel responds to Pilate that that he comes to testify to the truth of a kingdom that is not of this world, or St. Paul writes in *I Corinthians* that now we see through a darkened glass, but shall see truly in heaven, it is hard to gainsay the influence on such texts of Platonism in general, if not of Plato's *Republic* in particular.

At all events, the Word that is the divine source of all things and in terms of which human affairs may aspire to ultimate meaning seems mainly liable for appraisal in terms of its *truth* – indeed, of a truth that may be hard to discern in the mundane realm of sense or sensible experience. To be sure, it seems to be in this spirit that Pilate – a prince of this world – famously replies to Jesus 'What is truth?' Here, to be sure, we

need not take Pilate to be voicing the sort of radical epistemic scepticism about the very possibility of objective knowledge that has troubled philosophers from ancient to modern times (from Protagoras to post-modernism) – and which was also effectively refuted by Plato in his dialogue *Theaetetus* (Plato, 1961c). On the contrary, it seems more likely that Pilate was despairing over the possibility of any normatively higher wisdom or knowledge whereby he or other human agents might live ultimately meaningful, purposeful or worthwhile lives. In short, Pilates' doubt seems to have been more *moral* or *spiritual* than epistemic: to be, precisely, a question of the kind that the enquiries of Socrates and his great pupil Plato sought to answer.

Unworldly knowledge and truth

Indeed, the New Testament abounds with judgements that seem to be moral – or, perhaps more precisely, *spiritual* – truths of this kind: one might cite as examples: 'For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'; 'Man shall not live on bread alone'; 'Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends'; 'No man can serve two masters'; 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's' and 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof'. Still, in what sense – if any – might these be regarded as actual *truths*? Aside from the point that contemporary philosophers remain divided as to whether *any* moral judgement may be regarded as expressing evidence-based truth (more than, say, social rule or subjective preference), it is far from clear that such statements are of equal logical status. Indeed, it might be claimed that some of these – those concerned with rendering unto Caesar, the impossibility of serving several masters or not worrying un-duly about one's troubles – have, notwithstanding any need for some contextual interpretation, little more than the vague sense of such (English) proverbs as 'a stitch in time saves nine', 'he who hesitates is lost' or 'it's an ill wind that blows no-one any good'. While it may be hard to serve two masters, servants will have done this this; it might not always be right

to render unto Caesar; one may well be lost (especially in traffic) by not hesitating; and some ill winds blow *no-one* any good. Again, the notion that love entails laying down one's life for one's friends – meaning, no doubt, that true love is selfless – looks more like a prescription or definition: one, moreover, that is arguably definitive of only *one* sort of love – and which may therefore be contestable as a general recipe for a successful or well-rounded life.

That said, judgements that there is more to life than bread and that world domination is not worth the loss of one's soul, particularly on a Platonic, neo-Platonic or Christian notion of soul as the site of *logos* as Word, may well have more moral and spiritual – if not actual epistemic – content or substance. Thus, we may well recognise not only difference but actual *conflict* between the world over which Governor Pilate has jurisdiction and that wherein Jesus and his teachings have authority. Indeed, such difference may well be interpreted or appreciated, as the gospel itself indicates, in *epistemic* terms: Jesus has access to a *knowledge* or truth that Pilate lacks. But such higher wisdom or knowledge may also be accessible via escape from Plato's cave – though the cave image may need purging of some possible misconception. For, just as escape from the sunless cave to the sunlit surface is clearly not meant as *literal* movement from one spatial location to another, so one need not take ascent from the sensible to the intelligible to involve any ontological or post-mortal shift from embodied to disembodied cognition. Souls liberated from the cave continue to inhabit the same world as their unliberated fellows: it is rather that they now see more truly and honestly what they formerly saw through the distortive influences of vanity, avarice and self-interest.

Again, of course, we meet much the same point in the Hellenized (if not actually Platonized) teaching of *1 Corinthians* that whereas we see presently as through a darkened glass, we shall then see clearly or as face to face – which also, unsurprisingly, exhibits much the same ambiguity as Plato's cave allegory. Thus, while the connective 'then' in *Corinthians*, may be interpreted either metaphysically or ontologically to mean beyond death or in heaven, it may also be read more epistemically in the sense of after one has heard and understood the Christian message. At all events,

what one may expect to grasp under either Platonic or Christian inter-
pretation – whether out of the cave or in the Kingdom of God – is a truth
by light of which one's previous perceptions appear now false or wanting.
Still, is any of this less obscure or more illuminating in *Corinthians* than in
Plato's myth of the cave? In what terms, or by what light – other than di-
vine revelation – may Christ's Word or knowledge be judged epistemi-
cally, morally or spiritually truer than that of Pilate or other princes of the
world? Again, however, while the case to which we now turn may fall
short of what is needed to support full Christian faith, the essence of
a satisfactory answer to this question is clearly to be found in the writ-
ings of Plato.

The health of the soul in Plato's *Gorgias*

Plato's dialogue *Gorgias* (Plato, 1962a) focuses primarily on Socrates'
refutation of a bold conceit of the ancient Greek sophists concerning
rhetoric or the art of persuasion. The sophists were professional educators
who made a lucrative living teaching rhetoric to the (male) offspring of
Athenian well-to-do for deployment in the emerging climate of Athe-
nian democracy wherein authority and influence depended upon per-
suasion of others to one's own interests in democratic assemblies.
Moreover, such use of rhetoric rested upon a more basic utilitarian and/or
hedonistic assumption that the highest form of happiness or flourishing
depends upon the satisfaction of deepest human desires. In much this
spirit, the Gorgias of Plato's dialogue praises rhetoric as the very highest
and most rewarding of human arts or skills. However, whilst Plato de-
picts Gorgias as a person of some moral character and integrity, it is soon
clear from other participants in the dialogue that the uses of rhetoric are
open to morally darker and more cynical advocacy in terms of naked
self-interest, self-advancement and ruthless will to power. Indeed, on
the premise that satisfying all one's natural desires is more or less what
human happiness and flourishing means, Socrates' opponents argue that
even the most wicked and depraved tyrants who get their way through

the oppression, abuse and exploitation of others have to be regarded as happy or flourishing.

However, to understand completely why Socrates considered such defence of wholesale human abuse to be morally objectionable – which, of course he did – one needs to appreciate his overall rational or epistemic objection to rhetoric. The key point is that the worth of rhetoric was measured not by the validity or truth of its arguments or conclusions – since successful rhetoric could be either invalid or false – but only by its effectiveness in persuading others to the rhetorician's interest. In this light, Socrates seeks to show that rhetoric cannot be considered a genuine art or skill, precisely insofar as arts and skills entail genuine *knowledge* directed towards the promotion of real human benefit. Thus, Socrates contrasts medicine and gymnastics – skills or arts grounded in knowledge of what is of real benefit to human well-being – with cosmetics and cookery, both bogus 'knacks' concerned only to flatter the palate or disguise the real state of human health. Still, such Socratic focus on the *epistemic* status of expertise alleged conducive to human flourishing has clear implications for any crude estimate of human success or flourishing in terms of brute satisfaction of personal appetites or desires. Indeed, Socrates' critique of rhetoric is based on a view of the health or good of the 'soul' that seems much at odds with modern post-Darwinian and other scientific sensibilities. Precisely, we are encouraged to observe a genuine difference between the life and conduct of human and non-human creatures that exalts the distinctive capacity for reason and knowledge of the former. This difference is charmingly illustrated in a fictitious exchange between a precocious child and her mother in a short story by the modern British novelist Sebastian Faulks:

> 'Shall I tell you why I'm not a monkey?
> 'If you must', said Fluvia.
> 'It's because a monkey doesn't know it's a monkey. A human being knows it's human. That's what sets us apart from every other animal on earth.' (Faulks, 2013, p. 120)

Likewise, for Socrates and Plato, such capacity for knowledge – of the world as such, but more particularly of oneself, one's own appetites and desires and one's relations with other knowing agents – raises human agency to a level that differs not just in degree but in kind from that of in-sects, rodents, sheep and even monkeys, even though such creatures may act in the world and be said either to flourish or decline. However, such epistemic capability has especial implications for the growth of *moral* virtue and conduct, since without it – and the responsibility for one's ac-tions that is entrained by it – there can be nothing much worth calling morality at all. In short, insofar as non-human brutes are epistemically de-ficient, they can have no moral aspirations to virtue, no responsibility for their actions and cannot be (other than figuratively) praised or blamed. By the same token, insofar as human epistemic engagement with the world is wanting in moral sensibility and responsibility, no human agent who thereby falls short can be considered an exemplary specimen of hu-mankind or to be living as a full human agent.

It is from this basic position that Socrates mounts his objection to the idea of the flourishing or 'happy' tyrant. Indeed, a key move in Socrates' argument is to question whether the unjust and cruel tyrant who is driven by insatiable appetites is – insofar as what is distinctive about human agency is that it should be responsive to well-grounded reasons – acting as a mature human agent at all. For while non-human brutes may certainly act freely or voluntarily – insofar as they are not sub-ject to external constraints – their freedom does not follow from rational choice or decision and is wholly determined by natural instincts, ap-petites or drives. In this regard, a brute will gorge until sated and gorge when hungry again – and one can hardly suppose that a lion or crocodile might plan its meals to save the tasty bits for later. Indeed, Socrates takes the insatiable craving of the tyrant for ever fresh thrills and pleasures to be compulsive conduct of precisely this sort, comparing those so driven to 'leaky buckets' needing constant refill. Insofar as agents are behaving in this compulsive way, they are not acting with the rational discernment and responsibility that distinguishes the agency of genuine human soul. Thus, for Socrates, the very idea of a 'happy' or flourishing tyrant is barely

intelligible. For it is not only that the wicked tyrant acts unjustly – which, of course he does – but that in acting without knowledge he acts below the level of anything that might be considered distinctive *human* flourishing. Since even self-interest is unlikely to be served by conduct entirely regardless of the need for basic self-control or some regard for others, it would seem to fall well short of successful or 'happy' in any significant sense.

In this spirit, Socrates argues that if the wicked tyrant or other agent really grasped or knew the consequences of the actions to which his ill-advised desires and appetites drive him, he would not perform them. Once again, the problem of the wicked – and the moral failure consequent upon this – is essentially *epistemic*: they lack the knowledge or wisdom that is required for – or, for Socrates, virtually identical with – the moral or other virtue of true human excellence. No human agents who are ignorant or lacking in wisdom in this way can possibly be regarded as flourishing, and they should not be regarded as such even if they consider themselves to be so: precisely, it cannot profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul. Consequently, Socrates insists that the wicked are better off exposed and punished for their crimes than by getting away with them (indeed, if more tongue in cheek, that if one really wants to harm one's enemies, one would let them go unpunished). Macbeth strays from the path of virtue in thrall to vain and false ambitions – which also, significantly, lead to his downfall and death. But it might have been better for the soul of Macbeth to have been taken alive, to have undergone 'correction' and therefore atoned for his crimes.

Word, soul and education

As previously noted, while the arguments of *Gorgias* may fall well short of Gospel visions of divine grace or salvation, there are nevertheless evident moral correspondences between the Platonic and Christian views. Moreover, as indicated in the prefatory quote to this essay, the great twentieth century poet T. S. Eliot – in a footnote to critique of modern

humanism from a specifically Anglo-Catholic perspective – observes that pagan Greek philosophers were largely at one with later Christians in regarding Word or *logos* as a matter of human participation in the divine. This seems fundamentally right, especially with regard to Platonic and neo-Platonic thought, and is just as we might or should expect given the cultural and theological influence of such thought on the Gospels and early Christianity. For such pagan Greeks and Christians, the divine *logos* or Word from and by which healthy human (allegedly immortal) soul is formed and informed is essentially that which bears witness to the kind of truth to which Christ testifies and whereof Pilate is sceptical. Moreover, while such truth may appear to require some 'transcendental' access – for Platonists, to the intelligible realm of ideal forms, or for Christians to some heavenly destination or to the mind of God – it is evidently liable to less controversial epistemic interpretation as freedom from the Platonic cave of false vanity and self-concern. It is precisely in the worldly cave of delusional sensible or sensual experience that one sees through the glass of *Corinthians* only darkly, so that some emancipation from the web of ignorance, prejudice and egoism to which natural or socially conditioned humanity is inevitably heir is quite indispensable to any grasp of those Platonic or Christian moral and spiritual truths required for the good of the soul. In short, good Word is that which best conduces to truth – as well as to just and unprejudiced regard and concern for others as the due concomitant of truth – and bad word is that which blinds the soul to such truth. Moreover, it is upon such truthful word that the best modern accounts of education – particularly of liberal education – have focused.

So, what of no word or word of other varieties? Plain folk occupy much of their lives with office or shop-floor gossip and trivial entertainment. Still, so long as this is good-natured or well-intentioned and not malicious (bad Word) – this may be of little or no consequence and even be socially beneficial. It is also true that if humankind cannot live by bread alone, it equally cannot live entirely without it. In this light, there are many kinds of knowledge of human benefit, by no means all of which are primarily focused upon direct discernment of the sort of wisdom

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engendered by good Word. While, as we have seen, there are arts or skills – such as rhetoric – that are potentially hazardous in the service of morally suspect ends, there are clearly other forms of practical knowledge of much value for human survival, progress and culture that young and not so young need to be taught in schools or other educational contexts for flourishing lives or for the benefit of their societies. But while such forms of art and skill are often of enormous human value or consequence, it should not be forgotten that the human worth of such knowledge and skills is ultimately dependent upon their fidelity or service to good Word. Thus, ever mindful of the misuse of rhetoric by political demagogues, we also need to be alert to possible subordination of the potentially valuable knowledge and skills of science or art to the service of this or that adverse end of vicious exploitation, persecution or environmental degradation. So while many in today's world, like Pilate in the Gospels, may insist that the divine Word or wisdom valued by the Greeks, and/or that Jesus sought to teach, is of less consequence than the arts and skills of worldly advantage and profit, it may well be – at a time as variously hazardous and threatened as the present – that any further worthwhile human future may crucially depend on due regard for the less worldly truth of good Word.

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Las estaciones de Cy Twombly, a la luz de Renoir [Cy Twombly's seasons, in the shadow of Renoir]

Abstract

The iconographical analysis of *Four seasons* (1993), by the contemporary artist Edwin Parker "Cy" Twombly (Cy Twombly, 1928–2011) must be understood considering the importance of one of the most famous impressionist painters: Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–919). *La vague* (1879) and *Paysage bords de Seine* (1879) are two oil on canvas where Renoir prints the feeling of captivating the ephemeral through the colour and the movement of light. *Four seasons* has its roots in American lyrical abstraction. The need of making a portrait of lightness, through a creation where image and text are together, represents the evolution of Renoir's work in contemporary art. As an impressionist artist, Renoir describes beauty as the reflection of the harmony of the world, as such as a bridge between aesthetic and emotional education. With this proposal, Cy Twombly sublimates the idea of beauty in contemporary art.

*Keywords***:** abstraction, American, Cy Twombly, *Femme à l'ombrelle*, Four *seasons*, impressionist, *La vague*, lyrical, *Paysage bords de Seine*, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *The couronation of Sesostris*.

Abstract

El análisis iconográfico de *Four seasons* (1993), obra del artista contemporáneo Edwin Parker "Cy" Twombly (Cy Twombly, 1928–2011) debe ser realizado a la luz del sello impreso por uno de los mayores artistas impresionistas. Se trata de Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919). *La vague* (1879), así como *Paysage bords de Seine* (1879), son dos lienzos de Renoir que plasman la necesidad de captar lo efímero, a través del color y del movimiento de la luz. *Four seasons* destila la esencia de la abstracción lírica americana, como tendencia artística contemporánea. De esta forma, la necesidad de sublimar la delicadeza, a través de una creación donde residen imagen y texto, representa la reverberación del eco *renoiriano* en el arte contemporáneo.

En tanto que artista impresionista, Renoir representa la belleza como reflejo de la armonía del mundo, y también como motor de unión entre la recepción estética y la educación emocional. Con este mismo propósito, Cy Twombly retrata la belleza en una creación perteneciente al arte contemporáneo, cargada de lirismo.

*Palabras clave***:** abstracción, americana, Cy Twombly, *Four seasons*, impresionista, *La vague*, lírico, *Paysage bords de Seine*, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *The couronation of Sesostris*.

Iantroducción

Pierre-Auguste Renoir (Limoges, 1841 — Cagnes-sur-Mer, 1919) es actualmente conocido en tanto que artista controvertido dentro del círculo impresionista. Amante del detalle y captador de la explosión cromática, este creador, consagrado a las escenas vinculadas con la feminización, con la naturaleza y con la infancia, integra el movimiento impresionista durante gran parte de su vida. Iniciar la técnica en el taller de Gleyre conducirá a Renoir a viajar hasta lo más profundo del corazón de la creación plástica y escultórica, una doble vocación que el artista no abandonará hasta el final de sus días. A pesar de su atroz enfermedad física, Renoir creará sin cesar, en su acogedora casa de la Costa Azul (actualmente, el Museo Renoir), donde pasará los últimos años de su vida.

En cuanto a la principal razón que justifica la dicotomía reflejada por la obra pictórica de Renoir, cabe mencionar la falta de implicación sociopolítica. Renoir no representará nunca ningún tema vinculado con la Primera Guerra Mundial, evento que baña su contexto sociohistórico. Por otra parte, tampoco mostrará interés en ninguno de los propósitos del Salón, donde sus obras serán rechazadas en varias ocasiones. A pesar de esta falta de implicación política y social en cuanto a su entorno más cercano, este artista se mostrará extremadamente sensible ante el detalle y ante todo lo que le rodea. La belleza de los pequeños placeres (el amor, la amistad, el juego infantil) y la reivindicación de la armonía del mundo transformarán su obra en un himno a la vida y al color de sus días.

Este artículo se basa en un análisis de la obra *Four seasons*, del artista americano Edwin Parker "Cy" Twombly (Cy Twombly, 1928–2011), a la luz de dos obras, también pictóricas, de Renoir (*La vague*, 1879; *Paysage bords de Seine*, 1879). Las similitudes entre las temáticas de estas obras, así como el vínculo existente entre las formas de representar el acercamiento a la naturaleza y a la poeticidad de las formas, revelan las trazas del movimiento impresionista en la abstracción lírica americana.

Imagen 1
***La vague* (1879)**
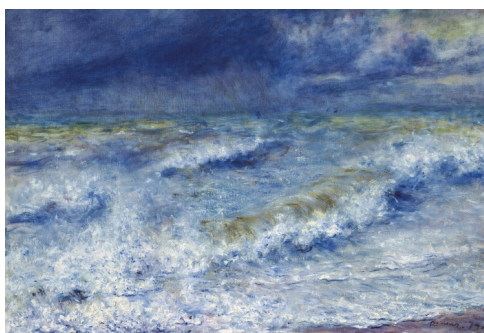
Note: Renoir 1879, *La vague*. Pintura. Óleo sobre lienzo. Localización actual: Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago (Estados Unidos), Bourdos, G. (2013). *Renoir*. Francia : Fidélité Productions

La vague es una obra realizada en1879, por Pierre-Auguste Renoir. Durante los años 1869–1879, Renoir imprime su sello como impresionista.

Sin embargo, este controvertido artista no dejará de evolucionar, desde un prisma estrictamente técnico. Por ello, la exploración de varias etapas, entre las que cabe mencionar la etapa ingresca (Rivière, 1921, 18) define la esencia de su obra. Asimismo, la obra pictórica de Renoir es un trabajo en constante evolución, como creación impresionista, como creación desvinculada del mismo movimiento y en tanto que obra que prefigura investigaciones de carácter lírico.

Respecto a la eclosión del lirismo aquí descrito, ésta yace en el corazón de lo sutil, pues consiste en el frágil detalle que baña la totalidad de las escenas de Renoir. En cuanto al nacimiento de la poesía visual dentro del campo iconográfico contemporáneo, no se puede soslayar la relevancia del concepto "*word painting*", que Ruskin integra en su descripción de la representación de la pintura a través de las palabras (Camplin y Ranaura, 2018, 54).

La ola que enciende el escenario de *La vague* es blanca, debido a su espuma. La impregnan tonalidades verdes. Se balancea natural y lentamente, abrazando el cielo y el horizonte. Este último es casi invisible. Al columpiarse, atormenta una nube en el cielo: impone su cuerpo ante la misma. Por consiguiente, cielo y ola se funden en un mismo espacio que parece reducirse a lo esencial. *La vague* rinde homenaje a la profundidad del océano y de la naturaleza que acompaña al mismo. Danza al compás del cielo, mientras el cielo parece acomodarse al ritmo de la ola. En esta escena presiden los colores, el sutil movimiento de la naturaleza y las impresiones táctiles vinculadas con el algodón, con la efímera naturaleza de la espuma y con el tacto pegajoso de las algas.

Esta obra pictórica consiste en la celebración del baile de los elementos del mundo natural. De esta manera, reivindica la armonía del mundo a través del agua, como espacio inmenso donde nada deja rastro. Las olas, como símbolo de la ausencia de huella, remiten también al mágico espacio purificador donde la libertad y el peligro se fusionan, igual que el cielo y el horizonte: el mar.

Imagen 2
***Paysage bords de Seine* (1879)**

Note. Renoir 1879, *Paysage bords de Seine*. Pintura. Óleo sobre lienzo. Localización actual: Baltimore Museum of Art (Estados Unidos). Bourdos, G. (2013). *Renoir*. Francia : Fidélité Productions

Paysage bords de Seine es una obra pictórica también perteneciente a Renoir, realizada en 1879. Aquí, la delicadeza parece tener sus orígenes en el corazón del "*word painting*". Este concepto, acuñado en el ámbito de la recepción estética de la obra de Cy Twombly (quien, a su vez, bebe de la tradición impresionista) justifica la amalgama entre imagen y texto, en una misma obra donde se sublima lo poético a través del relato iconográfico.

En *La beauté malade*, Lawrence critica la falta de sentido de la poética visual en el mundo contemporáneo. Sin embargo, y contrariamente a las preceptivas de este autor, son varios los intelectuales que aprecian el "auténtico sentido del arte visual" de los artistas americanos contemporáneos (Lawrence, 2017, 7; Distel, 1993, 140). Respecto a este último razonamiento, éste es motor de la defensa de la recepción estética de la obra plástica norteamericana creada en la actualidad, a la luz de la admiración que sus autores manifiestan hacia el movimiento impresionista. En cuanto a los orígenes de esta tendencia, es necesario recalcar el rol de Albert C. Barnes. Barnes simboliza la voluntad de procurar una educación artística transversal e integradora. A través de la fundación *The Barnes Foundation* (una institución educativa de carácter internacional, fundada en Filadelfía y vigente hasta el día de hoy), el sueño de este erudito se convierte en una realidad, que dejará sus trazas en la educación artística.

Particularmente, la íntima orden de Barnes, consistente en educar en la belleza a través del arte, está descrita por Distel, como motivación pedagógica y ética que debe comprenderse como lo más alto del laúd intelectual de Barnes:

Outre-Atlantique, dans la banlieue de Philadelphie, à Merion, un *self-made man* qui a fait fortune grâce à la commercialisation d'un puissant antiseptique, l'Argyrol, le docteur Albert C. Barnes (1872–1951), a commencé une collection de tableaux en 1912. Conseillé par un ami peintre, l'Américain Glackens, et par un connaisseur averti, Leo Stein qui, avec sa sœur Gertrude et son frère Michael, est un des premiers amateurs de Picasso et de Matisse, le docteur Barnes achète, lors de ses voyages à Paris, des œuvres impressionnistes et post-impressionnistes, notamment de Renoir et de Cézanne, ainsi que de Matisse, Picasso, Soutine et Modigliani. (Distel, 1993, 124)

Al igual que otros artistas impresionistas, Renoir centra su creación en la figura femenina, en la infancia y, particularmente, en los pequeños placeres de la vida. Su sensibilidad ante el detalle le convierte en el maestro impresionista que representa, con más brío y color, la belleza que baña el aroma del día a día. Renoir es, en efecto, el artista impresionista que capta pequeñeces con mayor sentido estético (Quintas, 2016, 24). Sin embargo, el valor de su creación no es apreciado por parte de todos los críticos de su contexto histórico. Harán falta numerosas críticas de la obra de Renoir y rechazos del mismo artista en el Salón, para que el transcurso del siglo XX le convierta en el padre del color y en un referente simbólico, en cuanto a la capacidad de plasmar emociones a través de escenas íntimas y sumamente detalladas. En virtud de la tardía justicia poética que se le otorga, Renoir retrata la belleza a través de su obra pictórica. A su vez, el relato del movimiento impresionista de esta obra pictórica consiste en un motor imprescindible de la educación artística en la contemporaneidad. Tanto en instituciones educativas formales como informales, Renoir es hoy considerado el amante, por excelencia, de las bellas escenas.

Renoir es un creador de escenas que triunfan en un concierto sin uniformidad musical. Por una parte, su obra baila al ritmo *mezzo forte* de las preconizaciones estéticas de un sistema educativo basado en los pilares de la belleza. El ritmo *renoiriano* inscribe la educación en la belleza a través de una pintura de carácter frágil, reducida a lo esencial — el amor, la amistad, el paisaje. Por otra parte, narra historias que, a pesar de su etérea simplicidad, perduran en el tiempo. Así pues, la condición atemporal de estas historias les confiere un carácter *forte*. Esto supone una dicotomía entre la carencia de visibilidad del valor de la obra de Renoir en pleno siglo XIX y el carácter esencial de la misma, que perdura en el tiempo y le convierte hoy en maestro del detalle y del color.

La pintura de Renoir metaforiza el triunfo de la vida. Se trata de un abanico de pequeños placeres, transgresores respecto a los intereses de los pintores de su época. Para Renoir, la grandeza vital está en el detalle diario, fluctuante como la luz del sol. El gesto y la mirada de los personajes, las impresiones táctiles, el brillo de la piel y el erotismo que desprenden sus modelos, los colores de la ropa y del paisaje son esenciales en su pintura, pues construyen un mundo infinito a partir de una sensación pasajera. Las impresiones, como tales, no pueden ser comprendidas por todas las miradas críticas de su época. De forma contraria, actualmente se percibe su obra como creación llena de sensibilidad. El mundo *renoiriano* es, en la contemporaneidad, un universo que concebimos como bordado de luz, de color y de complicidades efímeras en el pasaje vital y, por consiguiente, eternas en el recuerdo. Renoir inflama sus obras de amor hacia las pequeñas cosas.

Paralelamente, la falta de implicación sociopolítica de Renoir es determinante en su obra. En primer lugar, este artista nunca muestra ninguna preocupación ante los intereses del Salón. Además, no representa temas civiles, ni episodios vinculados con la Primera Guerra Mundial. En su obra *Renoir*, Bourdos resalta la necesidad de reflejar la sensibilidad del artista, a través de una consciente y aguda distancia respecto a los acontecimientos históricos que bañan su época. Renoir no es un pintor politizado, es un artista que lee fábulas, que está obsesionado con la representación de la belleza femenina, que se deja seducir por el placer de

la naturaleza y que cree en la tenacidad y la perseverancia, dos virtudes que encuentra en el trabajo manual, al que se aferra hasta el último de sus días (Vollard, 2016, 131).

Si el homenaje a la naturaleza es recurrente en la obra de Renoir, es necesario mencionar la poeticidad de lo natural que caracteriza *Paysage bords de Seine*. En este lienzo horizontal, el agua se diluye en lo vegetal. El reflejo del agua, en un lago, rememora la fuerza de lo simbólico, por parte de los artistas que dejarán su impronta en la abstracción lírica. Distel representa a Barnes en tanto que uno de los grandes amateurs de Renoir. La abstracción lírica, como tendencia artística estadouni-dense, tiene sus raíces en algunas de las temáticas de Renoir. Dicha razón se debe a la admiración, pues ni Renoir, ni Cézanne dejan a Barnes indi-ferente. De hecho, este erudito crítico, quedará también conmovido por la obra de otros artistas no impresionistas, tales como Modigliani, Picasso y Soutine (Distel, 1993, 140).

Paysage bords de Seine muestra el reflejo de un paisaje floral en el agua. Amapolas, capullos, briznas de hierba, troncos y charcos impregnan esta escena de rojo carmesí, de amarillo, de verde, de marrón y de violá-ceo y magenta. También el blanco preside este paisaje, mientras que la transparencia del agua destella en lo efímero de lo policromático. Paral-lamente, la reafirmación de la paleta sobre la pintura es destacable. En esta obra, el dibujo parece quedar en un segundo plano. La forma pierde su envergadura, dando relieve a la esencia. Las briznas de hierba, las ramas y los troncos se desvanecen sutilmente, hasta (casi) invisibilizarse.

Paysage bords de Seine ofrece una amplia visión del mensaje *plena-rista*, como bandera propiamente impresionista: muestra la transforma-ción de la naturaleza, en función del viento, del movimiento de la luz. Representa también la mutación cromática del mundo vegetal y, por su-puesto, de las *impresiones* que éste despierta (Blanche 1919; Zola 1970).

Renoir explora formas simbólicas, que traban el retrato de un uni-verso emocional descifrable ("*Renoir est jovial: ça fait du bien au corps!*" (Lawrence, 2017, 31)) y, al mismo tiempo, inefable.

Entre los elementos que conforman las obras previamente analiza-das, la importancia del paisaje no debe eludirse. Este último puede ser

analizado en la obra de Edwin Parker "Cy" Twombly (conocido como Cy Twombly), a la luz de la fuerza con la que Renoir representa el mundo natural, en su creación plástica.

Cy Twombly (1928–2011) es un artista norteamericano, cuya obra plástica se empodera de la poeticidad de lo simple en el paisaje natural, un paisaje compuesto de siluetas florales y poesía. Su obra es la cuna de la poética visual, reflejada en el poema iconográfico contemporáneo.

Para los conocedores de las características *renoirianas*,[1] la sutilidad de los elementos representados, la captación de un instante, la importancia del paisaje y el trabajo exhaustivo de la exploración del color son elementos definitorios de la obra de Cy Towmbly. A su vez, éste muestra las influencias del sello que Renoir imprime en el campo pictórico. Las similitudes entre la obra de Renoir y la de Cy Twombly quedan reveladas mediante obras como *Femme à l'ombrelle*, realizada en 1875 por el maestro impresionista, o *The couronation of Sesostris* (2010), perteneciente al segundo artista aquí mencionado. En este último lienzo, un conjunto de flores de carácter multicolor construye una barca que nada en un cielo de tonalidad clara. La poetización del elemento natural se transforma, progresivamente, en protagonista de *The couronation of Sesostris*, así como de la obra pictórica *Femme à l'ombrelle*.

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[1] En *La couleur et la parole: les chemins de Paul Cézanne et de Martin Heidegger*, el color es descrito como ley de armonía, según Cézanne. Por consiguiente, las obras con características parecidas a las de Cézanne son descritas como «*cézanniennes*». De esta manera, el término *renoiriano*, acuñado a partir de esta distinción, es utilizado en este artículo, con el fin de hacer referencia a atributos y características de la obra de Renoir.

Imagen 3
Femme à l'ombrelle **(1875)**

Note. Renoir 1875, *Femme à l'ombrelle*. Pintura.Óleo sobre lienzo. Localización actual: Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (España). Bourdos, G. (2013). *Renoir*. Francia : Fidélité Productions

Imagen 4
The couronation of Sesostris

Note. Cy Twombly 2010, *The couronation of Sesostris*. Pintura. Óleo sobre lienzo. Localización actual: MoMA, Nueva York (Estados Unidos). Bourdos, G. (2013). *Renoir*. Francia : Fidélité Productions

Imagen 5
Four seasons **(1993)**

Note. Cy Twombly 1993, *Four seasons*. Pintura. Óleo sobre lienzo. Localización actual: MoMA, Nueva York
(Estados Unidos). Bourdos, G. (2013). *Renoir*. Francia : Fidélité Productions

Las cuatro estaciones, representadas en la obra de Cy Twombly (*Four seasons*) son emblema de la abstracción lírica americana. Estos cuatro cuadros imponen la monumentalidad de su cuerpo el MoMA. Representan la primavera, el verano, el otoño y el invierno.

Varias notas — sin cohesión, adecuación ni coherencia, ocupan un espacio en cada una de las estaciones. Están escritas en mayúsculas y minúsculas, indistintamente. Siguiendo el hilo de una de las notas personales de Renoir, donde se describe la fisionomía de una de sus modelos (« *taille: 1 mètre 69 cm, visage ovale, front ordinaire, yeux bruns, nez long, bouche grande, menton rond, cheveux [mot illisible], sourcils blonds* » ; (Distel, 1993, 34)), en las notas de *Four seasons* constan las cuatro estaciones, escritas en italiano y en lengua inglesa: « *Le Quatro Stagioni / Primavera / Verano / Autuno / Inverno / Four seasons / Autumn / Winter* ». Algunas de estas palabras están repetidas, mientras otras se alternan con otros términos, escritos como garabatos e incluso, ocasionalmente, de acuerdo con la estructura métrica de un poema.

En estos cuatro cuadros, la voz lírica inscribe mensajes escritos por medio de la pintura. Así pues, esta obra estacional recoge las características de un poema visual contemporáneo, en el que la armonía entre la palabra y la imagen se manifiesta. Aquí, la creación huye de toda expresión literaria.

En cuanto al dibujo de estos lienzos, está compuesto de manchas y flores. A su vez, éstas están logradas gracias a una paleta densa y amorfa, basada en la falta de delimitación del relieve en el dibujo de Renoir.

La primavera integra dos grandes manchas que parecen emular una media luna sonriente: son rojas y amarillas, y se encuentran en la parte superior de la obra. La pintura transciende estas figuras geométricas. En la parte inferior de esta primera composición estacional, se hallan violetas. Debajo de las mismas, una figura difícil de descifrar, debido a su imprecisión morfológica, impone la geografía de su cuerpo. Es roja y amarilla. Un largo poema ocupa la obra, desde la parte superior hasta la inferior, y de izquierda a derecha.

Seguidamente, en la obra de Cy Twombly se celebra el verano. Se trata de un sol brillante y amarillento, que proclama el imperio estival por medio de una mancha de pintura, basada en tres densos golpes de paleta. En la parte inferior de esta segunda obra, brillan dos figuras rojas. Hay palabras, de las cuales algunas pueden ser leídas con facilidad ("*Le Quatro Stagioni*" / "*Seasons*"). El mensaje de este texto es subliminal, al estar marcado por la poeticidad de la forma en la caligrafía y en lo pictórico. A pesar de ello, ni la falta de sentido gramatical y sintáctico, ni la traslación de palabras combinadas en inglés e italiano, impiden la eclosión de la poética visual aquí mencionada.

Los tonos violáceos de otoño transforman esta estación en período lleno de vitalidad. Estos rasgos contrastan con la tonalidad apagada y con la abrumada tristeza del otoño real. El otoño, para Cy Twombly, consiste en una renaciente primavera. Hay flores violetas, magenta, negras, azules y rojas, que ocupan un espacio redondeado por las formas. Se trata de violetas, de lavanda, de amapolas, de rosas, incluso de *arums* de color negro. Algunas palabras se esconden, medio dormidas, entre estas flores: "*Le Quatro stagionni / Autuno / Autumn*". Estos colores vivos, directamente vinculados con la feminidad y el poder social (Pastoureau y Simmonet, 2005, 107–121) convierten el otoño en un poema al que prosiguen tonalidades azules, amarillas y negras.

Finalmente, el invierno está formado por cinco formas geométricas azules. También lo ocupan dos círculos azules y amarillos. En la parte

derecha del margen inferior del lienzo, un largo poema inmortaliza el fin del año estacional.

Las cuatro estaciones escriben un gran poema sobre el paso del tiempo y lo efímero de la belleza, ofrecida por la naturaleza y por su carácter impermeable. *Four seasons* es un homenaje a las cuatro estaciones, pero también a la abstracción lírica. Se trata de una obra que realza la fuerza poética de la palabra y de la imagen, la simplicidad del color en su máxima explosión (lo que se convierte, sin duda, en un guiño a la "intensidad de vida extraordinaria", citada por Zola, en una crítica artística de Renoir (Zola, 1970, 282) y la vegetación. Es, sin duda, una obra que narra un discurso acerca de la belleza, natural y cambiante.

Cy Twombly, a la luz de Renoir

Los análisis iconográficos previamente presentados construyen un relato que justifica la proximidad entre la recepción literaria y la recepción estética. Además, este relato argumenta la necesidad humana de contar historias. Con la intención de describir el intrínseco deseo de recrear el mundo de Auguste Renoir, Edmond Renoir escribe:

[…] l'air pensif, songeur, sombre,
l'œil perdu, vous l'avez vu vingt fois
traverser en courant le boulevard
[…]
Il restera des heures sans bouger, sans
parler : où est son esprit ? Au tableau
qu'il fait ou au tableau qu'il va faire
[…]   (Renoir, E., 1879, 146).

En esta composición poética, el periodista Edmond Renoir hace un retrato del que ya el título indica la fuerza poética que caracteriza al mismo Renoir ("*Un frère, un courant d'air*"). Este retrato literario de Pierre-Auguste Renoir muestra cómo la misma creación del artista — es decir,

la historia pintada, juega un rol determinante en tanto que narración. Se trata de un relato que no debe ser únicamente considerado como narración artística, sino también como narración iconográfica. Toda creación humana cuenta una historia. El íntimo mandato de contar historias reposa en el corazón humano (Kazmierczak 2014). Del mismo modo, toda representación iconográfica sublima la educación estética y emocional.

De esta manera, educar en la belleza se convierte en el motor de la iconografía. Renoir enseña el sentido de la belleza al público a través del detalle. Como impresionista, se centra en la flor, en el golpe de viento que despierta una sonrisa discreta, en el cambio del color del sol. Un siglo más tarde, Cy Twombly sumerge la mirada crítica hacia lo más profundo de lo sublime. Su mensaje visual y poético — y, por consiguiente, literario y estético (en términos educativos), maquilla el blanco abstracto con el silencio de una naturaleza poetizada, también cambiante.

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"What is History is What is Illustrated": The Utilization and Function of Images in History Coursebooks in Poland and Britain[1]

Abstract

In a society which is increasingly visual, and with the teaching of history and critical thinking being important in an age of post-truth and fake news, the words of the Swedish poet Linn Hansén seem particularly apt: "what is history is what is illustrated". The images found in history coursebooks help learners to imagine the past, providing a visual aid to support learning, but they can also be used to foster critical thinking by treating the images as historical sources in themselves.

This paper presents the results of a pilot study on the functions of images in Polish and British history coursebooks using a proprietary paradigm based on existing scholarship in English Language Teaching. It shows that

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[1] The article takes its title from a line from Linn Hansén's powerful, yet playful poem, Gå till historien [Turn to History], a work that inspired the author to reflect upon this issue. For the insights and inspiration gleaned from this poem, the author is eternally grateful.

the pedagogical functions of images in history coursebooks vary greatly be-tween the two educational contexts. In Britain, images are typically treated as historical sources in themselves, whilst in Poland they typically perform more of a decorative function. The paper closes with a number of recom-mendations for further research and publishers of history coursebooks.

Keywords: visual culture, Polish & British educational contexts, history teaching, ELT, critical thinking

Introduction

Ever since the publication of John Comenius's *Orbis Sensualium Pictus (A World of Things Obvious to the Senses, drawn in Pictures)*, the power of images to support and foster learning has been well-known. In more re-cent times, this has only been compounded by the "visual turn" in the hu-manities and the growing awareness of the importance of visual literacy.

However, whilst the pedagogical functions of images have been con-sidered for the best part of four decades in English Language Teaching, it is an issue that has been relatively overlooked in other disciplines (Don-aghy & Xerri, 2017; Goldstein, 2016; Hill, 2003). In the teaching of history, aside from a pioneering study by King-Sears and her colleagues on im-ages in American history coursebooks, the issue has received almost no attention at all (King-Sears et al., 2018). King-Sears et al. indicated that images deployed in coursebooks for eighth graders were usually chosen well, but often failed to engage learners in critical thinking. Given that they can be a crucial aid in fostering both an understanding of and a re-sponse to history, this represents a considerable oversight on the part of publishers and editors of history coursebooks.

This pilot paper presents a study conducted on Polish and British his-tory coursebooks. Adopting the well-established research paradigms from English Language Teaching (ELT) and adapting them to the context of history textbooks, it explored the functions of their images in order to determine to what extent they may be considered pedagogical (i.e., supporting learning) and to what degree they merely serve a decorative

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purpose. Beginning with an overview of the research in the field of ELT, it first discusses why the pedagogical function of images is important and then outlines the author's own paradigm before applying it in practice. The paper ends with a number of conclusions and recommendations for authors and publishers of history textbooks.

The importance, utilization, and function of images in ELT coursebooks

We are undoubtedly living, as many scholars have indicated, in an increasingly visual age and culture (Duncum, 2001). The instructional value of images is far from new, however, having been used for educational purposes since at least the Middle Ages. As well as serving a decorative function, stained glass windows in Gothic churches were also used pedagogically by priests to explain and illustrate parables and biblical stories (Reynolds, 2013). Indeed, as Dussel notes, "medieval Christianity supported a tight relationship between texts and images, whether explicit—as in illuminated books—or implicit—as in monumental sculptures that referred to texts" (Dussel, 2013). Comenius, however, was perhaps the first educator to explicitly highlight the pedagogical importance of images in his *Orbis Sensualium Pictus (A World of Things Obvious to the Senses, drawn in Pictures)*.

The first major, explicit study of the functions of images in ELT coursebooks was conducted by Hill in 2003. He divided them into two intuitive categories, decorative and useful, concluding that the majority of images (55%) fell into the former (Hill, 2003). Romney, arguably the leading scholar in the field, conducted his first study in 2012. Drawing on a much older typology proposed by Levin in 1981, Romney formulated six functions for the images found in ELT coursebooks (Romney, 2012). Arguably because of the methodological assumptions he adopted, but also potentially because of the relatively limited corpus which he drew upon (only Japanese coursebooks), he found that only 18% should be considered as serving a solely decorative purpose.

A more recent study by the same author presented another typology, this time featuring three categories and four roles (Romney, 2019). In this case, images could be categorized as decorative, instructional, or supportive. This was supplemented by the further distinction of the roles that they could play in a coursebook, namely, decorative, weakly supportive, strongly supportive, or instructional. In his study, he determined the vast majority of images (82.4%) to be strongly supportive and instructional. He adopted the following workflow:

Figure 1

Image Categories and Roles
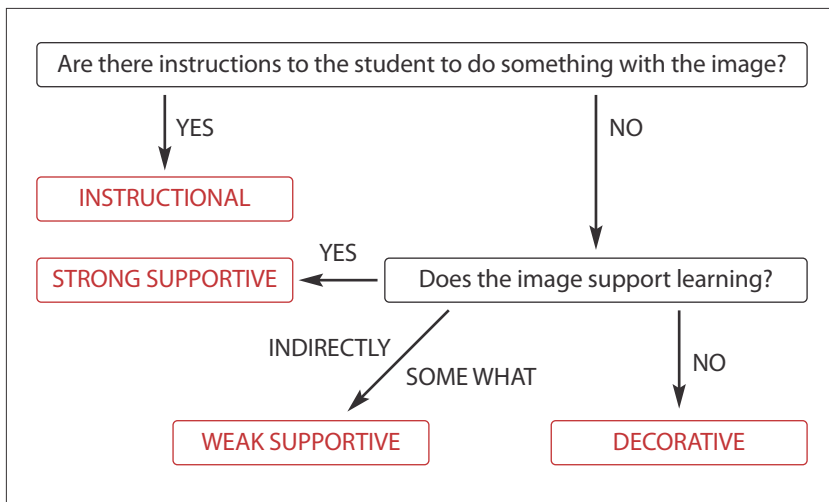
Note. (Romney, 2019)

It is unclear whether the disparity between the results of Hill in 2003 and Romney in 2019 represents the sea change that has occurred in the utilization of images in ELT coursebooks or that the different methodological assumptions of each study are responsible. Presumably, a repeat analysis of Hill's chosen coursebooks using Romney's methodology would be advantageous in this respect. However, that is not the purpose of this article, and the outline sketched above regarding ELT coursebooks was merely intended to show that the issue has received attention in the field.

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However, Romney's methodology requires some adaptation before it can be applied to history coursebooks. Firstly, it is necessary to determine whether the image is instructional or not, which is based on whether there are "instructions to the student to do something with the image". Whilst this is perfectly acceptable for an ELT model, given the vital role performed by images in communicative language teaching, those in history coursebooks play different semiotic and pedagogical functions. Another key drawback is the fuzziness of how to code the distinction between "strongly supportive" and "weakly supportive." Even an image with little supporting information could be exploited well to support learning in a classroom setting, and it is far from clear as to the difference between "strongly" and "weakly" supportive, since no criteria were given in the methodology.

Drawing on the insights and experiences of Hill, Romney, and King-Sears et al., this study includes its own proprietary paradigm, one more suited to analyzing history coursebooks. It should be stressed that this is formed around the pedagogical functions of images (i.e., how they can be exploited for teaching and learning) and is not an attempt to determine the semiotic functions of the images.

Methodology

Whilst Romney's 2019 study has much in its favor, I decided to formulate a slightly different methodology for analyzing history coursebooks. My method borrows the names of its categories from Callow's three dimensions of viewing: affective, compositional, and critical (Callow, 2005). Despite being indebted to Callow for the use of his terms, the sense in which he uses them is more rooted in the theory of visual literacy and semiotics, rather than pedagogy. As a result, the following categories and descriptions were established:

Affective – The image serves a primarily decorative or illustrative function, intended to arouse an esthetic response, making the text and work as a whole more attractive, but not explicitly meant to be exploited

when teaching, i.e., there is no explanatory text or context which is intended to support learning. For example, a modern illustration or picture of Henry VIII or Mieszko I, without any accompanying attribution, task, or explanation would be considered affective. Similarly, an unlabeled image representing a historical figure, even if it constitutes a historical source itself, would be considered affective if there is no information concerning the context of its composition or if none of its features are highlighted.

Compositional – The image is used to support learning or provide historical context, i.e., it illustrates or depicts something that accompanies a written explanation, or there is a broader context of the image's composition or features. For example, a painting of Henry VIII or Mieszko I by a contemporary of theirs—with a date of composition and/or other information—would be considered compositional. Similarly, an infographic of a castle, with different parts labelled and with explanatory text, would be classified as compositional. In contrast, an unlabeled, contemporary picture of a castle would be considered an affective image.

Critical – The image is accompanied by a task which requires the viewer to engage in critical thinking or analysis. For example, a painting of Henry VIII or Mieszko I by a contemporary, with a date of composition and/or other information, which requires the viewer to consider factors such as the manner of depiction or the artist's intention, or perhaps to make a comparison with the present day. Furthermore, any image which is accompanied by explicit instructions to reflect on it (whether in terms of its composition, context, or features) would lead to it being classified as critical.

The importance of critical images is based on Loewenstein's (2007) pioneering investigation into curiosity. He showed that heightened learner engagement and extended contributions are typically found wherever there is a gap of some kind between the participants which needs to be filled. Critical images, where students are asked to complete an information gap using the image and the information it contains, would thus be more stimulating and engaging for learners. Loewenstein identifies four main types of situations which may lead to the creation of an information gap:

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"1. The posing of a question or presentation of a riddle or puzzle"; "…. 2. Exposure to a sequence of events with an anticipated but unknown resolution"; …. " 3. The violation of expectations often triggers a search for an explanation"; …. "4. Possession of information by someone else also causes curiosity." (Loewenstein, 2007).

As other scholars have noted, the psychology of curiosity is a fascinating field and curiosity is likely to be engaged when a balance is struck between being too explicit or too vague (Kidd & Hayden, 2015). Therefore, it is assumed that critical images are more conducive to engaging learners and more likely to result in the kind of critical thinking that history requires.

Evidently, such categories are far from clear cut, and since this was a pilot study, no Romneyan style division into weakly or strongly supportive was ventured. To ensure consistency, the analysis was conducted three times on all works, with an average taken if there was a discrepancy in the numbers between the different counts.

Thus, counts of images in four history coursebooks (two Polish and two British) were conducted and the images were classified according to the three functions. Illustrations in titles, timelines, cartoon "guides," or accompanying characters were omitted from the count. In addition, maps were not included since a full consideration of their functioning merits a study in itself The decision to analyze coursebooks from two different educational contexts was motivated by the desire to avoid some of the limitations of previous ELT studies (e.g., Romney's was limited to the Japanese context) and to allow some, albeit limited, comparisons to be made between the two.

Therefore, the research task that was envisaged for the study, as depicted in Figure 2, was to classify images in four history textbooks as affective, compositional, or critical, in order to determine whether there have been changes over time (between the two British coursebooks, published in 1991 and 2019) and whether there are differences between educational contexts (Poland and Britain).

Figure 2
The research procedure used
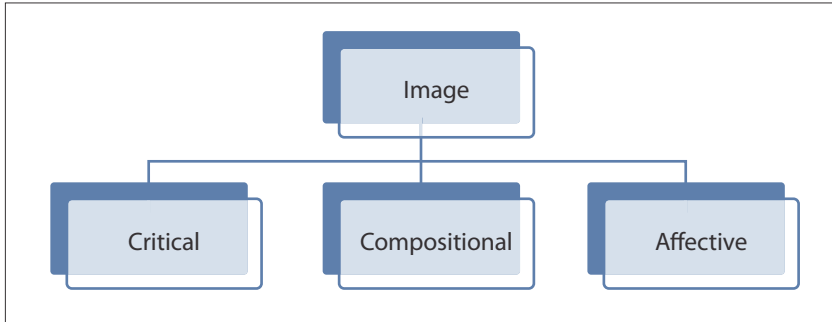
Pilot study

The following four coursebooks were chosen for the pilot study:

- Understanding History 1. Heinemann. (Child, Shuter, & Taylor, 1991)
- KS3 History 4th Edition: Invasion, Plague, and Murder: Britain 1066–1558. OUP. (Wilkes, 2019)
- Wczoraj i Dziś 5. Nowa Era. (Wojciechowski, 2018)
- Historia 5. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe. (Małkowski, 2018)

Three of them represent the most recent publications in the field. One—*Understanding History 1*—was first published 30 years ago and was selected for contrastive purposes. Despite differing in terms of the national focus, *Understanding History 1*, *Wczoraj i Dziś 5*, and *Historia 5* cover the same time period.

Table 1 contains the results of the case study, showing both total numbers and percentages for the three functions of images:

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Table 1

Count of Images According to the Three Functions

COURSEBOOK	IMAGES (TOTAL)	AVERAGE (PER PAGE)	AFFECTIVE	COMPOSITIONAL	CRITICAL
Understanding History 1	134	1.05	32 (24%)	15 (11%)	87 (65%)
Invasion, Plague, and Murder: Britain 1066–1558	155	0.71	78 (50%)	48 (31%)	29 (19%)
Wczoraj i Dziś 5	218	0.99	164 (75%)	54 (25%)	0
Historia 5	221	1.05	179(81%)	42(19%)	0

Some inferences can be made from the image analysis:

– There is a clear absence of critical images in Polish history books, de-spite the books being as visual or even more so than their British counterparts (i.e., they have the same number of images per page or more).
– Polish coursebooks use considerably more affective images than compositional ones.
– British coursebooks label and treat a significant percentage of im-ages as "sources," where students are encouraged to interpret them as part of the historical record. The absence of such labels and treat-ment in Polish coursebooks contributes to them being used more for decorative or affective purposes.
– There has been a reduction in the number of critical images in British coursebooks, and a rise in the use of compositional images.

A particularly illuminating example of the way in which images are utilized across the coursebooksis the reproduction of the Capitoline Wolf, which is featured in *Understanding History 1*, *Historia 5*, and *Wczoraj i Dziś 5*. Despite using photographs of the same sculpture, the three books treat the image in very different ways. *Wczoraj i Dziś 5* attaches to the image a textbox containing the following information:

The Capitoline Wolf is a sculpture which is a symbol of Rome. It takes its name from the Capitoline, one of the hills that Rome spread over. It is in the museum located there that one can admire this famous sculpture. The work presents a wolf feeding the twins, Romulus and Remus, who would later become the founders of the city. (Wojciechowski, 2018, p. 77)[2]

Historia 5, the other Polish coursebook, has the same image, accompanied by the following text: "A sculpture from the 5th century BCE showing the Capitoline Wolf (which is to be found in the museum on the Capitoline Hill in Rome). The figures of Romulus and Remus were only added in the 15th century" (Małkowski, 2018, p. 60).[3] Both of these uses were classified as compositional, since they provided context and information directly related to the image. However, students are not explicitly instructed to do anything with this knowledge or image. In contrast, *Understanding History 1* exploits the image in a very different way. As well as being accompanied by text—"A bronze statue of the she-wolf which looked after Romulus and Remus. It was made in the 6th century BCE"—the opposite page has the following task: "Study Source A [the image] and Source C. What do the sources tell us about the way Rome began?" (Child, Shuter, & Taylor, 1991, pp. 20–21).

This is a task which requires pupils to critically reflect on the statue and its symbolic role; it is the kind of task which accompanies as many as 65% of the images in this coursebook. The Loewenstein information gap created by the combination of text and image, the author believes, would help to foster curiosity and engagement in a way that the Polish coursebooks do not, despite being clearly superior in terms of picture quality and presentation.

As an interesting aside, all three coursebooks contain incorrect information in relation to the image itself. *Understanding History 1* presents the statue as having been cast in the 6th century BCE, whilst *Historia 5* cites

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2   Translated by the author.
3   Translated by the author.

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the more standard 5th century BCE ascription; *Wczoraj i Dziś 5* makes no reference. However, research conducted over 12 years ago confirmed that the statue was cast during the early Middle Ages, at some point in the 13th century (Hooper, 2008). Whilst this is forgivable in the case of *Understanding History* (since it was published in 1991), *Historia 5* was published 10 years *after* this fact became known. This is a considerable oversight on the part of the publishers and is particularly surprising given that both coursebooks passed through the extensive approval process conducted by the Ministry of Education in order to become official coursebooks.

Limitations of the study

Clearly, four coursebooks represents a relatively small sample, although the present study is intended as a pilot one to be developed over a larger corpus in the future. Three of the books cover exactly the same time period, but *Invasion, Plague, and Murder: Britain 1066–1558* only covers the latter one-third encompassed by the others. This may have influenced the results, but the comparison between the other three texts remains valid.

Conclusions and suggestions

There are clearly identifiable ways in which images are presented and exploited between Polish and British history coursebooks. Perhaps the most important one is that Polish history coursebooks typically treat images as something separate from the main body of text and not as historical sources in their own right. As a result, the images rarely contribute to the creation of an information gap as envisaged by Loewenstein and thus are not as engaging or likely to foster critical thinking as their British counterparts.

Whilst the Polish coursebooks are typically attractively laid out, colorful, and visual, the way in which they utilize images could and should

be altered in order to promote critical thinking. In subsequent editions, this could be done relatively simply by labelling the images as "sources" and by inserting an accompanying text box with a task to encourage students to use them in critically interpreting their content, context, and functions. In turn, this would undoubtedly help to make them a more engaging and useful resource for teaching the hypervisual learners of the 21st century.

Potential avenues for future research include using the paradigm adopted here to analyze other coursebooks used for teaching history, for example at the tertiary level, and repeating the study with a different set of coursebooks covering a different period of history. The latter would ensure that the use of images in the two contexts is not rooted in the particularities of teaching the period and age group in question.

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Italian Education's View of Cinema: From Suspicion to Media Education

Abstract

From the outset, the Italian educational system has been interested in the message of films and cinema's power of persuasion. Prior to the advent of television, it viewed cinema with suspicion for the alleged damage it caused to the minds of young people. Later, it would view cinema as a means of fascist ideological propaganda. From the 1920s onwards, schools would use cinema as a teaching aid through "educational cinema." Since 1960, schools have aimed to teach formal analysis and film content. On the threshold of the new millennium, the revolution in school autonomy obliged every

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educational institution to independently manage the financial resources allocated to them. This involved the arrival of external experts who were entrusted with media education: they were supported by an internal tutor while the school coordinated the professionals who specialized in cinema; meanwhile the subject teacher entered the Internet era with the innovation of the interactive whiteboard, assuming the role of multimedia author. Thus began the training of teachers within schools, who were registered on the national list of Visual Education Workers.

Keywords: Italian education, cinema, teaching, propaganda, cross-mediality, media education

Introduction

In Italy, recent regulations on cinema provide for training activities which—although they are not curricular or cross-cutting—are entrusted to specialized figures who manage projects in schools funded by public institutions. Today, cinema is included within Media Education and is central in the training of internal teaching staff. This has not always been the case.

Aims and method

This study examines the use of the cinema media channel in Italian schools, from fascism to the present day. Through theoretical analysis, the historical and socio-cultural context are analyzed and the cinema as an educational tool is examined. In addition, the evolution of the cinema and the way it is used in schools are investigated, as are the main legislative measures that have governed the use of cinema and media as an educational tool in Italian schools.

The suspicion towards cinema

The Italian cinema industry was born with the 20th century; from 1904 on, following the first projections in café concerts or accompanying circus or variety shows, the number of cinemas multiplied in cities to such an extent that by 1908 there were already 500 of them.

In 1907, the first Italian productions and distributions were created (Manetti, 2012). The first attention of the state towards this sector came from the President of the Council, Giovanni Giolitti, who with his May 15, 1907 Circular invited the Prefects to monitor productions that were offensive to good morals or that focused on spectacular deeds and tricks that caused fear or horror. This measure specifically referred to images of surgical or pornographic activities aimed at an adult public in large cities. In this way, the government came up against the enthusiasm towards cinema (Alovisio, 2015, 2019; Sacerdoti, 1910). Between 1913 and 1918, censorship would become even harsher (Guadagnini, 1918).

With Law 785 of June 25, 1913, the liberal state government, whose parliamentary president was Giolitti, centralized state censorship and subjected the sector to hefty taxation with the payment of 10 cents for each meter of film projected. The protests in the sector focused in particular on the consequences of this financial intervention. The progressive lengthening of films, which had developed the cinema, could now lead to a crisis.

The enormous spread of cinema halls led the government to replace the tax on film length with a ticket tax. However, this fiscal measure was adopted to satisfy well-meaning people who simultaneously judged cinema as potentially immoral and praised the superiority of the theater at a time when the public clearly preferred the cinema over the theater. In the 1914–1915 fiscal year alone, the tax on tickets sold in cinemas brought in over 2.12 million lire, while theatre and other show tickets yielded less than 90,000 lire (Manetti, 2012).

In short, in liberal pre-Fascist Italy, the cinema was considered more a source of tax revenues and of a concern over its moral influence than an area of educational opportunities.

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Propaganda cinema

With the advent of fascism in 1922, the Italian film industry found itself in disastrous financial conditions due to the high costs of the actors, who had become stars, and for the heavy taxation. Consequently, it suffered from competition from Hollywood productions, which, thanks to a favorable tax regime and the expansion of the domestic market, recovered their production costs even before being exported, and were thus able to be sold abroad at very competitive prices. For this reason, 20,000 workers in various sectors of the film industry, many of whom were famous actors, now found themselves in a state of misery and desperation.

However, Mussolini was a journalist and a school teacher, which meant that he was professionally capable of understanding the enormous potential of cinema. Firstly, he took measures to increase educational production. During Italian Fascism, cinema first became a teaching medium, with the foundation in 1924 of *L'Cinema Unione Educativa* (LUCE) (Laura, 2000). Even today, the LUCE Institute holds an educational archive which includes the series *Cineteca Scolastica* (School Film Library) with 37 titles.

During the Fascist era, the function of cinema, in addition to being educational, was also propagandistic. Of the more than 700 films produced by the LUCE Institute, 100 consisted of direct or indirect propaganda. Many of these films were screened outside and inside schools on the day the Fascist regime called *Fascist Saturday*, during which various activities took place to celebrate the regime, from gymnastic trials to parades of uniformed boys (Lentini, 2018). However, except in rare cases, schools did not have projectors in those days.

Thanks to the work of the LUCE Institute, Italy obtained important worldwide recognition for using the cinema for educational purposes. In fact, in 1928, the League of Nations approved Italy's proposal (outstripping France with a specific self-financed project) to create its International Educational Cinematography Institute (IECI) and establish its headquarters in Rome (Manetti, 2012, p. 58). Royal Decree 2025 of September 6,

1928 allocated a substantial annual budget to the IECI to cover all its costs, which were entirely borne by Italy. The IECI had a representative office in Frascati, in the province of Rome, where it hosted meetings and conferences. Furthermore, the IECI was responsible for creating the *International Review of Educational Cinematography*, which was published in Italian and translated into French, English, German, and Spanish.

However, the regime saw an opportunity to use cinema to endorse the cultural policy of fascism abroad in an "attempt by Mussolini to build an image of the Regime for external use that was capable of succeeding in the Anglo-Saxon world, but without falling outside the achievements of the socialist world" (Manetti, 2012, p. 59). Indeed, the regime looked upon the Soviet cinema model with extreme interest. Unlike the Hollywood model, the state wholly managed the economic aspect and the quality of the content. However, the Italian film industry and the Fascist regime had a common enemy in the commercial cinema of Hollywood, which both asphyxiated Italian production and transmitted a model of capitalist life that was unpopular with the regime (Frescani, 2012).

Another important initiative in favor of cinema was the creation of the Experimental Film Center in 1935, which was a true university of cinema based in Rome. One of the Center's initiatives was the creation of *Bianco e Nero* (*Black and White*), the first important film journal and one that is still published today. It no longer conveyed to the public the image of films as mere products of leisure, but of art. Moreover, between 1927 and 1942, 46 decrees were issued for the benefit of the film industry (Cardillo 1987; Venturini, 2012).

Undoubtedly, a gloomy image began to emerge from 1933 onwards, the year that witnessed the advent of Nazism in Germany and in which Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda minister, visited Rome and showed Mussolini the operation of the new Nazi Propaganda Ministry, which he headed. The already consolidated fascist attention to the potential of film found new inspiration through Goebbels's visit. Like the Nazi Ministry, Royal Decree 1434 of September 6, 1934 gave rise to the *State Undersecretariat for Press and Propaganda* in Italy; initially, it had three Directorates-General: *Italian Press*, *Foreign Press*, and *Propaganda*, to which, with Royal Decree

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1565 of September 18, 1934, a fourth was added—*Cinema*—headed by Luigi Freddi, who in his inaugural speech celebrated the rebirth of Italian cinema, stating "the state *frames*, the state *helps*, the state *rewards*, the state *controls*, the state *encourages*" (Manetti, 2012, p. 81). Propaganda and culture merged under the same perspective. Not surprisingly, during a debate in the Chamber of Deputies for the approval of the budget for the sector for the period July 1937 to May 30, 1938, the deputy Carlo Maria Maggi defined cinema as "the most powerful weapon" of ethical and political propaganda (Parliamentary Acts of the Chamber of Deputies, session Thursday, May 13, 1937, p. 3734).

Shortly thereafter, Giuseppe Bottai, on a partial collision course with the regime, in his role as Minister of National Education, founded with Royal Decree 1780 the Autonomous Film Library for School Cinematography, with the aim of equipping schools with projectors and specially produced or purchased films. The demolition of a school in Rome in 2002 recovered the entire heritage of the Film Library, which consisted of 12,000 copies of educational short films, 20,000 films, 15,000 volumes, slides, extensive correspondence on the administrative events of the School Film Library, 500 AGFA projectors, and other machinery for the projection and making of films which had been made available to schools during the final years of Fascism and which had been lost. All the rediscovered material is now kept in the Lucana Film Library, in Oppido Lucano, a small town in southern Italy (Durante, 2011; Pietrafesa, 2012).

The post-World War II period and educational cinema

In the mid-1940s, the educational system began to take an interest in cinema, and it did so without questioning the distinction between educational and commercial cinema. A number of articles by Luigi Volpicelli published between July 1948 and the end of 1949 in *Bianco e Nero* (Volpicelli, 1948 a; Volpicelli, 1948 b; Volpicelli, 1949 a; Volpicelli, 1949 b; Volpicelli, 1949 c) marked the beginning of the reflection on cinema and education in Italy, still basing it on the preconception that

everything which activates the imagination, the senses, and emotions did not have intellectual value and led young people towards uncritical acceptance of false values (Felini, 2015; Pierotti, 2013; Piromallo, & Gambardella, 1998).

At the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, Italian educators were somewhat wary about the use of film in educational work. They feared its hypnotic effect, also on the basis of their experience during fascism, which had promoted films with an explicit propagandist aim. Furthermore, the vast majority of educators believed that the study of the influence of spectacular cinema on young people was the responsibility of developmental psychologists and neuropsychiatrists (Rizzo, 2014).

In this context, the researcher Evelina Tarroni, investigating the use of cinemas by young people and their tastes in their choice of shows (Tarroni and Paderni, 1952), noted that "the perception of the film is greatly influenced by the personal experiences of individual spectators, and … these experiences to a large extent arouse the *interest* of the viewer in the film" (Tarroni, 1950, p. 28) and consequently expressed perplexity towards the prevailing conception of the effects of film. Later, Laporta (1957) would attribute the vulnerability of young people to cinema to be not a behavioral psychological passivity, but a defect of mature intelligence.

In classrooms, the narrow-mindedness towards spectacular cinema went hand-in-hand with the use of so-called educational cinema, which instead fell under the field of pedagogy as a tool in the hands of the teacher. The teaching of the positivist era used the "cine-aid" to replace direct experience with the representation of phenomena that were difficult to observe in person (Farnè, 2006). While commercial cinema was suspected of every harmful effect, the educational cinema validated by schools was trusted in the mistaken illusion that it represented a transparent means of communication offering up reality as it is. In this way, educational cinema – considered an honest reproducer of objective reality and not subjected to any esthetic value analysis – in fact ended up being more insidious in classrooms than commercial cinema (Farnè, 2002).

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The regulatory level of cinema education was in accordance with fascism. The Lamberti Law of May 11, 1950 granted "provisions in favor of popular and educational cinematography". Subsequently, the Segni Law of March 24, 1953 repealed the law that in 1938 had established the Autonomous Film Library for School Cinematography[1] and in turn established the National Center for School Audiovisual Subsidies and, at the local level, the Provincial Centers for School Cinematography under the authority of the Local Education Authorities. The new provisions continued to consider cinema meant for students to be an illustration, a textbook for moving images and sounds—rather than an artistic and narrative product with its own expression (Rizzo, 2014). An ideological gap was created between teachers and film critics. Teachers pointed out the differences between cinema and cine-aids—or rather, between commercial cinema and "educator" cinema—and identified them primarily in the setting, which was not a movie theater, but a classroom—or in other words, an environment set for a lesson accompanied by the aid of images, sometimes even without sound. Film critics, however, highlighted the devaluation of cinema in school practice. For the critics, educational cinema, in the absence of plot and dramatization, represented the opposite of cinema (Volpicelli, 1949).

Film education in the television era

From 1954 on, television began to arrive in Italian homes and the order envisaged by the educational system in cinema-aided teaching was disrupted. The new media context imposed a mass consumerist and extravagant culture of entertainment shows and "the sum of these minimal messages that accompany our daily life constitutes the most visible cultural phenomenon of the civilization in which we are called to operate" (Eco, 1964, p. 24). However, schools continued to show reality according

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[1] It was also known as the Bottai Film Library, after the Minister of National Education.

to its traditional curriculum and its linear analytical procedure, although the same linearity was lost in the mass of information and news (Tarroni and Baldelli, 1970). After 1965, cinema underwent a technological transformation with Kodak's distribution of the Super 8 camera. At the same time, thousands of film clubs were created throughout Italy. The most attentive pupils perceived what teachers experience in everyday life. In other words, through daily practice with television screens, students were helped to understand cinema (Baldelli, 1970), thereby invalidating years of research carried out in the pre-television era (Tarroni, 1960).

The educational world no longer looked upon cinema as a hypnotic plague from which to defend itself, but instead identified television as the new enemy. Consequently, while educational cinema gathered dust in the display cases of school buildings, commercial cinema emerged from the purgatory of prejudice to develop its new role as an educational tool (Rizzo, 2014). Academics of the era noted the paradoxical parallels between the old attitude of censorship and the new one. Baldelli (1970) reported that in the debate on the social impact of television "the same people who in the past attacked cinema now use the old arguments against the new means of mass communication" (Baldelli, 1970, p. 123). In the world of education, it became a general conviction that cinema, unlike television, "could favor a perceptual restructuring of everyday reality, dismembering the conceptual schematizations through which it is trivialized and repetitive" (Lumbelli, 1974, p. 21) and it was an established fact by that point that "it is no longer film that is pedagogical or didactic, but rather the communicative process into which it is incorporated to structure itself as such" (Farnè, 2006, p. 243). Therefore, schools abandoned educational cinema and asked themselves what could be done to teach cinema.

The semiotic teacher

The debate on the teaching of cinema in the late 1940s and early 1950s, which centered on the emotional dimension of film images and on

the problem of understanding the narrative and linguistic structures of film in relation to the degree of intellectual development of young viewers, was not widely followed.

In the following decades, in fact, the teaching of cinema would become a little practiced field, almost exclusively the object of a manual production divided between content and linguistic approaches and equally limited in terms of methodological openness and theoretical proposals. (Pierotti, 2013, p. 78)

Between the 1960s and 1980s, the Italian educational system adopted a semiotic perspective and considered cinema not only the bearer of values, as it had done since the birth of cinema, but also in its formal aspect. The narrative theoretical foundations and the language of cinema became the object of teaching. Film education interpreted filmmaking as a study and examined all the signifiers of cinematographic language, such as framing and perspective. Cinema was dissected and classified and the general rules adopted by the professionals working in the field were elucidated.In a sense, it was considered painting in movement and, as in painting, its formal rules were explained first, followed by the values it transmits (Malavasi, Polenghi, & Rivoltella, 2005; Rivoltella, 2017).

To demonstrate the persuasive capacity of the medium, teachers revealed the tricks behind the magic of cinema. Teachers chose to teach cinema from a narratological perspective in a voluntary, non-institutionalized way. From this perspective, teachers considered narrative cinema and included it in the teaching of Italian. Teaching interventions in schools focused on the functioning of cinema or the relationship between cinema and literature (Bernardi, 1991; Carluccio, 1988; Costa, 1993; Cremonini, 1988). The interest in the adaptation and transfer from the literary text to the cinematographic text was prevalent and sometimes functional when cinema was used as an ancillary aid in the teaching of school subjects, in this case of Italian and foreign literature (Cortellazzo & Tomasi, 2008; Dusi, 2003).

The Ministry's policy documents relating to secondary, primary, and nursery schools—issued in 1979, 1985, and 1991—revealed that attention was paid to the media at the institutional level. Italian secondary-school education appeared static compared to the other levels of the

school system. The legacy of Giovanni Gentile's approach [2] weighed upon it directly, at least until the 1950s, when "the decline of idealism brought scientific research to the fore once again and the use of methods inspired by it, reintegrating Italy into international teaching circles" (Laporta, 2001, p. 91), while the indirect conditioning derived from the spiritualist approach of idealistic teaching [3] from 1985 onwards was overcome with the introduction of Computer Science as a subject. Overall, the regulatory framework highlighted the lack of a unitary coherent educational design for the various educational levels it addressed. The media appeared to be treated with a different approach: as languages of relevance, as an aspect of the child's cultural environment, or as a space for teaching innovation. Indeed, in Italy, when the technological model prevailed, the interest in teaching older, non-digital media was supplanted by the interest in new technologies; computers and the Internet were preferred to printed paper, photography, film, and television (Rivoltella, 2017).

As mentioned above, Italian schools focused on the message transmitted by film and on the language of cinema, but did so spontaneously—in other words, without a clear legislative strategy from the government. At the turn of the century, however, the school system established rules for the training and practice of teachers who were to educate students on the subject of cinema. The practices that fell under the voluntary initiative of certain film teachers were now institutionalized and planned at the national level. Schools clarified, even formally, what the method of cinema education should be. In 1999, the Ministry of Education, University, and Research (MIUR) intervened on training and funded the National Plan for the Promotion of the Teaching of Film and Audiovisual

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[2] Giovanni Gentile (1875–1944), philosopher, educationalist, politician, exponent of Italian idealism, and author of the 1923 reform of public education known as the Gentile Reform.

[3] Idealist teaching believes in the self-education of the Universal Spirit present in everyone. Consequently, it does not consider any scientific notion or technique to be necessary in the communication between the teacher and the pupil. Moreover, it considers science to be a second-order activity with respect to philosophy and subjects that celebrate the spiritual: history, art, and literature.

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Language in Schools. The plan included an integrated training program during school service, and research and educational experimentation for teachers in all subject areas of each school level (Costantino, 2005). In the 2000–01 and 2001–02 school years, it involved 10,000 students, 1,000 teachers, and 500 schools throughout the country. However, it ended abruptly, without the planned third year being implemented. Nevertheless, the qualitative level of this experimentation was unparalleled by any other experience during the 20th century (Costantino, 2005).

School autonomy and external experts

Over the last twenty years, thanks to the growing development of information and communication technologies, the media landscape has been enriched with new media (Manovich, 2001), whose presence has become pervasive in the lives of children, used as symbolic resources to give meaning to their relational experiences and to organize their daily lives (Buckingham, 2003; Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 1994). A cultural context emerged that supported an extended participation in the production and distribution of the media, which are processes now favored by facilitating technology and cost-cutting (Jenkins, 2006). Cross-mediality, or rather the possibility of operating simultaneously in and with different languages via the Internet, has profoundly changed the media scenario.

In teaching, cinema, in addition to being an archive with its pre-existing narratives that became established over its century of existence, was approached by reworking the archival works themselves. Indeed, cinema no longer offered non-manipulable training tools, but digital visions (Arcagni, 2016), in which everything the director imposed, from the narrative pacing to the editing, tended to disappear by virtue of a new domain offered to the viewer. Each film could be included in the narrative created by the viewer, which was different from the one offered by the director. In the school world, both pupils and teachers could be producers and consumers of cinema; the film—deconstructed and reduced to pieces—becomes a semi-finished product in classrooms from which to

obtain material for an alternative editing. The "app generation" (Gardner and Davis, 2014), which uses only the Internet instead of watching TV, reading newspapers, or going to the cinema, appears to be very much at ease in the game of fragmentation and decontextualization typical of the "post-cinema" era (Arcagni, 2016).

Since the 1990s, schools have adopted Masterman's lessons (1985) and have based media education around the key concept of media as a representation. As a result, they stopped approaching cinema separately and turned their attention to all media and the entire media landscape. Media education had arrived in classrooms, a discipline bordering on the sciences of education and communication and whose objective was the study, teaching, and learning of modern means of communication from the ethical point of view of both democratizing knowledge and promoting active citizenship (Rivoltella, 2001, 2017).

Media education spread throughout Italy at a time when the reflection and experiences already established in schools were merged with the field of study that it recognized[4] (Giannelli, 2006; Rivoltella, 2017). Consequently, in this sector in Italy, the theoretical epistemological research followed practical research which—in contrast—preceded the birth of media education itself. An example of anticipation, although carried out with teaching presuppositions and aims that were not always explicit, was the first experiences of film education through the cineforum and the experiments in filmmaking carried out with the Super 8 camera (Felini, 2015; Rivoltella, 2017).

The transition from centralization to autonomy of Italian schools[5] enlivened the educational context and introduced dynamism and competition between schools. Educational institutions that became

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[4]   The association, represented primarily by the Italian Association for Media and Communication Education (*MED*), founded in 1996, has played an important role in the spread of media education throughout Italy.

[5]   The transition of schools to independence is enshrined in Law 59/1997. However, the implementing regulation would arrive with Presidential Decree no. 275 of March 8, 1999, and only in 2001 would the new text in Paragraph 3 of Article 117 of the Constitutional Charter preserve the independence of schools.

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independent—not only in terms of education, but also in terms of management—received help in securing funding for their operations, especially by drawing on European structural funds (*PON*). Once the proposed projects concerning the teaching of cinema were approved, institutes were able to fund directors, actors, and other qualified professionals working in schools.

The interactive multimedia whiteboard and the role of the teacher

In 2006, the interactive whiteboard arrived in classrooms and the cinema became an environment in which to look for shared meanings (Rodríguez, 2016). Teachers had the opportunity to become multimedia creators, even in an impromptu way, during lessons. The interactive whiteboard—which in a single object encapsulates all the main educational technologies previously in use (video projector, video recorder, computer, and television)—introduces the potential of different multimedia languages and the interactivity of new media into classrooms, allowing students to participate in the construction of the lesson. Moreover, it favors the use of iconic resources in the daily teaching work with the students.

The Visual Education Worker

The need became urgent for new literacy in order to offer students tools to decode visual messages in a context where images predominate in the transmission of information. Consequently, government policies promoted image education programs and cinema was also strategically and stably incorporated into the world of education. All of this constitutes an important historical passage for the history of Italian cultural and cinematographic policies. In the last five years, processes that had been paused for many years were restarted, as demonstrated by the experience

of the National Plan for the Promotion of the Teaching of Film and Audiovisual Language.

Since 2015, new laws have fostered institutionalized spaces for the inclusion of artistic languages in schools, including cinema. Law 107/2015, Article 1, Para. 7 c sets out the principle of "strengthening skills in musical practice and culture, in art and art history, in *cinema, and in techniques and media for the production and dissemination of images and sounds*" (emphasis added). As a consequence of the provisions of Law 107/2015, image education became one of the objectives of Law 220/2016, the Film and Audiovisual Act.[6] By enacting this law, legislators provided for requests for proposals to be issued by schools of all levels, as well as entities, foundations, and associations, in order to support and promote the study and use of cinema and audiovisual language in schools. Law 220/2016 established an annual fund for the sector and established the Superior Cinema and Audiovisual Council, which was based on the structure of the General Directorate of Cinema of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (MIBAC).

In the application of Law 220/2016, the MIBAC and the MIUR, based on the Memorandum of Understanding of March 2, 2018, jointly promote the National Film Plan for Schools to include film and audiovisual language in schools as an educational cross-curricular tool. In reality, the Plan does not concern cinema explicitly, but more generally addresses the culture of audiovisual media that cinema introduced and continues to lead from a privileged position. It offers applicants funds for school initiatives dedicated to the moving image through selection and funding procedures (MIUR, 2018). For the 2017–18 and 2018–19 school years, the Plan has already provided resources amounting to 23.5 million euros through the issuing of five requests for proposals from entities, foundations, associations, and schools of all levels. The calls attracted a large

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6   Article 27, Section i provides for the support, in agreement with the Ministry of Education, University, and Research, for the strengthening of skills in cinema and techniques and media for the production and dissemination of images and sound, as well as literacy in art and techniques and media for the prodcution of images and sound, pursuant to Article 1, Para. 7, Sections c and f of Law 107 of July 13, 2015.

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participation, with over 800 projects submitted and 496 projects funded. Participation in the regional tenders were proportional to the school populations, led by Lazio (167 projects), Campania (100), and Lombardy (97). The selected initiatives concerned and involved all types of schools, including comprehensive schools, which represent 36.6% of the participating educational institutions. However, for the 2019–20 school year, resources amounting to 12 million euros were made available (MIUR, 2019). Teacher training will guarantee nationwide coverage and will be managed, through a single training model, by schools awarded the tender for Visual Education Workers in School. This is new for the Italian educational context, which has followed more than one directive with respect to cinema as an educational tool over the years.

Conclusions

The aim of this work was to provide a historical reconstruction of the Italian context in which the school film culture was born and developed. The analysis was based on the legislation that has governed the use of cinema as a teaching tool over time.

The historical analysis has highlighted the influence of the political climate, in which the transition from fascist dictatorship to democracy influenced the vision of film, from propaganda to educational purposes.

On the meaning of film education, the various visions that schools have adopted are illustrated, from those of the 1950s that focused on educational cinema and excluded commercial cinema from the classrooms, to the arrival in Italy of media education.

Schools and teaching have evolved and cinema has changed. Cross-mediality has entered classrooms, which has created the perspectives of media education. It is hoped that Italian schools will no longer need to rely on external workers and will be able to adapt itself and its teaching staff to the new scenarios.

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Reflections on Teaching

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The Future of Education in the Context of Cognitive Enhancement Practices

Abstract

The exponential growth of technological advancements creates an environment in which the traditionally conceived cognitive enhancement—education—must constantly redefine itself in the face of the invasive presence of AI, social media, and various biotechnologies that strive to augment effect-oriented performance. Whereas on the conceptual level there is a visible shift from static to flow-modelled education—and a growing trend to invest in skills like flexibility and creativity—not many of emerging technologies are seriously considered educational tools. The paper looks into the varieties of cognitive enhancement within an educational context. Of major concern are the currently available technologies of collective intelligence and nootropics, as well as the experimental downloadable learning. I review the problems occasioned by these technologies, as well as the existing solutions, which tend to incorporate rather than exclude the possibilities of radical cognitive enhancement.

Keywords: cognitive enhancement, new technologies, education

Introduction

Since the inception of work on human enhancement and the creation of artificial intelligence, the ways in which it would affect education have been envisioned in various ways. The wildest scenarios have been imagined: from the telepathy in *Star Trek*, through "knowledge viruses" in *The Child Garden*, to simulations in *Ready Player One* and downloadable learning in *The Matrix*. None of these touch upon the revolution in the educational system as such but on a novel understanding of the working of the human mind, enabled by biological discoveries and technological breakthroughs. In these futuristic visions, learning is brought about by intimate connectivity and symbiosis with other agents within the edu-sphere, and constant rewiring of the central and peripheral nervous systems for the accommodation of new data. Direct brain stimulation, the "conversation" with microscopic beings infused in one's bloodstream, and/or unmediated access to others' thoughts are for the time being an imaginative portrayal of collective intelligence; however, they may soon prove to be more than science fiction. We already possess technologies that have impacted our philosophy of perception, and consequently, the way we think about learning. Nootropic drugs enhance concentration, various forms of brain stimulation (DBS, tDCS, TMS, or temporal interference) seem to "inject" knowledge directly into the brain, the commonly used social media—and less commonly used brain–computer interfaces—enable humans to work as one collective mind in a form of "swarming," whereas virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) provide safe, mutable environments for testing and practicing one's abilities. In the following paragraphs, I investigate the most common technologies of cognitive enhancement[1] and consider their import on the transformation of schooling and learning.

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[1] In this article, cognitive enhancement will be understood in accordance with the definition proposed by Allen Buchanan in his 2011 book, *Better Than Human*: "Cognitive enhancements increase normal cognitive capacities. Cognitive capacities include memory (of which there are several kinds), attention, reasoning, and what psychologists call 'executive function,' the ability of the mind to monitor, direct, and coordinate various mental operations" (Buchanan, 2011, 5).

Education, as the primary technique for cognitive enhancement, already benefits from and chokes on practices from the range of cognitive enhancement technologies that are often associated with radical transhumanist visions of cyborg people. Whereas it is true that cognitive enhancement is a large part of the Humanity+ agenda, it does not necessarily entail the practices of physical, moral, and emotional augmentation that is questioned by ethicists and demonized in dystopias and sensationalist reports in magazines. Smart devices are used as memory aids, e.g., of phone numbers or schedules, and ginkgo extract and omega-3 fatty acids are supposed to fend off the specter of Alzheimer's disease. More advanced cognitive enhancement, though, is already an everyday reality and generates challenges for institutionalized education.

Collective Intelligence

To begin with, Collective Intelligence (CI) has been ubiquitous for some time now, and it is slowly being recognized as a reality to be accounted for both in the process of formal learning and, more broadly, in the informal generation of knowledge items. It may be defined as a collaboration of individuals to achieve a particular goal, to which end they use new technologies and tools. By way of illustration, social media provide an opportunity to share and comment on current events, and Google, Alexa or Siri—i.e., a set of algorithms—can manage our itinerary for us. Some of the solutions resulting from networking with people and bots are codified in the repositories of common beliefs, such as Wikipedia or YouTube channels. This open-source approach encourages many to reach for this type of unstable, ever-changing data, rather than the advice of experts, which is usually costly and quickly becomes outdated.

Obviously, the general discussion revolves around the verifiability of such generated data. This gives collective intelligence a bad name and discourages "serious" educators from incorporating it into their practice. The main obstacle is the distrust with which the volatile, intangible world of cloud computing is viewed, as well as the lack of adaptability, flexibility,

and what may be called fluidity, which would allow people to function effectively in the fluid environment created by novel technologies. As Laura Beloff (2013) puts it, we need to become hybronauts and to learn at least basic strokes, not to drown in the increasingly virtualized world. The acquisition of such skills and the general passage from static, expert models to dynamic, collective-based educational models seems necessary when students are already using unverified sources, which cannot be monitored, and devices like Google Duplex, an effective artificial editor which allows them to compose whole texts with practically no basic writing skills.

Despite all the hamstrings and reservations about the validity and place of collective intelligence in the classroom, there are already well-established methods striving to introduce integrative networked learning. Massive online open courses (MOOCs), flipped classrooms, and blended learning are all parts of the same phenomenon. The basic premise behind them is the decreased role of static, centralized, and expert-reliant knowledge, and the increased role of the dynamic, participatory, and group-generated solutions for the fulfillment of particular tasks, leading to the rise of problem-oriented courses and studies. The instruction is delivered outside the classroom, either provided by the institution in the form of e-learning content or completely unsupervised by the teacher. Within the classroom, students are assigned different roles depending on their level of mastery and on their individual skills, i.e., some are researchers, some data verifiers, some creative thinkers, etc., and all benefit from their cooperation. The teacher supervises the progress of all of the students, perceiving them as individuals within a group, not as isolated "cases."

Working in a blended environment creates a set of challenges and necessitates the adoption of a collectivist mindset. At the institutional level, it calls for constant teacher support—in a blended classroom educators are coached and receive help with the monitoring of both the group and individuals, whether via specialized systems or human assistants. Problem-oriented learning requires constant activity and awareness of the fluctuating demands of the market, of the local milieu, technological changes, etc.; thus, the designers of such classrooms are under pressure to display lively creativity. Issues of privacy and intellectual property

are another problematic area. The progress of individual students can no longer be measured only in terms of their individual competence, but must be combined with the assessment of their overall skills of teamwork, data curation, and the aforementioned "fluidity," i.e., effective functioning in the environment of liquid modernity. If we treat knowledge as a flow, not as something we can possess, but something in which we partake, issues of copyright infringement appear. Rather than considering whose knowledge it is, students must learn to conscientiously use information from the generally available pool for the benefit of all.

Nootropics

Apart from the external hardware and software that serves as everyone's daily cognitive enhancement, memory, attention, and mental coordination are also being improved by a range of biomedical tools, such as supplements, GM foods (or conversely, ecologically produced foods), and drugs that are easily available not only in pharmacies, but also in regular stores. These drugs, called nootropics, are a synthesized rather than natural means of boosting the performance of the brain and the whole central nervous system in a healthy individual. Many of them are based on dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin, and they act as mood enhancers. They are commonly used in the treatment of depression and mood disorders. However, the most popular nootropics in an educational context are those based on amphetamine (Adderall), substituted phenethylamine (Ritalin), or modafinil (Provigil). Although they are marketed as ADHD treatment prescription drugs, they are easy to obtain and used by a considerable number of students in the USA and the UK. Recent reports (from 2017) have found that between 10% and 15% of students use cognitive enhancement drugs, which they either obtain from physicians by simulating a disease or they purchase illicitly. In May 2017, *The Guardian* alerted readers that despite the Psychoactive Substances Act, which was passed in the UK in 2016 and bans certain kinds of study drugs, they are still being sold to eager students (Marsh, 2017).

Although such substances are said to be non-addictive and do not demonstrate adverse effects with occasional use, there are issues of unknown future consequences, especially with prolonged use, and the irresponsible combination of nootropics with other drugs and/or alcohol. Whereas the health hazards stemming from biomedical enhancement are perhaps the domain of doctors, there are also legal problems which affect teachers and school authorities in their everyday work. *Harvard Business Review* and the aforementioned issue of *The Guardian* point out that some Ivy League universities and Oxford, Cambridge, and the London School of Economics are being pushed to introduce measures to regulate the abundant use of nootropics (Cederström, 2016; Marsh, 2017). For instance, at Duke University it is recommended to treat the "unauthorized use of prescription medicine to enhance academic performance" as cheating (Cederström, 2016), and students in the UK are calling for doping controls before exams.

The phrase "unauthorized use" is a watchword here, signaling that as long as it is authorized, enhancement is allowed. Consequently, it has been reported that a diagnosis of ADHD is often abused by doctors themselves to enhance cognitive performance in healthy individuals (Lakhan & Kirchgessner, 2012; Urban & Gao, 2017). Nick Bostrom (2008), a Swedish philosopher, explains the reasons for such practice:

> One of the perverse effects of the failure of the current medical framework to recognize the legitimacy and potential of enhancement medicine is the trend towards medicalization and "pathologization" of an increasing range of conditions that were previous regarded as part of the normal human spectrum. If, for example, a significant fraction of the population could obtain certain benefits from drugs that improve concentration, it is currently necessary to categorize this segment of people as having some disease (in this case ADHD) in order to get the drug approved and prescribed to those who could benefit from it. This disease-focused medical model is increasingly inadequate for an era in which many people will be using medical treatments

for enhancement purposes. Academic research is also hampered by the disease framework in that researchers find it difficult or impossible to secure funding to study potential cognitive enhancers except in contexts where the study can be linked to some recognized pathology. (Bostrom, 2008)

Within such an environment, it is to be expected that a number of students will be diagnosed with different cognitive deficits to gain access to cognitive enhancers. This cover-up for the unhealthy study conditions in the first place—putting a strain on individual students forced to function in the product- and effect-oriented, marketized education—clouds a range of existing and potential problems and hampers attempts to solve them. "Exam doping" may increase the competitiveness of learning, and it may enhance not only cognition, but a "neurological arms race" (Cederström, 2016) and contribute to the expansion of different pathologies, such as illicit drug trafficking.

Downloadable Learning

The final cognitive enhancement technique which may transform the future classroom is currently being tested by the USA military agency, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), as an extension of the Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) initiative. It involves work on cerebroprostheses (brain–computer interfaces) and neuroprostheses (various brain implants), as well as Targeted Neuroplasticity Training, which is supposed to enable the immediate manipulation of memory and grant instant access to knowledge, understood as both data and skills (thus improving on simple collective intelligence). Downloadable learning can be generally described as invasive and non-invasive stimulation of synaptic plasticity with the use of brain–computer interfaces. What DARPA hopes to achieve is the enhancement of military performance in terms of the arsenal of skills available for soldiers on the battlefield, for example, different combat styles,

operating multifarious devices, and the ability to communicate via different media and in different languages. Many university centers all over the USA are involved in designing and testing technologies that would deliver just that: for example, the teams at Johns Hopkins University, the University of Maryland, and the University of Texas are performing studies on volunteers in terms of complex skill learning, such as language acquisition.

The potential uses and misuses of brain stimulation are currently being hotly debated by bioethicists, with major issues being the loss of individual autonomy and the risk of brain hacking. Cybersecurity, mind control, and surveillance concern the whole of the society, and should be discussed at the level of state policy and legal regulations. Social stratification, connected with at least the initial costs of implementing the gains of neuroplasticity, may result in distributive injustice when it comes to knowledge and the resulting power. In the context of education, these problems address the selfsame areas as those delineated above: students can no longer be perceived as autonomous agents whose progress is measurable, but as users of data stored in repositories, at least theoretically sound and unfettered by economic and political ties. What follows is that the challenges specific to the future classroom environment directly impact the place of the teacher in the process of education, and the psychological and moral integrity of the student/apprentice who is presented with a ready set of tools and skills, but remains unaware of their own potential and power. The teacher's role as a guide, refiner of the final outcome and, above all, an ethical and moral caretaker, will be far more important than the one we see today—as a deliverer of instructions and a taskmaster.

Education and the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The key phenomenon for cognitive enhancement is synaptic plasticity: "a natural process in the brain, pivotal to learning, that involves the strengthening or weakening of the junctions between two neurons"

(DARPA, 2017). Lifelong learning and the demands of fast-paced alterations call for extreme flexibility and adaptability as critical survival skills, and the exploitation and augmentation of the brain's ability to rewire itself seems to be guiding most enhancement efforts connected with learning. Michio Kaku, in his 2014 *The Future of the Mind*, writes extensively on the science and available technologies, reviewing the then trends, which—to some extent—are still being developed now. The consequences of memory enhancement, brain-net, "forgetfulness drugs," etc., are discussed on the individual and social levels. When it comes to education, on which the impact of these technologies will be unprecedented, Kaku has little to say:

> The educational system would be turned upside down; perhaps it would free teachers to spend more time mentoring students and giving them one-on-one attention in areas of cognition that are less skill-based and cannot be mastered by hitting a button. The rote memorization necessary to become a professional doctor, lawyer, or scientist could also be drastically reduced through this method. (Kaku, 2014, p. 125)

Similarly, little place is devoted to the educational impact of new technologies by the chief theorists of human enhancement. Marvin Minsky, who famously viewed the mind as a "society of agents" rather than a stable entity, in his essay in *The Transhumanist Reader* brushes away the notion of understanding as irrelevant.

> What is understanding? What I claim is that there isn't any such thing. There is no such thing as consciousness, there is no such thing as understanding, and all of the trouble these people are having is because they've gotten trapped into using words that have become very popular for social reasons; it is very useful to say that this kid doesn't understand, meaning that his performance and versatility and ability to apply what he's supposed to learn isn't good enough and he's going to have to come back after school or repeat second grade … but of course that would

interfere with his social development, so we can't do that … and blah, blah, blah. (Minsky, 2013, p. 172)

In contrast to the above thinkers, Luciano Floridi devotes more space to the conceptualization of education and learning. When talking about e-learning and education, he emphasized the benefits technology has already brought to teachers and learners, simultaneously showing an awareness that the sea change of the life environment calls for more than a practical application of ever-updated tools:

A century after Turing's birth, universities are rushing to put their courses online, and the market of e-learning is blooming [sic]. There is much to be said in favor of (distance) e-learning, when it is not a form of "unmanned teaching" or merely cheap outsourcing. As its supporters rightly stress, it has made a vast reservoir of educational contents available to millions of people, and it promises to deliver even more to ever more. ICTs may allow a degree of didactic customization unprecedented in non-elitist contexts: the personalization of the educational experience for millions of individuals. But all this is a matter of delivery policies, methods, techniques, and technologies. If it is taken to be a solution of how to educate Generation Z and the others which will follow, then we are mistaking a painkiller for a cure. The real headache is not the *how*. Since the late eighties we have become enthusiastic about MOOs (text-based online virtual reality systems for multiple users connected at the same time), literary hypertexts, glove-and-goggle VR (virtual realities), HyperCard, Second Life, and now MOOCs (massive open online courses). More fashions and further acronyms will certainly follow. Yet the real headache is the *what*. (Floridi, 2014, 81–82) [2]

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[2] By "the what" Floridi means not so much the new subjects and disciplines—he rather asks, "What is education for?" This problem has also been posed and heavily discussed by the representatives of critical posthumanism, which perceives classical education as a humanist project, anthropocentric, and self-contradictory (see Bayne, 2018).

Floridi's theory of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is starting to reverberate with professional educators. A refined and detailed learning ideas that aptly apply the above theory are proposed by cyberculture theorist Pierre Lévy (2015). He predicts the emergence of reflexive collective intelligence in which connectivity between different education agents is taken for granted and used on self-reflection, on a social community thus created. For that to be effective, he proposes the following basic set of skills to be acquired, preferably in early development:

Table 1

A new literacy: Data Curation Skills

	AWARENESS	MEANING	MEMORY
Personal intelligence	**Attention management** Prioritize topics Select source	**Interpretation** Produce hypotheses Analyze data	**Memory management** Maintain categorization Manage cloud
Critical intelligence of the sources	**External critique** Diversify sources Cross-examine data	**Internal critique** Identify categories Identify narratives	**Pragmatic critique** Assess transparency Identify agenda
Collective intelligence	**Stigmergic communication** In global memory In local memory	**Liberty** Take responsibility Use power	**Collaborative learning** Externalize tacit knowledge Internalize explicit knowledge

Note. Adapted from Lévy (2015).

Within this set, learning is defined as a mnemonic skill, inseparable from the sense of common heritage of all participants of the network. Lévy sees it not simply as one of the many competences to be acquired, but as the most important one. It is made up of "tacit knowledge" (the local, contextual one) and "explicit knowledge" (the commonly accessible, public memory). The key to connecting these, thus enabling collaborative learning, is language translational skills, which Floridi (2014, p. 85) writes about as being essential for the 4IR era: whether they are national languages or communication systems used in music or programming, they string together the separate worlds of internal and external knowledge, giving meaning to the ocean of limitless data items.

These ideas of connectivity and a globalized mind begin to be recognized as imminent and tied in with concrete technologies which pose challenges to learning environments. Bryan Edward Penprase, in "Higher Education and the Fourth Industrial Revolution" (2018, 215–216) lists "exponential technologies" that are instrumental to the 4IR, and an impressive array of predictions treated seriously within the context of education. The forecast for the near future is a drive for the cyborgization of human bodies and an increased connectivity between individuals, mostly with the use of wearables, but soon also with invasive implantable technology. In fact, recreational biohacking—as in the case of subdermal jewelry or gadgets—is already quite popular on the market. As cyborgized learners appear, education will have to adapt.

A completely new dimension for education has been created by the fact that even now Robot Sophie has been admitted as a university student, Bina48 teaches ethics at a university level, and the Mirai Bot "attends" a Japanese kindergarten, but it is conceivable to think that some other robots and androids could be eligible for inclusion in the educational models of the future. When social skills, communication, and cooperation transcend simple computational power, AI approaches the state of "becoming human." Brain-netting with advanced AI is yet another consequence of the inclusive and equalizing attitude permeating the contemporary trends. Researchers dealing with Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIEd; Luckin et al., 2016) have developed multiple models of integrating AI into the current systems, and particular changes in the curricula for universities have been proposed (Penprase, 2018). Some form of support may come from Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS) that

> use AI techniques to simulate one-to-one human tutoring, delivering learning activities best matched to a learner's cognitive needs and providing targeted and timely feedback, all without an individual teacher having to be present. Some ITSs put the learner in control of their own learning in order to help students develop self-regulation skills; others use pedagogical strategies

to scaffold learning so that the learner is appropriately challenged and supported. (Luckin et al., 2016)

In their *Intelligence Unleashed* report for Pearson, the researchers envision, among other models of AIEd-enhanced education, the interaction with AI learning assistants that can be introduced as lifelong learning companions. Still, although the report acknowledges the deep systemic changes that will be occasioned by the 4IR, the exact nature of these changes is never specified. AI is still seen as an addition to an anthropocentric and didaskalocentric classroom, where a human teacher is the prime organizing power, the expert, and the formal authority, reining in the seemingly "unleashed" intelligence.

Conclusions

It can be stated that the failure of the current systems is the attempt to forcefully "enhance" classrooms with the use of innovative tools. With the recent introduction of AI teachers in Sweden and Japan, it is important to realize that these are no longer gadgets that we can use with a 2.0 mindset, i.e., the one in which it is enough to move from using a laptop to a tablet in order to upgrade the learning and teaching experience. Teachers themselves have to be familiar users of contemporary technologies, and they have to benefit from them in their everyday life to be able to guide their students in using them appropriately. The role of the teacher as an instructor or designer of materials such as MOOCs or online tests (Moodle) will most likely be taken up by AI instructors or simple bots. In the future classroom, the hybronautic teacher will gather students at a meeting of equals, differing perhaps in the level of mastery and experience, around a certain problem to be solved with the use of available data and skillsets. As Pierre Lévy states,

young people should be prepared for collaborative learning in social media using a practically infinite knowledge repository

without any transcending guiding authority. They will need not only technical skills (that will evolve and become obsolete very quickly), but above all moral and intellectual skills that will empower them in their life-long discovery travels (2015).

In other words, students need to be independent researchers rather than recipients of knowledge and to take responsibility for the knowledge they create. This also pertains to the teachers and school authorities themselves.

To promote high-quality teaching and learning, a thorough reflection on the technological means of cognitive enhancement is in order, and the consideration of their humanistic impact. As Gerd Leonhard (2015) stated in his lecture *Future of Learning, Training and Education*, "we'll only be better by being more human"; that is, if we let machines do their job, and let go of the industrial era perception of humans as cogs in the machine—or even a device or a product straight from the assembly line. The education's role in the face of cognitive enhancements is ultimately not to mechanize the learning process—rather, to liberate the teacher and the students from mundane tasks and grant them a more responsible place, proper for the dignity of human beings: creating and discovering.

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Learning Reflective Practice Skills with the Use of Narrative Techniques

Abstract

The article is meant to address the importance of drawing attention to learning reflective practice skills for personal and social development, particularly a learner's development. The use of narrative techniques in the process of learning can prove to be beneficial for its participants. That is why their importance in pedagogical purposes is emphasized in the material analyzed herein. These techniques implemented in didactic practice and childrearing can also be treated as techniques of gathering data in the qualitative research that is the author's area of interest.

Keywords: learner, learning, learner's reflective practice, narration, narrative techniques

Introduction

The issue addressed in this article is the to elicit of the meaning of narrative techniques, particularly when applied to education. This seems

crucial nowadays, as the constantly changing trends in social and cultural domains have some impact on the human approach to life, which cannot be indifferent to the pedagogical and didactic dimensions of schools functioning in society. These dimensions interfere with each other and face many challenges. They must be coped with by both teachers and learners, and they become an object of reflection which may lead to solutions to many problems brought by them.

Not surprisingly, teachers and learners require the significant care that should take place in a reflective, warm-hearted, friendly, educative atmosphere that fosters the processes of teaching and learning. Such an atmosphere can help teachers and their students keep healthy, beneficial, creative relationships that enable them to achieve their educational goals. This requires time and quiet (Nalaskowski, 2017, pp. 245–246). Without these factors, the knowledge obtained in the process of learning can be shaped in an instrumental, declarative way that serves the standardization goals. Such a situation can raise many questions about the future of the individuals and of whole societies that develop thanks to educational progress. It often becomes reflected in discourse and discussions conveyed between teachers, students, parents, and academics, who refer them to various aspects of a particular school policy. However, these discussions do not always yield the expected results. Often, they seem to reach a theoretical, broader point, which must be overcome thanks to the skills of reflective practice.

Thus, in this light, the aspect of learning the skills of reflective practice which this article briefly touches on can be justified. The problem posed by the author can be expressed in the form of a query: "How important is it to use narrative techniques in learning reflective practice?" The answer to this question requires an analysis of such notions as learning and the learning of reflective practice in relation to the use of selected narrative techniques as regards qualitative research. These techniques of narration will only be summarized, as they have been described by the author in other publications. Thus, the data gathered with their use can induce some implications which are crucial to their deployment in everyday school subjects, regardless of their nature.

Learning in a nutshell

Depicting the theoretical aspect of learning reflective practice requires us to focus, first of all, on the term "learning," and then on the reflective skills which the learner should learn, develop, and master. It will be shown in the perspective of personalistic pedagogy, which treats a person as an integral entity that forms in the process of integral development, embracing the development of the physical, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual layers aligning tightly with each other in an interactive relationship (Kunowski, 2000, pp. 194–203; Szymańska, 2019, pp. 66–88). This theoretical, personalistic perspective leads to an understanding of the process of learning as an interactive phenomenon that allows the person to gain more complex, molded skills of self-cognition, cognition of other people, of the world, and of God. Such an approach to learning can be fundamental for the learner in developing and mastering skills of reflective practice. Thus, the next aspect of the analysis should concentrate on the meaning of these skills in the process of a person becoming a more mature individual living with and among others.

The term "learning" can be defined as the personal, unique disposition that enables the learner to make progress in the integral development, perceived from a pedagogical/anthropological/ethical perspective. This means that learning has a tremendous impact on the formation of the developmental layers mentioned above. This relationship between learning and integral development can have a reciprocal, hermeneutic feature, as the content learned so far (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) should foster the trajectory of further learning. Franciszek Bereźnicki defines learning as a process of acquiring the knowledge of the world, skills, and habits. According to Bereźnicki, if this process runs appropriately and successfully, it results in the creation of new forms of behavior and activity or in modifying the old ones (2011, pp. 17–18). Theresa Ebiere Dorgu states that "learning has been defined in various ways based on various theories explaining the process of learning. Learning involves changes in the behavior patterns of an individual. Simply put, learning is the process of acquiring knowledge or skills and attitudes"(2016, p. 79). In addition to the

individual aspect of learning, it is necessary to show its social dimension as well. Hence, learning is also seen as a social process, allowing the human to adapt to their wider environment, thanks to many factors, among which experience cannot be ignored. David and Alice Kolb state that

> the process of learning from experience is ubiquitous, presentin human activity everywhere all the time. The holistic nature of the learning process means that it operates at all levels of human society from the individual, to the group, to organizations, and to society as a whole. (2008)

In their point of view, learning is also "re-learning", and "the process of creating knowledge". It refers not only to experience, but to observation, reflection, thinking, and acting (2008). Kolb and Yeganeh claim that

> learning can have magical transformative powers. It opens new doors and pathways, expanding our world and capabilities. It literally can change who we are by creating new professional and personal identities. Learning is intrinsically rewarding and empowering, bringing new avenues of experience and new realms of mastery …. It involves a deep trust in one's own experience and a healthy skepticism about received knowledge. It requires the perspective of quiet reflection and a passionate commitment to action in the face of uncertainty. The learning way is not the easiest way to approach life, but in the long run it is the wisest. (2011, p. 3)

Learning requires responsible, wise exploration and expansion. Focusing on the aspect of expansive learning, one must mention the seven actions suggested by Yrjö Engeström (2011): questioning; searching for explanatory mechanisms and causes with historical/genetic and empirical analysis; building a model that exploits the new concept with an explanation of the solutions to the problems; constructively testing this model in the practical operative field; deploying it in an expansive way

according to the constructive concept; and reflecting on and evaluating the process of learning by consolidating its outcomes and deploying them in a practice that takes a new form.

It is worth mentioning here that reflective learning seems to be determined by the quality of reflection carried out by action, in action, and on action, which will be depicted while describing the learner's reflective practice. Evoking these definitions of learning brings to the mind the notion of transformative learning, which should also be mentioned. This kind of learning, according to Jack Mezirow,

> is learning that transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, and mindsets)—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change. Such frames of reference are better than others because they are more likely to generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action. (2003, pp. 58–59)

The professional guidance of action can be tied in with the understanding of some principles of actions fitted to expansive learning, and bringing out the meaning of communicative learning aligned with communicative activity (Mezirow, 2003, p. 59) in the domain of teacher and learner formative education (Szymańska, 2019). Therefore, it can be assumed that learning, perceived both as an individual disposition and as the process seen from an individual and a social perspective, has a profound meaning in the building of a mature, creative personality and society. From the point of view of personalistic pedagogy, the competent care of these two dimensions (individual and social) of learning should lead to developing and mastering of the following: language competences, including narrative skills; interests; passions; curiosity; control and regulation of the emotions; logical, dialectic, creative, and critical thinking; imagination; moral character; inner and outer integration; the performance of social roles; social and cultural identity; spirituality, etc. (Szymańska, 2017).

Having considered all the aspects of learning in terms of the material already discussed, mature learning can be defined as a life-long, intrinsic, holistic, dynamic, reflective, expansive, exploring, communicative, transformative, and creative process that fosters a person's integral development by imparting a new, higher quality of identity. To make learning more mature, effective, and successful, the following principles can be suggested to teachers and educators:

- respect learners and their experience
- build a creative atmosphere
- create a reflective space for learning, particularly a divergent one that requires time and quiet to "produce" fruitful feelings and creative thinking;
- make space for learning through guided action and communication
- stimulate and cultivate learners' interests and passions
- challenge learners' ability in overcoming their mental, affective, moral, and social limitations, difficulties, and barriers
- build a space for learners to take responsibility for the results of their learning
- assist learners passively and actively in the process of learning
- show learners that they are the desired subjects of education

Learning skills of reflective practice

Observing the principles of learning rooted in personalistic pedagogy, one can state that the learner should become a reflective practitioner who understands the meaning of reflection, which has to be taught and learned (Spalding & Wilson 2002). The range of definitions for reflection is wide. Apart from those offered by John Dewey (1933, p. 9), Patricia L. Williams (1998, p. 31), David Boud, Rosemary Keogh, and David Walker (1985, p. 19), Luke Mathieson (2016), and Donald A. Schön (1995), Joy Amulya's definition is worth mentioning:

Reflection is an active process of witnessing one's own experience in order to take a closer look at it, sometimes to direct attention to it briefly, but often to explore it in greater depth. This can be done in the midst of an activity or as an activity in itself. The key to reflection is learning how to take perspective on one's own actions and experience—in other words, to examine that experience rather than just living it. (2011)

Therefore, learning has an impact on the quality of outcomes that derive from reflecting on the knowledge provided by formal or informal sources (Schön, 1991; 1995). The analysis of the different terms of reflection in the personalistic perspective led me to make an attempt to build a definition for reflection:

Reflection is the inner, active, dynamic process covering the whole integrated (biologically, psychologically, socially, culturally, and spiritually) person revealing its quality in a particular act that arises from concrete experience taking place in a concrete period of time and the knowledge obtained either consciously or unconsciously that needs to be formed in order to achieve the personal and social growth. It is determined anthropologically, morally, axiologically, and psychologically. (Szymańska, 2017, p. 30)

It is worth emphasizing that reflection should be shaped in three dimensions: by action, in action and on action. Thus, these dimensions need to be presented briefly as well. The first one refers to the theoretical domain of the declarative and procedural knowledge items that become the objectives of the concrete questions directed first of all, to various *self*-facing inner and outer situations that require a moral judgement of truth. The answers given to questions posed to oneself should lead to reflection in action, connected with the knowledge in action "revealed in and by actual designing" (Schön, 1991). Here, the reflective questions that the *self* poses come from the experience and knowledge

gained while implementing the designed ones. They draw the learner's attention to the past and the future in order to improve the quality of their own approach to aspects learned so far, seen from the intrapersonal and interpersonal perspectives. As far as reflection on action is concerned, the self-assessment of the knowledge obtained from formal and informal experience should be drawn from the questions, deepening the process of scientific curiosity, building new levels of conscience, and leading to new quality of identity. However, it demands constant work to master reflective practice. Christopher Day claims that

> without routinely engaging in reflective practice, it is unlikely that we will be able to understand the effects of our motivations, prejudices, and aspirations upon the ways in which we create, manage, receive, sift, and evaluate knowledge; and as importantly, the ways in which we are influencing the lives, directions, and achievements of those whom we nurture and teach. (1999, p. 229)

Hence, both teachers and learners can benefit from practicing reflection and developing and modeling reflexive skills (Spalding & Wilson, 2002, pp. 1393–1421). Designing a good practice of reflection seems to be very demanding, as reflective practice

> means both clarifying the purposes it needs to serve and identifying opportunities to locate reflection in our work that are realistic and yet occur at the right intervals and with sufficient depth to be meaningful. Maintaining a practice of reflection, however it is structured, transforms the possibility of learning from our work into a reality. (Amuyla, 2011)

In this context, developing and mastering reflective skills seems to be crucial for the trajectory of teaching and learning. Joseph A. Raelin defines five skills of reflection: being, speaking, disclosing, testing, and probing (2002, p. 66).

The first one can be seen as the creative opening skill, enabling vertical and horizontal cognition of oneself, others, the world, and God. The queries have a metaphysical, existential nature. They approach the area of meta-knowledge in declarative and procedural dimensions, e.g., What do I know about the knowledge of self in the aspect of morality? How can I use this knowledge to help others, to build a warm community?

The second skill of reflection

> seeks to articulate a collective voice from within ourselves. In speaking, we attempt to characterize the state of the group or its meaning at a given time. It may entail summoning an image to articulate meaning, suggesting group norms, or bringing out uncertainties or unfounded assumptions. In speaking, it is not necessary to prepare words in advance. We craft our message in the moment as the meaning unfolds. (Raelin, 2002, pp. 72–73)

The queries posed by a learner should be oriented towards conveying a dialogue seen as an art of communication with oneself, others, the world, and God: How I know my dialogue partner? Do I respect him/her? How should I conduct the narrative with him/her? How do I react to my opponents? Is the dialogue creative and beneficial for both subjects?

Reflective analysis of the practical domain of these two skills can lead to the development and mastering of the third skill. J. Raelin claims

> we stay within ourselves and, at the same time, share our doubts or voice our passion. By disclosing, we may unveil feelings at a given moment based on what has transpired, or we may present a story to reveal the depth of our experience. As people disclose more about themselves, the group learns more about its membership. Another cue to promote disclosing is to ask myself what I might say to help the group know me better. (2002, 73)

The disclosing skill can be learned in a warm, educative atmosphere conducive to conveying a fruitful dialogue, discussion, discourse.

The speakers should be prepared to share their own inner experience, feelings, thoughts, or interests with others. All these things disclosed in a positive manner also become the object of reflection and meta-reflection, bearing such questions as: What do I really think about the matters discussed? What do I know about those who are around me? How can I and they benefit from this disclosure? This skill indicates the progress of the process of learning which heads towards obtaining the maturity of the next skill—testing.

Hence, this fourth reflective skill

> is an open-ended query directed toward the group as a whole that attempts to uncover new ways of thinking and behaving. When testing, we may ask the group to consider its own process or may attempt to explore underlying assumptions previously taken for granted. In testing, we are trying to promote a process of collective inquiry. (Raelin, 2002, p. 73)

This skill refers to the previous experiences, the conclusions that stem from them, etc. It can evoke either disappointment or satisfaction that may foster another step of creative thinking. The queries can go deeper in the direction of needing to face one's old beliefs, values, or attitudes in the search for the truth about oneself, others, and the world: How do I seek the truth in other people's attitudes to life? How subjective is my analysis of matters, events which occurred to me and othe The questions and feedback given to them implies the need to probe—the next reflective skill.

As the fifth reflective skill, probing requires a person, on the one hand,

> to be careful not to interrogate or make any member feel he or she has been put on the spot or on the defensive. On the other hand, probing may initially make some members uncomfortable if they are asked to consider assumptions that had been hidden even from their own consciousness. (Raelin, 2002, pp. 73–74)

It can evoke such questions as: Where do my experience and reflection go? How do I try to change my old habits, behavior, feelings, thoughts, or motivation to be a better person? How do I help others to discover various areas of reflection? What do I do to master my personal and professional life in terms of the integrity of my being?

Learning the reflective skills briefly described above can foster one's personal and social development, since they refer to oneself, others, the world, and God in a critical and creative approach. They should be taught and learned at every level of education in a manner appropriate to the student's stage of development. However, their practice requires time, a learning space, and an appropriate selection of content, which reduces the standardization of educational practices in favor of providing the teachers and learners with wider opportunities for creativity, and respecting certain principles. According to Bruner, these principles comprise, for example, the perspective and interpretative aspect of education; the aspect of overcoming the constraints of human minds by building a symbolic attitude towards education; a constructivist cultural approach to the process of transforming one's outer and inner circumstances mastering the inter-subjectivity gift that helps in developing the mental, cultural interactivity with oneself, others, and the world; the ability to externalize and produce artifacts that evoke the development of creativity; the aspect of forming the identity and sense of the value of self; and the need to implement narrative into school practice (Bruner, 2006, pp. 29–63).

All in all, learning reflective practice can be seen as a challenge when managing the processes of contemporary education, where reflective practice should find its place. Research published by Muir et al. seem to advocate this statement. They write that

> reflection on work-based practices enabled the acquisition of new knowledge by reviewing and learning from experience, arising from action and problem-solving, within a working environment. The learning is centered round live projects and challenges to individuals and organizations. The creation of knowledge,

as a shared and collective activity, is one in which people discuss ideas and share problems and solutions. (Muir et al., 2014, p. 29)

Therefore, creating the learning and teaching spaces and deploying appropriate didactic methods and techniques which foster the development of reflective practice skills should be understood as a good investment in human and social development. When I ask teachers how they teach reflective practice to their students, they acknowledge that although they use the notions of reflection, they do not focus on skills of reflective practice. Moreover, they often understand it as synonym for consideration. Apart from that, having inadequate time to complete the curriculum, they mainly focus on the instrumental knowledge which is required to prepare the students for their exams. In this light, the reflection upon meta-knowledge and meta-strategies appears pointless. Such a situation evokes a paradox. On the one hand, some are committed to the idea of achieving "tough," "pure," and concrete teaching and learning goals, while on the other hand, they expect moral/axiological progress in the students' personal and social development which should take place in the educational process. Here, the question about the educational (didactic and upbringing) goals and ways of achieving them can induce the need for a constructive change in the area of education that should go towards formative didactics. One of the factors fostering this change is hidden in the potential of appropriately used narrative techniques in any subjects.

The use of selected narrative techniques to foster the development of learners' reflective practice skills

Taking into consideration the meaning of narrative in building one's personal, social, and cultural identity (Bruner, 2006, pp. 63–67), I can claim that either neglecting or reducing the possibilities for competently implementing narrative techniques in the area of education should be objectionable. Among them are some which are connected with structural learning, such as journal of reflection, metaphorical stories, reflective

essays, digressive/reflective essays, and comparative/reflective essays (Szymańska 2017, pp. 143–163, 260–274; Ciechowska, Kusztal, Szymańska, 2019, pp. 182–184). These techniques have a formative dimension. They are structured in such a way that enables in-depth wandering across the inner personal and social areas. The learner, who observes their structural forms, can avoid the mental chaos and seek qualitative, creative problem-solving and implement the results into their personal and social life. They can be used not only for educational goals, but also for scientific research, as they gather data which are the source of experiences and reflections upon the issues assigned. These techniques can foster the learner's cognitive/humanistic approach and raise their human maturity within integral development processes. They can direct the meaning of experience and knowledge towards the formation of their attitudes to the self, others, the world, and God, which results in a transformation of their mentality, feelings, motivation, beliefs, or expectations. However, the use of these techniques demands some "technical" rules to be applied:

- sticking to the issue that evoked the reflection
- conducting the reflection in a spiral
- conveying and deepening the reflection on the formative stages: either personal, pedagogical, or professional (didactic), or personal and social for the pupils
- deploying the idea of reflecting according to the goals that are assigned by the five reflective skills described earlier)
- implementing the "cultural matrix" for carrying out the reflection, for example, a film, a piece of writing, etc. that can be used on purpose or freely
- introducing the maximum of integration into the students' way of conducting the reflection
- encouraging the students to create their own artifacts (poems and the like) if possible, regardless of the subjects being taught and learned—in this way the results of reflection can be positively reinforced and translated into progress in teaching and learning

- providing a warm, creative atmosphere which fosters the reflec-
tion in time and space

According to my own qualitative narrative research, the application
of these techniques to action research or autoethnography became pre-
cious sources of data which enabled the participants to rediscover what
"plays in their souls," their interests and hobbies. They drew attention to
the strengths and weaknesses of their personal and social lives. They
evoked and deepened their constructive critical thinking about their
knowledge and the meta-knowledge of merits, drawbacks, and obstacles
to be overcome. Moreover, the data reflected the participants' crucial
needs and values in the process of building their new qualitative identity.
These data also made me think of the pupils attending primary and sec-
ondary school. The use of narrative techniques could develop and extend
their cognitive creative skills. They could help them reveal their talents
and problems to be solved, making them more sensitive and critical. At
the same time, it could help them find their path in life, constrain the neg-
ative impact of mass media, develop their communicative skills, open
them up to higher culture outcomes, and appreciate traditions. Therefore,
the deployment of narrative techniques can also foster the development
and mastering of the skills of reflective practice, which help the learner
build and expand the space of being, speaking, disclosing, testing, and
probing, on the condition that they have enough time to reflect upon the
valuable content acquired through the educational process. Reflection,
deepened with the use of narrative techniques, also enables the learner
(pupil) to assess their own progress and growth (Marek, 2017, p. 43) in
their own integral development. It is crucial to remember the three fac-
tors—silence, "time, and thorough exploration" (Denton, 2009)—which
perform an important role in it.

I could conduct the research for some years owing to the imple-
mentation of my own concept of the portfolio project on reflection stim-
ulating personal and professional teacher development. I acknowledge
my original method of portfolio not only as a method in teacher forma-
tive education, but also as a narrative method of data collection.

REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING

Language and the Visual Arts in Education

Conclusion

To conclude, the material presented above briefly outlines the meaning of learning and reflection, seen as deep inner and outer processes forming one's personal and social environment being tightly aligned with each other. These processes should become an object of reflection in their participants' perspective of integral development, which implies the need to change one's view on some aspects of education, such as the expected knowledge, skills, and approaches which the learner should achieve. In light of the many negative situations and events taking place in the world at the local, regional, national, and international levels, the directions of contemporary education do not seem effective enough. In the world of deploying the rigid, highly standardized education into life, there is little space for reflective learning and teaching, although reflection is seen as a tool that aids in the mastering of advanced practice of education and the meta-cognitive process of learning (Williams, 1998, p. 31; Mathieson, 2016, p. 1). However, the reality is that the implementation of reflective/transformative concepts in the pedagogical and didactic art seems remote. Therefore, the formative education emerging from these concepts appears as a utopia, leaving the reflective question "Why?" open to those who take responsibility for the qualitative existence of future generations.

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The Competent Teacher of a Gifted Pupil in Early Primary School Education: Expectations versus Reality – The Author's Own Study

Abstract

The aim of the article is to present the results of a study on early primary school teachers' preparedness for working with gifted pupils. The study was conducted among 697 primary school teachers teaching in grades 1, 2, and 3 in Krakow and nearby towns. The theoretical aim of the article is to demonstrate, on the basis of literature on the subject, the most important predispositions these teachers should possess. The study has revealed that teachers are not adequately prepared to provide effective and engaging education for gifted pupils at an early school age. In the last part of the article solutions are listed which aim to improve the situation, e.g., by enriching the range of university study programs for teachers in the area of educating gifted students, creating a position of a "teacher of gifted students," creating separate centers which would support the educational development of gifted students, and extending cooperation between all educational units.

Introduction

In Poland, as in other European countries apart from the United Kingdom, there is no separate position of a teacher of gifted students. Polish law does not provide any specific requirements for the professional qualifications of teachers working with gifted students, including the first stage of compulsory education, i.e. primary school. In the Polish educational space, the identification of gifted students and the diagnosis of their abilities and development are covered by two documents: the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of August 9, 2017 on the principles of organizing and providing psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools, and institutions (Journal of Laws 2017, item 1591) and the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of August 9, 2017 on the conditions for the provision of education and care to children and young people who are disabled, socially maladjusted, or at risk of social maladjustment in kindergartens, schools, and mainstream or integrated classes (Journal of Laws 2017, No. 228, item 1578, as amended). These regulations treat working with gifted students in a very general manner, so it is the teachers who are solely responsible for working with such students. The teaching process and its results depend mainly on their competence, but also on their commitment, passion, and many other factors. Several researchers, in Poland and abroad, have investigated competencies of teachers, including early primary school teachers, who work with gifted students (Sternberg, 1999; Renzulli, 2002; Tannenbaum, 2003; Sękowski, 2001, 2004; Giza, 2006; Uszyńska-Jarmoc, 2005, 2009; Wróblewska, 2009: Limont, 2008, 2010; Żłobił, 2010; Dyrda, 2012; Szmidt, 2017; Gierczyk, 2019). The article discusses the most relevant issues selected by the author which illustrate the scope and essence of teachers' duties, competences, attitudes towards and initiatives undertaken for the benefit of gifted students, and approach to such students and their abilities.

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The duties of an early primary school teacher working with gifted pupils

The education of gifted students entails a number of duties resting with the teacher, such as diagnosing their abilities (in early primary school education, it is not the abilities themselves but the signs of the pupils' giftedness), developing individual educational plans, cooperating with parents, preparing and correcting additional tasks, preparing additional teaching materials, accompanying gifted students to meetings with the academic community, etc. The teacher should support the development of gifted students by adapting the educational process to their needs, predispositions, and abilities, mainly by differentiating tasks within compulsory and optional education, and encouraging students to participate in extracurricular activities. The teacher's role is to motivate students to engage in educational efforts on their own, which includes participating in courses and other projects for their benefit. Examples of other activities a teacher can undertake to support gifted students include inviting experts from various fields to their classes in order to stimulate such students; encouraging students' self-directed learning; extending their own knowledge regarding gifted students by, e.g., sharing experiences with other teachers or implementing good educational practices; creating support networks; and raising funds for various projects, programs, and activities (Machałek, 2013, p. 25). Due to the number and range of possible activities, the teacher should possess an unceasing willingness to act, comprehensive knowledge, specific skills and competences, an extraordinary personality, and appropriate attitudes. According to Joseph Renzulli, the creator of the Three Ring Conception of Giftedness, a teacher of gifted students should be characterized by above-average abilities, creative skills, and a great commitment to working with such students (Cieślikowska, 2008, p. 27).

It is vital to create favorable external conditions for gifted pupils at an early school age that would allow them to develop a positive attitude towards learning and developing their abilities and to discover their own individual learning style. Teachers should take care of their pupils'

intensive cognitive development in the form of daily short classes, during which they can share their knowledge with pupils and guide their further development. It is advisable to use the early years of school education to stimulate the development of gifted students in the long run. What might be particularly valuable in this endeavor are the exceptional instructional skills possessed by some teachers with outstanding minds and thorough educations, who are aware of the need to apply diverse teaching methods, with an emphasis on direct contact between teachers and students (Piotrowski, 2019, p. 100).

Competences of teachers working with gifted pupils at an early school age

Early primary school teachers who work with gifted pupils should possess relevant competences. Competence can be defined as a whole range of knowledge and skills together with relevant experience that a person possesses in order to be effective in a particular area. It has an internal dimension—all the resources mentioned above that an individual possesses—and an external dimension, the ability to use them appropriately in specific situations that require it. This external dimension involves the ability to be innovative and flexible in order to act effectively. Competences are the result of innate dispositions and professional training, but also certain attitudes, emotions, and evaluations of particular events (Kamińska, 2014, p. 54).

The teacher of a gifted student should possess not only the "standard" teacher competencies, which include those of diagnosing, planning, teaching techniques, knowledge of the subject matter, media, and communication, but also highly developed creative skills and relevant psychological and pedagogical competence.

Effective work with gifted students requires, above all, knowledge of the essence and diversity of talents and abilities and knowledge of indicators that will guide the teacher to appropriately identify them. The definition of gifted students assumed by teachers directly translates into how

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they will work with them, which includes fulfilling their emotional and cognitive needs at school. An incorrect understanding of the essence of talent may result in a failure to identify it properly, thus reducing the effectiveness of the teacher's work (Gierczyk, 2019, p. 113; Gierczyk, 2018, p. 137).

As far as creative competence is concerned, it is manifested in the teacher's unconventional, innovative, and creative activities. Creative teachers want to and are able to act in a non-standard way in order to trigger their students' independent thinking and original behavior in the educational process (Adamek & Bachałowicz, 2013, p. 16). They are able to think critically themselves and to develop critical thinking skills in their students; they do not expect ready-made solutions, patterns, etc., but are able to apply their knowledge and experience in developing theoretical assumptions and organizational and methodological solutions in their work, to efficiently and creatively solve educational problems, and to "think on their feet". (Bielski, 2017, p. 49). Creative competences can be called "meta-competences" because they "link" together all other competences that a teacher working with gifted students must possess.

The question is to what extent will teachers be able to use the competences connected with diagnosing giftedness and planning the teaching process for gifted students if they themselves are inflexible, unimaginative, and unable to create a unique and distinctive environment for teaching such students (Szmidt, 2017, p. 19). Therefore, creative competences can be placed at the very top of the list of skills necessary for working with gifted students.

As far as planning, teaching, and knowledge of the subject matter are concerned, teachers should be familiar with strategies for teaching gifted students. Two strategies are common in Europe, including Poland: speeding up the teaching process and increasing the amount of knowledge. A third option would be mixing them in the right proportions. Teachers should be able to choose the strategy that would work best for their students, depending on their individual needs and abilities. It is also crucial to be familiar with and be able to apply those teaching concepts and giftedness models that will make the education of gifted students, including pupils at an early school age, more informed, relevant, and

effective for both students and teachers. In addition, a teacher should not shy away from using activating methods, practical methods, and expressive methods, which are probably the least frequently used in Polish schools.

As mentioned above, the teacher's task is to create new or elaborate ready-made programs for a gifted student (Kuźma & Morbitzer, 2005, p. 347)—thus, project competences will definitely prove helpful. This task requires a creative attitude, which can be manifested in knowledge of a given area or areas of education, psychological and pedagogical knowledge, or the ability to predict which activities will be beneficial for a particular gifted pupil at an early school age. The teachers' ability to use their own imagination and analytical skills, and the ability to anticipate the results of given activities, are highly beneficial in working with gifted students.

Moreover, communication skills enable the teacher to communicate with students and their parents. Good contact with students determines the effectiveness of the education, especially early primary school education, because it is only thanks to a properly built relationship that students will be able to trust their teachers and show them their own abilities and talents. This will enable the teacher to gain an in-depth understanding of the students' abilities, interests, and preferred learning style. On the other hand, talking to parents can provide the teacher with information about the students' behavior at home and their extracurricular interests, which may also reveal some talents (Kuźma & Morbitzer, 2005, p. 170). Positive relationships with parents and guardians allow the teacher to engage them in the development of their children's abilities, even during early school education. These competencies will also facilitate cooperation with specialists from institutions other than the school, where gifted students can develop their abilities. Communication is one of the facets of social competences that is important in building a good relationship with gifted students, including those at an early school age, if it is accompanied by tolerance and sensitivity to the specific nature of their functioning (Limont, 2010, p. 227).

The reflection on teachers of gifted students should not miss their self-awareness and readiness to continuously work on themselves. They

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should strive for self-development and set ambitious but achievable goals, which involves continuous discovery of one's own strengths and weaknesses, as well as an awareness of one's feelings, emotions, and current needs and the ability to confront them with reality. Understanding oneself as an "agent of change" allows the teacher to function as a person who is acquiring new skills. The teacher's self-awareness shows students how to consciously "become" and obtain an objective picture of themselves. Flexibility is a feature that is the result of conscious experience, and becoming flexible results from working on oneself, combining one's knowledge and previous experience under systematic reflection with activity in the "here and now," when teachers overcome the existing pedagogical reality and stereotypes which are firmly grounded in their consciousness (Borkowka, 2015, p. 27).

It should also be emphasized that teachers of gifted students should possess knowledge and skills in the field of individual evaluation and assessment of such students' performance. As is done in Finnish schools, they could encourage gifted children to evaluate their own work and its results, their feelings and discoveries, as well as their meaning. Having a chance to do so can trigger self-criticism in these pupils, but can also equip them with a sense of achievement which will motivate them to persevere in their efforts. Such reflection undertaken by the teacher and student together leads to working on imperfections and finding areas needing improvement. It also facilitates the work of teachers who, being open and sensitive to their students, are able to notice mistakes in their work, and thus constantly improve themselves in the art of teaching and upbringing (Woltman, 2009, p. 62).

Skillful and effective work with gifted students is a daunting challenge. Much is required from a teacher of such exceptional students, including adequate knowledge and skills, being interested in talent and gifted students, and initiating activities and using personal resources appropriately for their benefit.

Methodology

The most appropriate method for research in this area of study was the quantitative method. The author used a diagnostic survey method and a questionnaire as the research tool. The main research problem was formulated in the following way:

How do early primary school teachers work with gifted pupils?

The following specific research problems were derived from the main research problem:

1. How do the respondents recognize gifted pupils at an early school age?
2. How do they organize classes for gifted pupils?
3. What problems do they most frequently encounter when working with gifted pupils?
4. What are the respondents' competences for working with gifted pupils?

The study was conducted among 697 teachers of early primary school education working in state schools in the Małopolska region of Poland, mostly in Krakow and in selected small towns in the vicinity; all of the respondents were women. The respondents were selected randomly. Some of them agreed to answer the questions, but other teachers declined to participate. The researcher had planned to survey at least 800 teachers.

The results

The respondents answered a set of questions related to working with gifted pupils. However, due to publication restrictions, the analysis presented herein is based on four multiple-choice questions which were connected to the research questions.

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The data presented in Table 1 reveal that in order to identify gifted pupils, the respondents mostly referred to their measurable achievements. Among the most significant indicators of being a gifted pupil were academic performance (654 respondents), the fact that such pupils possess broader and more in-depth knowledge than their peers (612 respondents), and their ability to learn quickly and easily (597 respondents). Fewer respondents indicated the practical application of knowledge (261 respondents), being able to work independently (193 respondents), and being active and inquisitive (126 respondents). Very few respondents (59) pointed to creative thinking and providing innovative solutions to educational problems. Most respondents were unable to determine gifted pupils by their IQ—only 18 respondents chose this answer.

Table 1

Identifying a gifted pupil

Characteristics of a gifted pupil	Number of respondents
learns quickly and easily	597
possesses knowledge beyond the basic knowledge and skills required at this stage of education	612
shows signs of creative thinking and provides innovative solutions to educational problems	59
has a high IQ	18
is active, inquisitive, and curious about the world	126
gets good grades and has a record of other academic achievements	654
works independently	193
is able to apply acquired knowledge in educational situations	261

Almost unanimously, the respondents (690 respondents) stated that they identified pupils while observing them (Table 2). Some of them (49 respondents) confirmed their observations regarding pupils' abilities by talking to their parents and the school's pedagogical specialist (21 respondents). Only a handful of respondents (13) used professional diagnostic tools, and only 4 referred to the identification of a gifted pupil by a counselling center.

Table 2
Identifying a gifted pupil

The way a gifted pupil is identified	Number of respondents
observing the pupil's abilities during class	690
discussing the pupil's abilities with parents	21
using special diagnostic tools for teachers, such as scales, sheets, tests, etc.	13
discussing the pupil's abilities with the school's pedagogical specialist	49
referring to a recommendation issued by psychological and pedagogical counselling centers	4

The most frequently used method in working with gifted pupils in grades 1–3 indicated by the respondents was individualizing their class work, mainly through diversifying it and following the pupils' interests (681 respondents; Table 3). They also noted the importance of recommending regular participation in extracurricular activities at school and outside of school to gifted pupils (458 respondents) and verbally encouraging their development (346 respondents). Thirty-one respondents claimed to use activating methods in their work with such pupils, which is a rather small proportion. Likewise, very few respondents admitted to preparing the learning environment in such a way that gifted pupils could explore it and look for original solutions by themselves (11 respondents). Hardly anyone (2 respondents) prepared individual curricula for gifted pupils.

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Table 3

Working with a gifted pupil

Ways of working with a gifted pupil	Number of respondents
individualization of teaching through additional and varied tasks for a gifted pupil in a heterogeneous group of pupils and satisfying his/her individual interests	681
preparing the learning environment so that the pupil could discover knowledge on their own	11
using activating methods	31
creating individual curricula and working individually with the gifted pupil	2
recommending extracurricular activities (extra classes, competitions, children's university, etc.) to a gifted pupil	458
open identification of the pupil's abilities in the group and increased verbal encouragement for their development	346

The problems connected with teaching gifted pupils most frequently noted by the respondents were problems with proper socialization with their peers (rejection or alienation) and their negative personality traits—impatience, perfectionism, excessive energy, and obstinacy (516 respondents; Table 4)—as well as insufficient time and large, heterogeneous classes (696 respondents). A lack of cooperation with other agents of the educational process was indicated by 571 respondents, and a lack of an adequate extracurricular activities was noted by 210 respondents.

Table 4

Problems connected with working with a gifted pupil

Problems connected with working with a gifted pupil	Number of respondents
gifted pupils' low socialization levels and emotional problems—displaying negative personality traits	516
insufficient time and large, heterogeneous groups of pupils in the classroom	696
a lack of interesting extracurricular activities at school and outside of school	210
a lack of adequate support in the development of gifted pupils from other participants of the educational process (parents, headmasters, school's pedagogy specialist, etc.)	571

Conclusions and recommendations

In conclusion, the data presented herein reveal that the respondents' diagnosis of gifted pupils is inaccurate and insufficient. Teachers should not only study the definition of a gifted pupil in the literature on the subject, but should also learn how to use professional tools to diagnose such pupils. Moreover, their planning and creative skills could be better. In fact, many of them declare that they individualize their work with gifted pupils, but this is done superficially and certainly inadequately. They only choose such methods of working with gifted pupils that do not require too much effort on their part. They do not implement the most creative and individually tailored methods, such as individual teaching programs. They also willingly send gifted students away to participate in extracurricular activities instead of working with them more during lessons. Additionally, they also lack time for classes dedicated to gifted pupils, which is understandable having to teach so many heterogeneous groups.

It would probably be beneficial for teachers to develop their communication skills in order to encourage the often reluctant parents to work together to develop the pupils' abilities. The analysis of the respondents' attitudes towards working with gifted pupils reveals that they are not particularly appreciative of the signs of giftedness among pupils at an early school age, and that they do not know how to aid in their development.

The data obtained in the study do not paint an optimistic picture of a Polish teacher of gifted pupils at an early school age. Therefore, it is worth formulating certain recommendations in this area, such as improved training for potential teachers of gifted pupils within their university studies; providing teachers with adequate substantive and organizational support at school and in the municipality by, e.g., creating expert teams in the field of talent management or encouraging cooperation between all teachers of a given gifted pupil; creating a separate position of a "teacher of gifted students," or at least a coordinator for teaching such students who would organize and support teachers in this respect; and initiating regular cooperation with other institutions, including universities, which more and more frequently offer help in the development of gifted

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students. However, teachers also complain about a lack of support from parents and head teachers, as well as inadequate socialization of gifted pupils with their classmates.

At this point it is worth mentioning, by way of comparison, a study from 2019, conducted by Marcin Gierczyk among 200 teachers working with gifted students within compulsory primary and secondary education in Poland and England. The researcher found that teachers quite accurately diagnose gifted students, listing many important constitutive features of giftedness, and that they apply a whole range of forms and methods when teaching these students (Gierczyk, 2019, pp. 126–128). These results might stem from the fact that teachers who work with older gifted students, including teachers of particular subjects, treat the development of their abilities more seriously than those working in early primary school education, perhaps considering those abilities more stable and meaningful. It is all the more important to inspire and support teachers of gifted pupils in grades 1–3 to pay more attention to identifying and developing their pupils' abilities, as this is a formative period in their development. Unfortunately, neither the legal regulations of the Polish education system nor the literature on the subject—including publications devoted to methods of teaching—support the work of teachers with gifted students, including those at an early school age. Thus, matching modern methods of teaching with common knowledge and the contemporary reality forces teachers to reach deeper layers of their own experiences and reflections (Śliwerski, 2019, p. 124) in order to improve the education of gifted students.

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The Use of Elements of Translanguaging in Teaching Third or Additional Languages: Some Advantages and Limitations

Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to analyze some advantages and limitations of the use of translanguaging, or the mobilization of students' whole multilingual repertoires to facilitate understanding and learning (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012, p. 655), in the teaching of third or additional languages (De Angelis's [2007] term) at the university level. The paper is based on two studies by the author, on the use of translanguaging in the teaching of Spanish (Włosowicz, in press-a) and of French (Włosowicz, in press-b). It analyzes the use of translanguaging, including code-switching (see García, 2009), for the purposes of explanation and awareness-raising, taking into consideration the increased language learning experience and awareness of multilingual students (cf. Hufeisen, 2018), and its perception by the students. However, despite its advantages, it also has limitations related to students' lack of experience with translanguaging and unwillingness to use their multilingual repertoires in learning particular languages.

Keywords: translanguaging, multilingual repertoires, language awareness

Teresa Maria Włosowicz

Introduction

The studies presented in this article aim to investigate the advantages of using elements of translanguaging in the teaching of third or additional languages at the university level, as well as its limitations. Since the context in which the studies were conducted only allowed for limited use of translanguaging, it seems better to describe the activities as 'elements of translanguaging', rather than full-fledged translanguaging, used in bilingual and multilingual communities for the negotiation of meaning in spoken interactions (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2019; Li, 2018). The term "third or additional languages", introduced by De Angelis (2007, pp. 10–11), is used here deliberately, since, firstly, L3 learning is qualitatively different from L2 learning (Hufeisen, 2018), so it cannot be treated as synonymous with second language acquisition (De Angelis, 2007, p. 10) and, secondly, even minimal knowledge of a language influences one's multilingual repertoire (De Angelis, 2007, p. 126); that is why L4, L5, etc. acquisition cannot be termed "third language acquisition."

In general, it can be assumed that translanguaging, as a process involving two (Baker, 2011, p. 288, as cited in Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012, p. 655) or more languages (Lewis et al., 2012, p. 655; Li, 2018, pp. 13–14) to facilitate understanding and learning, can be very useful in teaching third or additional languages, capitalizing on the students' existing knowledge and language awareness, which can allow them to exploit similarities and differences between their languages more effectively. However, in a group of international students who possess a variety of language repertoires, translanguaging can be supposed to take a different form than, for example, in a community of bilingual or multilingual speakers who switch and mix languages on a daily basis (Li, 2018; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2019), as not of all their languages are comprehensible to the whole group. In fact, as Duarte (2018, p. 13) explains, even in multilingual classrooms translanguaging can perform different functions which may or may not require the teacher to know all of the students' languages. Moreover, as adult learners, university students have certain expectations based on their earlier language learning experience (Włosowicz, 2016) which also need to be taken

into consideration. Therefore, in the context of teaching multilingual groups at a university, translanguaging is likely to have certain limitations.

At the same time, it must be stressed that the studies were carried out in the Polish context, where the society does not use multiple languages on a daily basis and where foreign languages are mainly taught in formal, instructional settings, so the use of translanguaging cannot be assumed to be identical with that observed in bilingual classrooms in the USA (Allard, Apt, & Sacks, 2018) or multilingual ones in South Africa (Paradowski, 2020), the Netherlands, or Luxembourg (Duarte, 2018). Students who have been taught not to mix languages may regard this approach to teaching and learning experimental and unusual, and may require encouragement before trying this new way of mobilizing their multilingual repertoires. This is particularly true of Study 1, where the participants were mostly native speakers of Polish, studying Spanish in Polish university settings, where not only does the teaching have to follow certain guidelines, but the verification of teaching and learning outcomes must also adhere to target language norms. On the other hand, the participants in Study 2 had different native languages and different language repertoires, and had been taught foreign languages in different ways in their native countries. Nonetheless, firstly, in Poland they were required to follow a fairly unified course (even though the teacher attempted to personalize the explanations and feedback as much as possible) and, secondly, as the questionnaire revealed, the mobilization of multilingual repertoires was new to them as well. Therefore, the term translanguaging is used here in a broad sense, as the use of multilingual repertoires, not necessarily for the negotiation of meaning in multilingual classrooms—with extensive use of code-switching and code-mixing—but also the use of code-switching regarded as a form of translanguaging (García, 2009) for expressing the intended meaning in a vocabulary task, or referencing the similarities and differences between languages for the purpose of raising language awareness. In fact, it can be assumed that the extent and functions of translanguaging are likely to vary considerably from one context to another, due to differences in the learners' language experience and the classroom context, as well as the social context and the educational system in the country.

The paper is based mainly on two of the author's studies, one concerning the use of translanguaging in Spanish as a third or additional language (Włosowicz, in press-a) and one investigating multilingual students' acquisition of French and their perception of translanguaging for the purpose of awareness-raising during the classes (Włosowicz, in press-b), as well as on earlier research on the topic. Based on the results, an attempt will be made to suggest some applications for translanguaging in higher education, and to present some limitations of its use in both teaching and evaluation.

Translanguaging as an Approach to Language Teaching and Use

Translanguaging has been defined by Baker (2011, p. 288, as quoted in Lewis et al., 2012, p. 655) as "the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, and gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages", although it can involve more than two languages as well. In education, it is "the planned and systematic use of two languages inside the same lesson" (Baker, 2011, p. 288, as quoted in MacSwan, 2017, p. 170). According to Lewis et al., in the school context, "translanguaging tries to draw on all the linguistic resources of the child to maximize understanding and achievement" (2012, p. 655). Consequently, "both languages are used in a dynamic and functionally integrated manner to organize and mediate mental processes in understanding, speaking, literacy, and, not least, learning" (Lewis et al., 2012, p. 655).

Still, in the case of multilingual students, it is possible to mediate between three or more languages, though—given the differences between the students' language repertoires—the process must be assumed to be largely personalized and (as will be discussed in more detail below) it requires of the teacher a high level of multilingual proficiency and language awareness.

The origins of translanguaging can be traced back to Williams's research (1994, 1996; García & Li, 2014, p. 20) on alternating between English and Welsh in both receptive and productive use, as a pedagogical

practice. It might thus be regarded as a fairly controversial concept, especially in view of the traditional approach to language teaching and learning, which has always involved teaching languages in isolation, either establishing connections between L2 (or L3, etc.) and L1—as in the grammar translation method—but excluding other languages, or even eliminating L1 as well, in an attempt to avoid interference—as in the direct method (Yu, 2001, p. 176, as cited in Cummins, 2008, p. 66). As Gorter and Cenoz remark, "traditionally, languages have been kept separate in school settings" (2017, p. 235). Similarly, the exclusion of the native language from foreign language classes is one of the assumptions which "are rarely discussed or presented to new teachers but are taken for granted as the foundation-stones of language teaching" (Cook, 2001, pp. 403–404, as cited in Gorter & Cenoz, 2017, p. 235).

However, researchers such as Cook (2001, as cited in Cummins, 2008, p. 66) and Cummins question the "'two solitudes' assumption" (Cummins, 2008, p. 65) and call for the inclusion of the principled use of L1 in L2 classes, for example, in the form of translation. According to Cook (2001, as cited in Cummins, 2008, p. 66), the use of L1 should be based on the following criteria: *efficiency*, or the possibility of communicating certain content more effectively in L1; *learning*, as a result of combining both languages; *naturalness*, or capitalizing on the fact that learners feel more comfortable discussing some topics in their native language; and, finally, *external relevance*, or the acquisition of skills that will be useful outside the classroom. Therefore, in the broad sense adopted here, the translation of target language words into the learners' native language (not necessarily Polish, but also Spanish in the case of the Spanish-speaking students in Study 2, to make them aware of certain similarities between French and Spanish), can also be considered a form of translanguaging.

In fact, languages in the bilingual or multilingual mind are not stored in isolation, but there is a certain degree of interconnection between them, depending, on the one hand, on the language subsystem (for example, in the areas of syntax and semantics, the neural connections between languages are largely shared, while phonology uses different networks; Franceschini, Zappatore, & Nitsch, 2003, p. 164), and, on the other hand,

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on the context and way in which the languages were acquired (for example, whether the languages were acquired separately or by establishing connections between L1 and L2 words), as well as on the level of proficiency (Cieślicka, 2000). On the basis of the organization of the multilingual mental lexicon, Müller-Lancé (2003, p. 131) has distinguished three types of multilinguals: a "multilinguoid" possesses strong connections between the mental representations of all his or her languages and a high level of metalinguistic awareness; a "bilinguoid" has connections between two languages, the native language and the dominant foreign language; and a "monolinguoid" is multilingual only "on paper," but he or she behaves like a monolingual. As he explains, multilinguoids learn their languages with cognitive methods, establishing connections between their languages, while bilinguoids acquire the preferred language abroad and monolinguoids "are the result of an unhappy combination of reserved temperament, monitor overuse, and a misguided foreign language education in the classroom"—in particular, "ignoring common features between L1, L2, L3, etc. instead of stressing them" (Müller-Lancé, 2003, p. 131). Certainly, this is a fairly general distinction, as more fine-grained analyses of the multilingual mental lexicon take into consideration, for example, the connections between lexical items and the underlying concepts, shared or not by the languages (e.g. Pavlenko, 2009), but for the purposes of this article it can be assumed that learning strategies (and to some extent teaching methods) play an important role in the organization of multilingual repertoires.

Indeed, the recognition of common features can be beneficial to the learning of further languages. Cummins (2008, p. 69) distinguished five types of transfer whose use depends on the sociolinguistic situation: "transfer of conceptual elements" (understanding the underlying concepts behind words, e.g., "photosynthesis"), "transfer of metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies" (mnemonic devices, vocabulary learning strategies, etc.), "transfer of pragmatic aspects of language use" (e.g., using gestures to aid communication), "transfer of specific linguistic elements" and "transfer of phonological awareness." As learners themselves admit, allowing them to use their L1s in the classroom helps them to understand more and to be more confident about the L2 (Cummins, 2008, p. 71).

Certainly, the use of translanguaging is likely to vary between different contexts of language acquisition and use. On the one hand, there are communities in which mixing languages is the norm; for example, Li (2018, pp. 13–14) presented a dialogue between two Singaporeans which involved the use of seven languages: Hokkien, Teochew, Mandarin, Malay, Cantonese, Singlish, and English and which is typical of that speech community. Similarly, Otheguy et al. (2019, pp. 17–22), based on a body of empirical evidence provided by Latino speakers in the USA, claim that bilinguals possess one unitary system of language competence and not two systems. In their view, "externally named languages" (2019, p. 5), such as English, Spanish, etc., are only "anchored in *sociocultural beliefs*, not in psycholinguistic properties of the underlying system" (Otheguy et al., 2019, p. 4, their emphasis). In their view (2019, pp. 8–9), even though the internal differentiation of bilingual systems is obvious, it "corresponds to the social division between English and Spanish" (Otheguy et al., 2019, p. 8) and the selection of lexical and structural resources depends on the situation, the interlocutor, etc. In fact, this view of translanguaging does not recognize code-switching, because code-switching assumes switching between two languages and—if competence is unitary—there are no two languages to switch between, but rather there is a broader system to choose words and structures from (Otheguy et al., 2019, p. 16). However, in an earlier work, García (2009, p. 140) regarded code-switching as a kind of translanguaging and was arguably correct, as code-switching involves capitalizing on a learner's whole bilingual or multilingual repertoire to facilitate communication and, consequently, achievement. Indeed, in their original definitions of translanguaging, both Baker (2011, as cited in Lewis et al., 2012, p. 655) and Williams (1994, 1996, as cited in García & Li, 2014, p. 20) recognized the existence of two languages in a bilingual classroom and alternation between them, rather than unitary competence without any boundaries between the languages involved.

By contrast, MacSwan represents "a *multilingual perspective on translanguaging*, which acknowledges the existence of discrete languages and multilingualism … along with other 'treasured icons' of the field, including language rights, mother tongues, and codeswitching"

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(2017, p. 169, his emphasis). In his integrated multilingual model, "bilinguals have a single system with many shared grammatical resources but with some internal language-specific differentiation as well" (MacSwan, 2017, p. 179). On the basis of code-switching research, he concludes that differences in the structural patterns of various languages are evidenced by bilingual speakers themselves (MacSwan, 2017, p. 182). Similar evidence is provided by Toribio (2001), who has shown that Spanish/English bilinguals are aware of the structural differences and that code-switching requires a certain level of competence in both languages. In fact, even non-fluent bilinguals show some sensitivity to the acceptability of some switches and not others (Toribio, 2001, p. 225).

Moreover, as shown by Williams and Hammarberg (1998), even though multilinguals do mix their languages, they do not do it indiscriminately: the different languages play different roles in communication. In their polyglot speaking model, they distinguish four categories of switches: EDIT (self-repair or facilitating interaction), META (a comment on the communicative situation, or framing an utterance), INSERT (inserting a non-target language word or phrase, e.g., to elicit the target word), and WIPP (Without Identified Pragmatic Purpose, or switches made by mistake, due to the interaction between languages, as evidenced by immediate self-correction; Williams & Hammarberg, 1998, pp. 306–308). Still, the switches tend to take place in languages which play particular roles; for example, the native language has the INSTRUMENTAL role and serves the META function in particular, while WIPP switches tend to involve the DEFAULT SUPPLIER, which is a foreign language (i.e., it has an L2 status) characterized by the learner's high proficiency, typological proximity to the target language, and recency of use (Williams & Hammarberg, 1998, pp. 318–323).

Arguably, what is particularly important for the amount and kind of translanguaging that is used is the context. It is certainly different in a bilingual community in which mixing languages is the norm (Li, 2018; Otheguy et al., 2019), where the speakers may not even recognize certain words as belonging to the non-target language, as in the system shift phenomenon (De Angelis, 2005; see below), and in a community where

the boundaries between the languages are clearly defined, as in the case of Polish learners of English or Spanish. For example, in multilingual classrooms, where there are immigrant children from different countries and the teacher does not even have to know all their native languages, translanguaging performs different functions and requires of the teacher different degrees of competence in the languages involved, from fluency to no competence at all (Duarte, 2018). On the basis of studies carried out in Luxemburg and in Friesland, the Netherlands, Duarte (2018, p. 13) distinguished three functions of official translanguaging (in a school context and not among the immigrants themselves): the symbolic function, which serves to acknowledge the pupils' languages and does not require of the teacher any proficiency in them (e.g., each child says "hello" in his or her native language), the scaffolding function (used for acknowledgement and organizational purposes; proficiency is needed only in the instruction languages), and the epistemological function (as in content and integrated learning [CLIL]; proficiency in both languages is indispensable).

However, just as education should not ignore the language repertoires of multilingual pupils, but should at least acknowledge them, if not involve them all in making meaning and sharing knowledge, it should also take them into consideration in evaluation. According to Gorter and Cenoz (2017), assessment should adopt a more holistic, multilingual approach. They cite a study by Gathercole et al. (2013) in which bilingual children were tested in both their languages separately, taking into account their home languages. As Gorter and Cenoz conclude, "the importance of this study lies in the fact that participants are assessed differently according to their linguistic background and not as deficient speakers of their second languages" (2017, p. 242). In their view, traditional approaches may have been useful in the past, as learner populations were more homogeneous, but now, in the globalized world, even though students from different linguistic backgrounds have to achieve a common goal (e.g., to learn English), assessment should be more holistic and involve, for example, translanguaging (Gorter & Cenoz, 2017, pp. 244–245).

Even so, requirements concerning language courses at university are still largely traditional, and the students' knowledge has to be assessed

by means of standard tests and documented. Thus, assessing multilingual students on the basis of their native languages and language repertoires does not seem very realistic. Yet, while written tests have to be the same for the whole group, regardless of their native languages, assessment opportunities, or "any actions, interactions, or artifacts (planned or unplanned, deliberate or unconscious, explicit or embedded) which have the potential to provide information on the qualities of a learner's (or group of learners') performance" (Hill & McNamara, 2012, p. 397, their emphasis) might to some extent take into consideration the students' multilingual repertoires and, for example, point out to them the sources of errors caused by negative transfer, recognize the progress of students who can use their language resources efficiently, or those whose L1s are distant from the target language and who need to make more effort than the others.

It might be argued that translanguaging constitutes a solution to many problems related to linguistic diversity in schools. García and Li emphasize its transformative nature, saying that "as new configurations of language practices are generated, old understandings and structures are released, thus transforming not only subjectivities, but also cognitive and social structures" (2014, p. 3). However, even though they believe that "human beings have a natural Translanguaging Instinct" (García & Li, 2014, p. 32), they admit that it is not necessarily spontaneous. Rather, "students need practice and engagement in translanguaging, as much as they need practice of standard features used for academic purposes" (García & Li, 2014, pp. 71–72). In fact, in Jaspers's (2018) view, translanguaging has its limitations and it does not have to be the transforming force García and Li (2014) regard it to be; it may even become an ideology and—as Jaspers remarks, "translanguaging in some of its representations becomes a constraining force that marginalizes, if not silences, particular views" (2018, p. 5). For example, as shown in Charalambous et al. (2016, as cited in Jaspers, 2018, p. 7), promoting translanguaging in a context that is unfavorable to it can decrease pupils' well-being, as in the case of introducing Turkish in a primary school in Greek Cyprus. Similarly, forcing Polish students to switch freely between Polish, English, and

Spanish would probably have felt quite unnatural in the formal instruction context. Indeed, as observed by Testa, following Otwinowska (2016) and Kucharczyk (2018), "Poland is characterized for being a strikingly monolingual country" (2018, p. 70) and most Poles learn foreign languages at school but do not have contact with cultural or linguistic diversity (Kucharczyk, 2018, p. 44, as cited in Testa, 2018, p. 70). In the case of international students, their language experiences could be different and some could actually be used to speaking two languages in their home countries (e.g., switching between Ukrainian and Russian; Włosowicz & Kopeć, 2018), but that might not necessarily result in spontaneous translanguaging in the university context in Poland. In fact, language awareness is not limited to an awareness of similarities and differences between languages or to intuitions about the target language (see James, 1996, below), but it can also be assumed to involve an awareness of what the interlocutor may or may not understand. Consequently, while pointing out similarities between French and Spanish may be useful to native speakers and learners of Spanish, it is unlikely that a spontaneous mixture of Spanish and French would be comprehensible to the whole group, and a spontaneous mixture of Georgian or Azerbaijani and French would be even less so. Thus, even though in immigrant contexts translanguaging allows children to feel safe speaking their home languages (Duarte, 2018), in a university context it might serve such purposes as awareness-raising. Enforced translanguaging, however, could become what Jaspers calls "a constraining force" (2018, 5).

Multilingual Learners' Language Awareness

Undoubtedly, foreign language learning by adults, as in the case of university students, is a conscious process and involves more or less reliance on analytical skills. As mentioned above, certain skills, such as phonological awareness or vocabulary learning strategies, can be transferred from L1 to L2 (Cummins, 2008), or, it can be assumed, from one foreign language to another. James defines language awareness "as

the possession of metacognitions about language in general, some bit of language, or a particular language over which one already has skilled control and a coherent set of intuitions" (1996, p. 139). By contrast, consciousness-raising involves making the learner aware of what he or she does not know yet and needs to learn. In other words, consciousness-raising is an "activity that develops the ability to locate and identify the *discrepancy* between one's present state of knowledge and a goal state of knowledge" (James, 1996, p. 141). As James remarks, both language awareness and consciousness-raising involve noticing certain elements of the native and/or the foreign language, and foreign language elements that differ from those of the mother tongue are particularly salient, which is why it is easier to identify errors based on negative transfer (1996, p. 143). However, salience may be of two kinds: inherently salient elements are universally noticeable and, as a result, more likely to be acquired, whereas contrast-dependent or cross-linguistic salience makes such items less likely to be acquired (James, 1996, p. 143). Consequently, to make learners aware of the differences between the native and the foreign language, James recommends "classroom-based CA [contrastive analysis]" with a metacognitive dimension (1996, p. 145). In other words, making learners aware of the differences between L1 and L2 (and, it can be assumed, L3, L4, etc.) is likely to facilitate the acquisition of those elements which are different.

It can thus be assumed that what Cenoz calls "pedagogical translanguaging", (2017, p. 193) or the use of translanguaging as a planned, systematic activity, can be beneficial to foreign language learning, if it is aimed at raising students' awareness of the similarities and differences between the language currently being studied and languages previously learned. Indeed, language awareness can facilitate learning, for example, noticing the similarities between English, German, and Swedish facilitates learning Swedish a great deal (Hufeisen & Marx, 2004; Włosowicz, 2018). In the area of vocabulary, the use of cognates for developing learners' cross-linguistic language awareness was studied by Müller-Lancé (2003) and Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2011), among others. Indeed, similarities between words facilitate reading comprehension (including

intercomprehension—the comprehension of related languages, even ones the learner has not studied; Müller-Lancé, 2003) and vocabulary learning. However, in the present study, the awareness of similarities and differences is not limited to vocabulary, but includes grammar structures and language chunks used in particular situations (e.g., ¿Qué le pongo?) as well.

In general, multilinguals have been shown to possess a higher level of language awareness than monolinguals learning a second language. In her research, Jessner showed that competence in two or more languages could result in increased metalinguistic awareness, which constitutes "a key component in the cognitive aspects involved in language learning" (1999, p. 203). In particular, it "plays a central and facilitating role in the acquisition of additional languages" (Jessner, 1999, p. 207). Indeed, as shown by Klein, bilinguals learning their L3 outperformed monolinguals learning their L2 in learning lexical items, in setting parameters for marked structures—such as preposition stranding (e.g., What are you talking *about*?), and "mapping lexical items onto constructions resulting from the new settings" (1995, p. 451). Klein hypothesizes that this may be due either to multilinguals' higher level of metalinguistic awareness and better analytical skills or to their less conservative approach to grammar and openness to different structures, but she remarks that "some previous studies show a correlation between [multilinguals'] greater metalinguistic abilities and improved syntactic skill" (1995, p. 453).

Indeed, the more language learning experience, the higher the level of language awareness seems to be. As Hufeisen's (2018) Factor Model 2.1 shows, the learning of consecutive languages involves an increasing number of factors. While the factors involved in L1 acquisition are either neurophysiological or learner-external (input, the learning environment, etc.), L2 acquisition also involves affective and cognitive factors (language awareness, learning strategies, etc.) and factors specific to the L1; even the learner-external factors are more numerous, as they include the teacher's role, educational aims, learning traditions, etc. In L3 acquisition, a new group of factors appears, namely, foreign-language-specific factors: "individual foreign language learning experiences and strategies (the ability

to compare, transfer, and make interlingual connections), previous language interlanguages, and interlanguage of the target language(s)" (Hufeisen, 2018, p. 186). On the other hand, L4 acquisition is less qualitatively different: although there are more languages (or rather interlanguages) in the system, and thus more language-specific factors (specific to L2, L3, etc.), no additional type of factors comes into play (Hufeisen, 2018, pp. 184–186).

However, as shown by De Angelis (2005), multilinguals' experience with several languages may not necessarily result in the accurate perception of similarities and differences between the languages. Instead, it may lead to the perception of foreign languages as closer to each other than to the native language, regardless of the actual typological distance. The phenomenon of system shift, or the transfer of lexical items from one language to another, often without recognizing the source of transfer (De Angelis, 2005, pp. 10–11), is predominantly due to two factors: "perception of correctness" and "association of foreignness" (De Angelis, 2005, pp. 11–12). In her words, "*perception of correctness* refers to multilinguals' resistance to incorporating L1 linguistic knowledge into interlanguage production when other information is available for them to use" (De Angelis, 2005, p. 11, her emphasis). This is due to the perception of the native language as too distant from the target language, so the transfer of L1 words is regarded as incorrect by definition. On the other hand, attributing the status of "foreign languages" to L2, L3, etc. "results in a cognitive association between foreign languages that is not established between the native language and a foreign language" (De Angelis, 2005, p. 12). As a result, learners block L1 transfer and prefer to transfer words from one foreign language to another. It might thus be assumed that, in multilingual learners, translanguaging might actually work quite well, and that association of foreignness might prompt them to transfer words and, possibly, structures, from one language to another, in different directions, provided some similarity was perceived. However, as will be shown below, this occurs to some extent, but is not so straightforward.

Last but not least, in the context of multilingual language awareness, teachers' awareness needs to be mentioned as well. According to García

(2008, p. 393), given the increasingly multilingual student populations, multilingual awareness should be a part of all teachers' education. Indeed, teachers themselves recognize foreign languages as a vital component of education, both for the purposes of international communication and for making learners more open-minded, giving them access to different sources of knowledge, etc. Still, as they admit, learners should be motivated, but not forced, to become multilingual (Włosowicz, 2019, p. 227). Moreover, as shown by Otwinowska, even though teachers view multilingualism as an asset and believe cross-linguistic comparisons to be helpful in learning, they often "lack preparation or confidence to apply their own awareness in practice" (Otwinowska, 2014, p. 115). Moreover, in their opinion, "referring to L3–Ln languages, whose level is worse than the language they teach, seemed unprofessional, or even harmful" (Otwinowska, 2014, p. 115). In fact, as Otwinowska observes, they are not prepared to do so during their teacher training, which is why they prefer to keep the languages separate and to avoid revealing their knowledge of languages other than English (2014, p. 115). Therefore, as teachers are taught to stick to the traditional approach and to keep their languages separate, translanguaging seems quite unlikely, at least on the teachers' part.

However, it is possible that multilingual students use their own strategies, based not only on the instruction they have received, but also on their own language awareness and cross-linguistic analysis, and that they use translanguaging as long as their production in a single language is not evaluated. Alternatively, they may be used to traditional methods and be reluctant to use translanguaging, both in their individual work and even in classroom discussions aimed at developing their multilingual awareness.

The Studies

As mentioned in the introduction, the article is based on two of the author's studies, which investigated multilingual students' use of translanguaging in different contexts and language combinations. One study,

on translanguaging as the mobilization of the whole linguistic repertoire in Spanish as a third or additional language, concerned the students' use of translanguaging when prompted to do so, to compensate for the lack of lexical items, and to consult their multilingual competence when simple Polish–Spanish connections were not enough. By contrast, in the other study, the use of some amount of translanguaging, for the purpose of raising students' awareness of similarities and differences between French and other languages, was introduced by the teacher during the French language course. As the studies will be presented in detail elsewhere, the present paper focuses on their most important implications for the use of translanguaging in foreign language teaching in higher education, as well as on its limitations.

The research questions are therefore as follows: Firstly, to what extent and for what purposes do multilingual students use translanguaging and what does it reveal about their multilingual awareness? Secondly, how do they perceive the use of translanguaging by the teacher and awareness-raising activities? Third, what are thus the possible applications of translanguaging in language teaching in a university context and, simultaneously, what are the limitations of its use?

Study 1: Translanguaging in Spanish as a Third or Additional Language

Participants: The study was conducted on 26 participants learning Spanish as a third or additional language (L4, L5, etc.). They all had basic competence (A1/A2) in Spanish, or intermediate at the most (B1). Seven of them were English Philology students from the Mysłowice branch of Ignatianum University in Krakow or the Krakow branch of the University of Social Sciences in Łódź, with Polish (six participants) and Russian (one participant) as their native languages. They took a Spanish-language course with the author, who, whenever possible, drew their attention to similarities between Spanish and English (e.g., the Present Perfect and Pretérito Perfecto), Spanish and Polish (e.g., the use of the present

indicative for both continuous and habitual activities), or even Spanish and Russian (for instance, single verbs rather than phrases, e.g., *desayunar* and *завтракать* [to have breakfast]). Apart from Polish (and, in one case, Russian), English, and some Spanish, they had also studied French or German at some point.

The other group consisted of 19 Romance Philology students from the University of Silesia and Jagiellonian University who were studying Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian or—in the case of one person—Romanian. Even though their coursework focused on the Romance languages, their language repertoires were quite varied and—apart from having Polish as L1 (one person indicated two L1s, Polish and Italian) and knowing Romance languages in different combinations (e.g., Spanish and Portuguese, Spanish and French, etc.)—they had all studied English (otherwise, they would not have been able to do the tasks and the questionnaire); four had also studied German. Their language repertoires were thus quite varied, but, as Van Gelderen et al. (2003, p. 23) have pointed out, multilingual groups are very likely to be more heterogeneous than the research design assumes.

Method: The study consisted of two parts: three language tasks involving the use of at least two languages (Spanish and English), if not more (for example, Portuguese), and a questionnaire, which are presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, respectively. The first task allowed the students to fill in the gaps in two dialogues with words from Spanish or another language (e.g., English, but also French, Portuguese, Italian, etc.). The aim was to make the students use translanguaging for communication purposes: for lack of a Spanish word, they could express the target meaning, using, for example, an English one. Some of the target words were provided in a box, but, in order to use them, the students had to know them. As the words were quite basic, such as the names of foods, they could be assumed they would have already been studied by Romance Philology students, given the place of Spanish in their curricula, while the English Philology students had in fact studied them.) As the assessment of translanguaging cannot be limited to correctness in only one

language, the responses were classified according to their communicative value rather than monolingual norms, e.g., a correctly used English word was also accepted as correct; nevertheless, grammatical correctness was not abandoned altogether and the English words were supposed to meet the syntactic constraints as well. Thus, even though the target language norms could be regarded as a point of reference (for example, because the students' progress had to be evaluated and documented), the study did not assume strict adherence to monolingual Spanish norms, but rather focused on the comprehensibility of the responses. While a correctly used Spanish, English, French, etc. word was classified as correct, a response that was still comprehensible in the context and could convey the intended information, even partly, was regarded as "partly correct." By contrast, an incomprehensible or contextually incompatible answer (e.g. *ochocientos gramos de calcetín*—eight hundred grams of sock, instead of some kind of food) was classified as "incorrect," while unfilled gaps (because of failure to retrieve a word, uncertainty, etc.) were labelled "avoidance." Since the students were learning Spanish as a foreign language and the existence of boundaries between the languages was obvious to them, code-switching as the use of two languages to express the intended meanings was also regarded as a form of translanguaging.

The second task involved translating English words and expressions into Spanish in sentence contexts, to force the students to consult both their Spanish and English mental lexicons. In other words, translanguaging in this case involved the use of the whole multilingual repertoire, although not by using words from another language, but through translation, which according to Cummins (2008) can also be treated as a form of translanguaging. Finally, the third task had the opposite focus: it involved the identification and correction of errors in Spanish, but the errors were based on negative transfer from English, Polish, or both; so, rather than using translanguaging to make meaning (cf. Lewis et al., 2012), the students were supposed to rely on their awareness of the differences between those languages. On the other hand, the questionnaire concerned their perception of difficulty in learning Spanish, the influence of their native languages on Spanish, and the tasks they had just completed.

Discussion of the results: In Task 1, translanguaging was generally used in the dialogues to a limited extent. In the English Philology group, twelve switches into English were observed (e.g., *¿Qué le want?* for *¿Qué le pongo?* ["How can I help you?/What would you like?"], as asked by a shop assistant), and only two switches in the Romance Philology group. Both the Romance Philology students' switches were correct: "*Es muy simple*" (for *Es muy sencillo/fácil* ["It is very simple/easy"] and "*Hay ticket machines en todas las estaciones*" ["There are ticket machines at all the stations"]; the Spanish words "*taquilla*" ("ticket office") and "*expendedor automático de billetes*" ["ticket machine"] were probably either unknown to the participants or temporarily unavailable. The English words were also grammatically correct in the sentence contexts, as they belonged to the target syntactic categories and were used in the right forms.

It might be surprising that no switches into other Romance languages (French, Portuguese, etc.) were observed, but it is possible that, in order to minimize the risk of interference and of system shift, the students kept their Romance languages deliberately apart. This may reflect their language awareness and conscious strategy use. Alternatively, it is possible that they followed the instructions, originally written for the English Philology students, despite being explicitly told to switch into other languages too, if necessary. Further still, both interpretations may be possible: keeping the Romance languages separate does not preclude relying on English for communication purposes. Last but not least, the French, Portuguese, etc. words might have been unknown or unavailable to them, but, as the words were quite basic, unavailable (possibly suppressed by control mechanisms; cf. Green, 1986) seems a more plausible explanation than unknown.

On the other hand, the English Philology group had more difficulty completing the dialogues, as evidenced by the amount of avoidance (unfilled gaps): 42.85% in the shop dialogue and 68.57% in the dialogue between the tourist and the receptionist, in contrast to 5.26% and 10% of avoidance, respectively, in the Romance Philology group. The switches into English were mostly (8) classified as correct, for example: "*un kilo de potatoes*" or "*¿Tiene change de cincuenta euros?*" ["Do you have change

for fifty euros?"]. The five incorrect ones mostly failed to meet the syntactic constraints (e.g., in "*¿Qué le pongo?*", the subject is the shop assistant—the expression can be literally translated as, "What do I give you?"—while in "*¿*Qué le want?*" and "*¿*Qué le need?*", the subject is the customer, so the students relied on the plausible meaning of "What do you want/need?" and not on the syntactic properties of the target verb). Similarly, in "**Es muy close*" ["It is very close"], the adjective "close" was not compatible with the verb "*ser*" ["to be"], which is used for permanent characteristics, not for locations. Locations require the verb "*estar*", so the correct version would have been, "*Está muy cerca*" (or, with code-switching, "*Está muy close*"). As intralingual errors (the use of incorrect Spanish words unrelated to translanguaging and consulting the other languages in the multilingual system) are not the focus of the present study, they will not be discussed here in detail, but it must be admitted that the number of incorrect (i.e., contextually inappropriate and non-communicative) answers in Spanish was also higher in the English Philology group (6.35% in the shop dialogue and 17.14% in the tourist–receptionist dialogue) than in the Romance Philology group (5.26% and 5.08%, respectively). A comparison of both groups' answers (correct in Spanish or English, contextually acceptable in Spanish or English, contextually unacceptable in Spanish or English, and avoidance) by means of a chi-squared test revealed statistically significant differences for the shop dialogue ($p < 0.001$; $df = 6$) and for the dialogue between the tourist and the receptionist ($p < 0.001$, $df = 5$; one column was removed because there were zero values in both rows). The effect sizes, measured by Cramér's V, were quite large: $V = 0.596$ for the shop dialogue and $V = 0.672$ for the other dialogue. This further confirms the significance of the difference between both groups. This finding suggests that not only were the English Philology students less advanced in Spanish, but, possibly, they also lacked the motivation to fill in the gaps with words which could have met the communicative goals, so they tended to leave the gaps empty.

In neither group were any switches into Polish observed—nor into German, as a previously studied language which most likely was no longer used and was undergoing attrition. The L1 Russian participant did

not switch into Russian either. However, this is likely due to the instructions, which encouraged switching into English, but also to the association of foreignness and the perception of correctness (De Angelis, 2005, see above). Given the distances between Polish and Russian between Polish and Spanish, strengthened by the perception of one's native language as being distinct from foreign languages by definition, the students realized that inserting a Polish or Russian word into a Spanish sentence would not be communicative. By contrast, switching into English—it being a global lingua franca— while talking to a native Spanish speaker, even in a real-life situation, was regarded as more likely to solve a communication problem. In fact, as Testa points out, Poles tend to switch to English as soon as they realize that their interlocutor is not Polish (2018, p. 70).

In the remaining two tasks, in which translanguaging took a more subtle form, mobilizing one's whole language repertoire, but not so explicitly and not necessarily for language production, the Romance Philology students also did significantly better, as shown by the chi-squared tests ($p < 0.001$; $d = 3$ for Tasks 2 and 3), which shows that they had higher levels of competence in Spanish and that they could manage their multilingual repertoires more effectively. However, the effect sizes were later checked by means of Cramér's V, and, while the effect for the translation task proved quite large ($V = 0.5983$), it was much smaller for the error correction task ($V = 0.3992$). Finally, in the questionnaire, they were asked about any cross-linguistic interaction (an umbrella term for transfer, interference, etc., introduced by Herdina and Jessner; 2002, p. 29) they had observed during the tasks, including, e.g., interference between L1 and Spanish, interference between English and Spanish, etc., and the responses were compared by a chi-squared test. The difference was not statistically significant ($df = 9$; $p = 0.241$), so the cross-linguistic interaction perceived by the participants did not depend on the language they studied and, as shown by Cramér's V (0.53), the effect size was fairly large.

In general, the results indicate that the students are used to the traditional approach, in which languages are kept separate, so the requirement to use translanguaging may have been an additional challenge, rather than a means to facilitate understanding and making meaning

(Lewis et al., 2012). Even though some of them resorted to code-switching into English, such responses were relatively rare and were not necessarily correct. This suggests that multilingual competence is not necessarily unitary, as Otheguy et al. (2019) postulate, but rather, boundaries between the languages exist and are psychologically real.

Study 2: Translanguaging in Teaching and Learning French as a Third or Additional Language

Participants: The overall study (i.e., continuous assessment and the questionnaire) was conducted on -a group of international students at WSB University in Dąbrowa Górnicza who were being taught French as a third or additional language by the author. As they were studying International Relations or Management in English, they were all advanced in English, but their language repertoires included other languages as well: Russian (most of the students from the former Soviet republics, such as Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, etc.), German, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, and—in the case of the student from Laos—Thai. With the exception of two students who had studied French before and were at an intermediate level, they were all beginners in French. Again, the group was quite heterogeneous, but so are the international groups at WSB University, and, following Van Gelderen et al. (2003, p. 23), it must be assumed to be the rule in multilingualism research.

However, to investigate the participants' multilingual awareness and their attitudes towards translanguaging, especially pedagogical translanguaging, a questionnaire was administered to them (see Appendix 3). It was filled out by 20 participants. The respondents' native languages were Spanish (5 participants), Azerbaijani (5), Polish (3), Ukrainian (2), Georgian (1), Turkmen (1), Kazakh (1), Albanian (1), and Lao (1).

Method: The study combined two methods: an assessment of the students' performance in French (tests conducted during the semester and informal observation) and a questionnaire aimed at revealing the

students' perception of similarities and differences between French and the languages already known to them (their native languages, but also English and, possibly, their L2s and/or L3s), the areas of difficulty in learning French as perceived by them, and their attitudes towards the French classes, in particular, to the teacher's use of pedagogical translanguaging to raise the students' awareness of similarities and differences between French and English as a language common to them all, French and Spanish (a related Romance language and the native language of some of them), and even French and Russian (e.g., the analogy between the formal and informal forms of address: *vous* – Вы, *tu* – ты). In fact, during the classes, some other similarities would also come to light between French and languages unknown to the teacher; for example, the similarity between French and Georgian numerals (in French "eighty" is called "*quatre-vingts*", literally "four times twenty," which, as a Georgian student remarked, is also the translation of the Georgian term for "eighty"). The questionnaire in presented in Appendix 3.

Discussion of the results: On the one hand, as the test results and classroom observation indicate, some aspects of French are difficult for all the learners, regardless of their native language. In particular, they all have problems with French pronunciation and, apart from language-specific sounds, such as the French /ʀ/, they tend to confuse /y/, as in the word *étudiant* [student] and /u/, as in "Louvre", especially because of the misleading grapheme-phoneme mapping, as /y/ is spelled "u". They also often pronounce the mute "e" at the end of words, which may change the meaning, for example, if "*j'aime*" /ʒɛm/ [I like/I love] is pronounced as "*j'aimais*" /ʒɛˈmɛ/ [I liked/I loved]. This shows that the transfer of grapheme-phoneme mappings from L1 and, possibly, from other previously learned languages, can inhibit the acquisition of the target language pronunciation. To help the students learn these distinctions, the teacher, apart from providing the correct pronunciation (both in her speech and in recordings), used awareness-raising activities, such as drawing the students' attention to the differences in meaning related to differences in pronunciation, or drawing the vocal tract on the board and marking the places of articulation.

However, as the native Spanish speakers' pronunciation problems indicate, the overall perception of similarity between languages and overall transfer, based on the perception of similarities between a number of language items (Ringbom, 2001, p. 1), does not necessarily result in facilitation. In fact, some of their errors, such as pronouncing "ch" /ʃ/ as /tʃ/, as it is in Spanish, suggest that perceiving French to be similar to Spanish, without sufficiently focusing on the differences, may make learning more difficult instead of facilitating it.

The students' performance on written tests also reveals some characteristic errors, for example, negative transfer at the level of prepositions. For example, French distinguishes between "*à*" ("in" in the context of a town or city, e.g., "*à Paris*" ["in Paris"]); "*en*" ("in" when talking about countries whose names are feminine nouns, e.g., "*en Russie*" ["in Russia"], or "by" when a means of transport is used in a general sense, e.g., "*en bus*" ["by bus"] or "*en avion*" ["by plane"]); and "*dans*" ("in" meaning within some space—"*dans la chamber*" ["in the room"], "*dans le sac*" ["in the bag"]—or "on" as in on a means of transport: "*dans l'avion*" ["on the plane"]). However, if the name of a country is masculine, "*au*" (a contraction of *à* + *le*) is used, e.g., "*au Danemark*" ["in Denmark"]. This distinction must be learned because transfer from one's native language is likely to be negative and, indeed, this is confirmed by the students' errors made on the test: "**dans Russie*", "**dans Hambourg*", "**dans Danemark*", or "**en Danemark*" (in the latter case, the error may have also been due to intralingual factors, such as overgeneralizing the use of "*en*" in French). In fact, the native Spanish speakers seem to have particular difficulty, as Spanish uses "*en*" in most contexts ("*en Rusia*", "*en Dinamarca*", "*en París*", "*en avión*", "*en la habitación*" ["in the room"], "*en la bolsa*" ["in the bag"], etc.), which indicates that overall transfer without learning the differences is likely to result in negative transfer, i.e., in errors. (More detailed information is presented in Włosowicz; in press-b.)

As for the results of the questionnaire, the respondents do not perceive many similarities between French and their native languages, with the exception of the Spanish speakers. By contrast, students from all language backgrounds perceived differences between French and their L1s.

However, when the responses were analyzed by a chi-squared test, there was no statistically significant difference between the speakers of the different languages for the perception of similarities (p = 0.991; df = 56) or for that of differences (p = 0.969; df = 56), so this perception does not depend on the students' native language. Indeed, the effect sizes were also small, V= 0.388 for similarities, and V = 0.255 for differences.

On the other hand, their attitudes towards the classes and pedagogical translanguaging in particular were more varied. On a 5-point Likert scale, they were asked to mark to what extent they agreed with each statement (1 – completely disagree, 5 – fully agree). In general, they liked the French classes and appreciated the fact that the classes involved different skills—from vocabulary and grammar, through listening comprehension, to cultural information—but their opinions varied considerably (mean = 3.71; SD =1.31). In fact, their attitudes towards raising awareness and pointing out the similarities and differences between French and other languages (i.e., pedagogical translanguaging by the teacher) varied even more (mean = 3.7; SD = 1.45), as did their attitudes towards the discussion of similarities and differences in class (mean = 3.53; SD = 1.35), as the standard deviations indicate.

Therefore, it seems that not everyone appreciates awareness-raising and what Carl James called "classroom-based contrastive analysis" (1996, p. 145). This may be due to some of the factors mentioned in Hufeisen's (2018) Factor Model 2.1, such as language learning experience and language learning traditions. Students who have previously been taught each language in isolation and have not been explicitly made aware of the similarities and differences may find such teaching strategies irrelevant or even confusing, as one of the participants wrote in the questionnaire. Similarly, the variety of activities and materials is not appreciated by everyone, as two participants wrote they would rather use one book. In fact, the teacher combined materials from different books because no single textbook contained all the necessary material, for example, certain topics could be dealt with superficially or not at all, or one exercise devoted to the practice of a grammar structure was not enough for the students to master it. Yet, regarding the questionnaires as feedback,

the teacher decided to compile an informal textbook, including all the topics and materials for the following semester, and to have it photo-copied and bound for the whole group.

However, the opposite approach—that is, speaking only about French and not mentioning any similarities or differences between it and other languages—apparently would have been even less popular, as the mean was 2.35, and the students were slightly more unanimous about it (SD = 1.23). At the same time, they appreciated the teacher's personal-ized approach and her pointing out the sources of errors to the students (mean = 4.15; SD = 1.14), which is also to some extent related to class-room-based contrastive analysis, if an error can be traced back to nega-tive transfer from L1, L2, etc. It therefore seems that translanguaging in a broad sense, involving the whole language repertoires for the purpose of raising awareness, can be useful in foreign language teaching and is largely perceived as such by students.

Conclusions

In general, both studies confirm, at least to some degree, the useful-ness of translanguaging as the mobilization of whole multilingual reper-toires at the university level. To answer the research questions, students use translanguaging to a very limited extent and they seem quite reluctant to do so, probably because it is a new experience for them, as opposed to the traditional approach, which calls for teaching each language in isola-tion. In Study 1, Task 1, where the participants were explicitly told to resort to translanguaging whenever they lacked a Spanish word, they did so in relatively few cases (13 in the English Philology group and 2 in the Ro-mance Philology group). Thus, the purpose of using translanguaging in the form of code-switching was to communicate meanings for which they lacked words in Spanish. In Tasks 2 and 3, translanguaging was not so vis-ible, but—as their answers indicate (Włosowicz, in press-a)—Polish as L1 and English as L2 were co-activated and used in the processing, which sometimes resulted in interference errors. On the other hand, in Study 2,

apart from errors due to negative transfer and/or interference (following Herdina and Jessner [2002, p. 29], these two terms are not regarded as identical, since transfer is more regular and predictable, while interference is dynamic and not reducible to any single language) observed in the students' tests and oral production, no translanguaging seems to have been initiated by the students. This confirms García and Li's observation that translanguaging actually requires practice (2014, pp. 71-72). Certainly, they may have participated in discussions aimed at multilingual awareness-raising, but those discussions were initiated by the teacher as part of pedagogical translanguaging (Cenoz, 2017).

As for multilingual awareness, it might be supposed that it focuses on differences rather than similarities. On the one hand, the students do perceive the boundaries between the languages and do not mix them indiscriminately, which calls into question Otheguy et al.'s (2019) notion of unitary competence and using words from a non-target language in the same way as target-language synonyms. In fact, since they are supposed to take tests based on monolingual norms in order to obtain certificates, etc., it is logical to become aware of differences so as to avoid negative transfer, especially if the languages are related closely enough to be conducive to system shift (De Angelis, 2005, see above), which was particularly visible in the Romance Philology students' production. According to Grosjean (2001), it may be assumed that, especially in such situations, multilinguals adopt a monolingual mode, just as they do while talking to monolinguals. However, there seems to be too little awareness of similarities, and too few connections between the languages, and, arguably, such awareness deserves to be developed, as it facilitates the learning of further languages.

Secondly, even though they benefit from awareness-raising activities and regard them as relatively useful, their opinions vary, and some students perceive pedagogical translanguaging as confusing. University students are adult learners and, unlike children, adults are accustomed to certain teaching methods and expect them to be used, even if such a method is already obsolete, like the grammar translation method (Włosowicz, 2016, p. 277). At the same time, adults feel more speaking anxiety

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(Komorowska, 2002: 91) and are less likely to use their linguistic resources more freely, as children do (e.g., "***Będzie*** ['we are going to have'] orange juice"; Niżegorodcew, 1988, p. 53, in Niżegorodcew, 1998, p. 24, her emphasis). That is why they cannot be forced to use translanguaging; rather, pedagogical translanguaging should be adapted to the learning context, learners' needs (including those perceived by the teacher, for example, on the basis of their errors), and their experience. Of course, if they are not used to any awareness-raising activities, this does not mean awareness-raising should be abandoned; instead, the purpose of such activities should be explained to them.

Thirdly, the applications of translanguaging in a university context seem quite limited. They may serve to raise learners' awareness of similarities and differences between the language being studied and the languages already known to them, to establish connections between the languages and—as a communication strategy—to compensate for some gaps in their lexical knowledge. Similarly, if students are to acquire specific skills, such as translation or foreign language teaching, translanguaging is of limited use: strong cross-linguistic connections may facilitate translation and teachers may use pedagogical translanguaging in their work too, but it must be remembered that a translation based on all of a multilingual's language resources would be incomprehensible to a monolingual reader or even to a multilingual one with a different language repertoire. As for the possibilities of applying translanguaging to evaluation, again, university students are subject to formal tests which are later archived and which must meet certain requirements; thus, the use of translanguaging rather than observing monolingual norms might be questioned. Though translanguaging might theoretically be allowed during some foreign language exams at lower proficiency levels, it is questionable at higher levels, for example, at a Philology department, where the students will later use their skills in professional contexts.

In summary, translanguaging can be an innovative approach that is applicable to the teaching of third or additional languages, especially as a means of raising language awareness, but its use at the university level is limited, which is why it is better to talk about "elements of translanguaging."

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On the one hand, adult students may be reluctant to use it themselves, perhaps because it is contrary to their learning experience or to the teaching tradition known to them. On the other hand, the use of translanguaging in evaluation raises a number of questions, for example, which language skills can be tested that way, at which proficiency levels, for which purposes, etc.; these questions would need to be answered if translanguaging were to be introduced on a larger scale. Moreover, context plays an important role. While in multilingual communities—in Singapore (Li, 2018) or South Africa (Paradowski, 2020), for example—it is spontaneous in a largely monolingual society (at least functionally monolingual, because foreign languages may be known but they are not used by many people; Włosowicz, in press-a), such as Polish society (Testa, 2018), it has to be encouraged and practiced if we expect learners to use it.

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Speech Understanding by Children Diagnosed with Delayed Verbal Development in the Context of Family Functioning

Abstract

The assumptions of the research presented in the article refer to the socio-interactive approach, which assumes that a child's learning and proper language acquisition require cognitive activity, proper progress in cognitive development, and active—resulting from social relationships—observation of adult speech. The research assumptions also take into account the importance of the self-regulatory function of language and a systemic understanding of the concept of family.

The aim of the study was to verify the relationship between the speech understanding of children with delayed verbal development and the various dimensions of their family functioning and ego-resiliency of their parents. The study included a group of 72 cognitively well-functioning Polish children, aged 5–7 years with a diagnosis of delayed verbal development, and their families; the sample was selected using random and nonprobability

sampling. The children were examined using the Polish Picture Vocabulary Test for Comprehension, version A (PPVT-C). The functioning of the children's families was operationalized by the tool FACES IV by David H. Olson (the Polish version of the scale was used), while the Ego Resiliency Scale was used to study resilience.

The research indicates that families of children with lower scores on speech understanding present less favorable functioning profiles in selected dimensions of FACES IV: Family Communication, Cohesion, Disengaged, and Family Satisfaction. However, the relationship between the child's speech comprehension and other demographic variables, such as the parents' age, gender, education, and marital status, has not been confirmed.

It was recognized that the results of the research will lead to both the future optimization of the therapeutic services offered to children with verbal developmental disorders and their families in their natural environment and the future presentation of appropriate strategies to support speech development (especially speech understanding abilities) in children. The creation of a group representing a certain type of language disorder will result in a better adaptation of the training program to the specific difficulties experienced by a child and allow for more effective involvement of parents in preventative measures.

Keywords: verbal development, child's understanding of speech, family functioning, ego-resiliency

Introduction

The communicative aspect of child language in the literature on the subject is combined with the concept of theory of mind (Tomasello, 2003) and children's egocentrism in the cognitive sphere (Piaget, 2002). In the course of socialization, by functioning in a social environment—including the family system—a child learns the rules of language use in social interactions, flexible perception, and communication. Developing communication competence allows a child to use language which is suitably adapted to situations and the needs of their interlocutor (Kurcz, 2005).

This is developed in the self-regulatory function of language, described in the classic works by Vygotsky (1978, 1980) or Łuria (1979). For Vygotsky, language was a very important intermediary between learning and child development. According to him, social communication and the development of inner speech are possible thanks to verbal development. The author introduced the term "zone of proximal development" to psychology and described it as special areas for a joint meeting and functioning of a child and an adult.

The socio-interactive approach, which is the basis for the current article, assumes that for a child to learn and properly master a language, their own cognitive activity, proper progress in cognitive development, and passive observation of adult speech are insufficient (Gleason & Ratner, 2017). Biological factors are important in the process of language acquisition, but according to Bruner (2010), they are not the only condition. He emphasizes that language develops primarily in interactions with other people. As an alternative to the language acquisition device—a mechanism postulated by nativists (Chomsky, 2006)—Bruner (2010) proposed the language acquisition socialization system (LASS) model. He observed that children acquire language and learn to understand speech through active communication. In this approach, the correct grammar of one's expression plays a secondary role (Gleason & Ratner, 2017). Speech allows a child to structure the surrounding reality and to symbolize. It is a "ticket" to subsequent developmental stages. A child learns a language through the development of concepts. However, this does not occur in a socio-cultural vacuum. Developmental psychology draws attention to the particular importance of terms to which a significant role is attributed to: sensory exploration, motor manipulation, a period of intense questioning, visual mass media, or reading to a child.

When adults speak to infants and young children, they adapt their speech to the recipient, using such techniques as slowing down the pace of speech, using clearer intonation, more attention-focused measures, more repetition, simpler, more specific vocabulary, and a higher tone of voice (Snow & Ferguson, 2013). This style is called "motherese," child-directed speech, or baby talk. In the first few weeks of life, caretakers are

already able to communicate to a child their acceptance or rejection by means of intonation patterns (Fernald & Kuhl, 1987). According to Fernald and Kuhl (1987), children are more likely to respond to baby talk than to standard adult speech. This probably happens because of the properties of prosody and syntax (e.g., clearer accenting of word boundaries), which makes it easier for a child to bootstrap their own progress in language development.

In addition to maternal speech and the above-mentioned corrective strategies for language mistakes made by a child, there are other forms that can be included in LASS. They involve arranging situations in which the caretaker and the child build a common field of attention, openness to attempts at experimenting with the language, providing adequate, prompt answers, linking verbal messages with the current interest of the child, and embedding verbal messages in the context of action (Fernald, Perfors, & Marchman, 2006).

According to the theory of fuzzy logical model of perception by Massaro and Cohen (1993), language acquisition mechanisms are not reserved solely for speech acquisition processes. The researchers stated that the language perception process is analogous to the problem of pattern recognition in the sense of general regularity. Massaro and Cohen (1993) admit that some specialization in the language acquisition process is necessary—people use the principles of distinguishing elements specific to the language of a particular user. The researchers also see commonalities between language processing and emotion perception. This gains a special interpretative significance in the context of research on relationships within the family system (in accordance with Olson's concept of family functioning) and the child's understanding of speech.

The reference to family functioning, including communication in the child's family system, occurs in the six-stage model of speech development by Weitzman and Greenberg (2002). These stages are distinctive of typically developing children from birth to five years of age. This concept has numerous psychoeducational and therapeutic applications, as it defines the key cognitive and social skills which are required at specific stages of child speech development. It allows the focus to be on developing those

competences which are found to be insufficient. At the same time, Weitzman and Greenberg (2002) emphasized the importance of the child's correct cognitive development in acquiring language competences, including speech understanding.

The problem of delayed verbal development in children, despite it being observed more and more frequently, is currently at the center of a lot of diagnostic and terminological controversy in the literature. Speech delay is diagnosed in children up to 3 years old (in the next two years of development, verbal competence acquisition is slower than in peers), excluding other causes of language development inhibition—primarily neurodevelopmental, intellectual, and sensory ones (Jastrzębowska, 2005). Such children are usually characterized by later speech initiation, slower acquisition of new communication skills, and weakened speech in terms of quality. In children with delayed speech development, the following are also observed: inadequate development of active and passive vocabulary in relation to age, a lack of using some parts of speech, the use of specific children speech inadequate to age, and abnormal grammatical structures (Pilarska, 2014).

This article and the research reported in it also refer to the assumptions of the concept of a systemic understanding of family (Olson & Goral, 2003). According to the systems theory, the family is interpreted as a whole, and the changes in each of the elements in the system affect that system and depend on all other elements. When changes in the internal or external conditions of the family system occur in the family, all family members are forced to take adaptive action to enable them to function properly.

The concept of ego-resiliency, which is indirectly referred to in the article, is derived from the theory developed by Jeanne and Jack Block (1996). Being a permanent resource, it determines the individual's ability to adapt to difficult situations and traumatic events. Ego-resiliency includes the ability to positively re-evaluate reality in every aspect of time; the capacity for gratitude that is important in considering the past; the ability to enjoy life; the ability to be optimistic, even in terms of anticipating future difficulties. A resilient person is able to adapt to changing

living conditions, perceiving positive aspects in them, and is able to treat them as opportunities for development (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). It also involves the ability to create and maintain satisfying social bonds. In contrast to ego-resiliency are emotional instability, vulnerability, and stress sensitivity (Ostrowski, 2014).

Material and methods

The purpose of the research which the article is based on is to verify the existence of a relationship between children's understanding of speech—functioning in an intellectual norm, without symptoms of sensory disorder or neurological disease, and revealing delayed speech development—and the profile of the functioning of the families in which they are brought up. This relationship is considered in relation to the ego-resiliency of parents and the demographic and cultural conditions in which they live. Due to the existence of norms for the population of healthy people with whom the parents' tests results were compared, the control group was abandoned.

Tools used in the study

1. Polish Picture Vocabulary Test for Comprehension, version A (PPVT-C) (Haman, Fronczyk, & Łuniewska, 2012)

The PPVT-C is intended to be used in examining children from the age of two years to six years, eleven months. The task of the examined child is to choose the one picture out of four that best represents the concept given by the diagnostician. The test has two parallel versions: A and B. The tasks presented to the child are of different levels of difficulty, which is meant to ensure the adequacy of tasks for both younger and older children. The test material consists of basic parts of Polish-language speech, and a total of 88 items appear in both versions of the test, of which 51 are nouns, 25 are verbs and 12 are adjectives, corresponding

to their frequency in spoken Polish. Three distractors were selected for each word: phonetic, semantic, and thematic.

The tool is standardized and has very high reliability for the overall results. The advantage of the test is the short examination time and the usefulness in the diagnosing speech development delay and in detecting various disorders of verbal development, e.g., specific language impairment (SLI)

2. Olson's (2000) Flexibility and Cohesion Evaluation Scales-IV (FACES-IV)

FACES IV is based on the theoretical assumptions created by Olson (2000) and is presented as the Circumplex Model of Marriage and Family Systems. It includes three key concepts for understanding family functioning: cohesion, flexibility, and communication. The main assumption of the Circumplex Model indicates that balanced levels of cohesion and flexibility are conducive to the beneficial functioning of the family. Unbalanced levels of cohesion and flexibility (very low or very high) are associated with problematic family functioning. Olson's Circumplex Model is one of the few holistic theoretical concepts describing the family which offers tools for measuring the constructs. The main variables that make up the Circumplex Model are related to cohesion, flexibility, communication, and satisfaction in family life.

Olson (2000) also proposes in his model three levels of family cohesion: disengament, balanced cohesion, and enmeshment. The indicators of cohesion include mutual emotional closeness, the quality of psychological boundaries between family members, the existence of coalitions, the amount of time spent together, common interests and forms of rest, the size of the circle of mutual friends, and the degree of consultation with other family members in decision-making. Cohesion was defined as the emotional bond between family members (Olson & Goral, 2003). Imbalance in family relationships can relate to an extremely high level of cohesion (enmeshment of relationships),or in its extremely low intensity (disengagement, non-commitment, relationships without bonds). Mem-

bers of enmeshed systems are very emotionally dependent on each other, and the affective states of the individual are often shared by the whole system; on the contrary, in disengaged families there is no bond. Enmeshedsystems discourage children from spontaneous and autonomous learning about the world and dealing with the natural problems of life, which complicates children's development in all areas.

By analogy, and for consistency, Olson also provides three levels of family flexibility: Rigid, Balanced Flexibility, and Chaotic. Flexibility means the quality and degree of changes taking place in systems related to leadership, in the roles and principles of mutual relationships, and resulting from negotiation processes between family members. The imbalance of elasticity may be manifested in the form of extremely high elasticity (defined as chaotic family relationships) or extremely low elasticity (classified as rigid family relationships).

Olson and Goral (2003) define family communication as the ability of a given partner or family system to communicate positively. Communication in the family is related to the act of familiarizing family members with information, plans, thoughts, and feelings, i.e., a broad repertoire of phenomena represented by the functioning system. The ability to communicate positively provides a change in the coherence and flexibility of the family system. On the other hand, satisfaction with family life determines the extent to which family members feel happy and fulfilled.

The concepts and dimensions of coherence and flexibility were presented by Olson using the wheel model. However, communication and satisfaction with family life were not graphically reflected in this model.

FACES-IV is a questionnaire composed of 62 items comprising eight scales. Six of them are the main scales of the Circular Model: the Scales of Balance—Balanced Coherence and Balance of Flexibility—and the Scales of Unbalance—Disengaged, Enmeshed, Rigid, and Chaotic. In addition, there are also the scales of Family Communication and Satisfaction with Family Life, which are called the Scales of Evaluation.

3.   The Ego-Resiliency Scale by Block and Kremen (1996)

According to this short, but aptly researched tool, people differ in the extent to which they consciously control their own emotional states and behavior. Block defines ego-resiliency as adaptive flexibility resulting from the ability to adjust the level of control to the situation (Letzring et al., 2005). The higher the level of ego-resiliency, the greater the ability to modulate the level of self-control depending on the possibilities and needs of a particular situation. This can improve emotional regulation processes, including the regulation of positive emotions.

Research question and hypotheses

After analyzing the literature on the subject and taking into account the theoretical assumptions presented in the introduction, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the level of children's speech understanding and selected aspects of their families' functioning (Cohesion, Flexibility, Rigid, Disengaged, Chaotic, Family Communication, or Family Satisfaction)?

2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the parent's ego-resiliency and the child's level of speech understanding?

3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the demographic variables that determine the family situation (e.g., age, place of residence, or education) and the child's level of speech understanding?

Using the research questions based on theoretical assumptions, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1: The profile of family functioning in the study group of parents of children with delayed speech development is less

favorable than that of people from the general population, which are measured by scales of controlled variables and are available in standardization manuals of the applied research tools.

Hypothesis 2: Families of children with lower scores of speech understanding present less favorable functioning profiles in certain dimensions: Family Communication, Cohesion, and Flexibility.
Hypothesis 3: Children of parents with higher ego-resiliency obtain better results in speech understanding.

Hypothesis 4: There is a statistically significant relationship between the demographic variables of the study group and the profile of functioning of families of children with delayed speech development.

Hypothesis 4.1: A higher economic status of the family correlates with a higher level of language understanding by the child.

Hypothesis 4.2: Children from urban environments obtain better results of language comprehension than children from smaller towns.

Justification of the hypotheses

In ontogenesis, a child's body is affected by hereditary and environmental factors (Hernandez & Blazer, 2006; Newbury & Monaco, 2010). The current study focused on the latter of these contexts—the family environment. As indicated by numerous studies in the literature on the subject (Tallal, et al., 2001; Kurcz, 2005; Dyer, 2006), environmental neglect, conflicts in the family system, problems in adequate communication between parents and the child, a lack of proper communication patterns, and a lack of motivation to use speech—in addition to factors of biological importance—can imply a child's verbal developmental delay (Kochanska et al., 2010). Non-verbal behavior and communication with parents are used in a child's dialogue with its social environment. A deficit in this area may indicate emotional and cognitive developmental disorders in a child, including language. According to the assumptions of the socio-interactive concept, in addition to an appropriate level of cog-

nitive predisposition and adequate developmental resources related to biological functioning, children also need adequate social stimulation and proper social contact in order to learn to communicate effectively, enrich verbal competences, and gain new language experiences (Brzezińska, Matejczuk, & Nowotnik, 2012; Brzezińska & Rękosiewicz, 2015; Hornowska et al., 2014).

Many studies (Kielar-Turska & Lasota, 2010; Evans et al., 2013; Brzezińska, 2014) have shown that children living among adults who are aware of the child's needs and who support their development build longer and richer speech content than children spending time alone or almost exclusively among their peers. The family structure and living conditions were identified in these studies as predictors of a child's cognitive development, including verbal development and speech understanding. It was also pointed out that delays in a child's speech development are the consequence of low parental communication activity, avoiding or rejecting an educational attitude, or a lack of adequate emotional support for the child (Hornowska et al., 2014). The context of the family system is therefore important in the process of initiating, facilitating, and stimulating development, including a child's verbal development. In numerous studies, especially written from an ecological perspective, the functionality of the family system is treated as the basic context for stimulating child development, but also as the source of the most important threats to this development. Therefore, in this research, it was decided to check whether the family, its functioning profile, and the ego-resiliency of the parents of children with delayed verbal development is significant in the development of the child's ability to understand speech and, if so, to what extent.

Characteristics of the study group of respondents

In order to carry out the research presented in this article, random and nonprobability sampling was made of people for the study group. The study included a group of 72 Polish children (40 girls and 32 boys) with relatively food cognitive abilities who had been diagnosed with delayed speech development. During recruitment, children with other possible

sources of language difficulties were excluded (e.g., oligophasia associated with intellectual disability, neurodevelopmental disorders, sensory or motor disability, hearing loss, or selective mutism); they were not included in the final group of 72 children. At the beginning of the study, the children were between 5 years, 2 months and 6 years, 8 months old (M = 5 years, 8 months; SD = 4.5 months). The children were recruited to the study group from children living in Lesser Poland, using appropriate speech and psychological care due to their verbal developmental delay.

The sample of parents collected for the study consisted of 72 people in total (one parent for each of the children recruited for the study), including 53 women and 19 men. The average age of the surveyed parents was 34 years, 10 months (SD = 5 years, 4 months). The oldest parent was 46 years old and the youngest was 25 years old. It is worth noting the marital status of the sample of parents: 56 people were married, 11 were divorced, 4 people were unmarried, and 1 was widowed. Among the 72 surveyed parents, 36 had a higher education, 26 had secondary school or post-secondary school education, and 10 had vocational education. More than half (38) of the surveyed parents lived with their children in the countryside or in a small town (up to 5,000 inhabitants), while 18 respondents lived in a town of 5,000 to 50,000 inhabitants and 16 people lived in a city of at least 50,000 inhabitants.

Methods for statistical analysis

The data were subjected to statistical analysis using Statistica 13 software. The results from the children and parents were recalculated, comparing them with the norms for the population. The numbers of surveyed parents who represented particular levels of family functioning were calculated. A profile of the results calculated for the study group (percentiles and sten scores) was made; a statistical analysis of the results was then conducted. The Shapiro–Wilk test was used to check whether the distributions of data represented a normal distribution.

After determining that the dataset conformed to a normal distribution, Student's t-test was carried out on the average results in the family

functioning profile of the study group and the results of the standardization study for the Polish population, followed by calculation of Pearson's correlation coefficient for the PPVT results with other variables extracted in the study, operationalized by FACES-IV, ego-resiliency indicators, and demographic variables.

In the last part of the analysis, using the progressive step regression equations, an attempt was made to construct a model describing the most important relationships of speech understanding by a child with delayed verbal development. SPSS Amos software was also used, as it contains tools for graphic modeling of structural equations, i.e., path analysis. This method allows for causal inferences, despite the lack of an experimental model in the study.
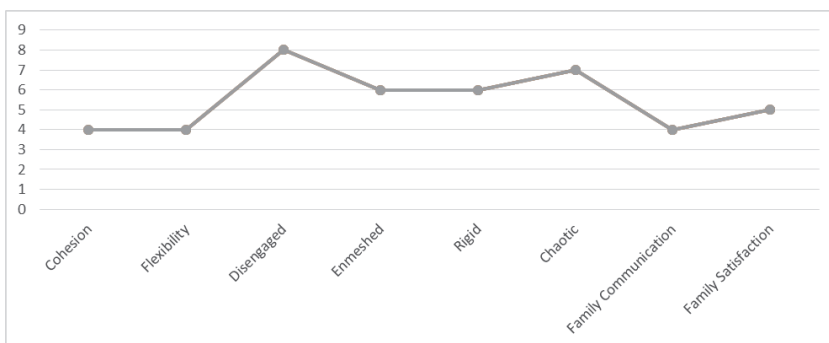
Results

On the PPVT-C test, the study group of children diagnosed with delayed speech development achieved an overall average result of 59.79 (SD = 2.71; Min=55; Max=67), which in comparison with the available norms for children of the same age is in the 12th percentile and has a sten score of 3. In the study group, below-average results for chronological age were obtained, which indicates that the examined children's vocabulary and speech understanding (despite the intellectual norm confirmed in them and the exclusion of progressive developmental or mental health disorders) are significantly lower than indicators for normally verbally developing monolingual children in Poland. Due to the lack of statistically significant differences between the results of the boys and the girls, in further analyses the group of children was treated as homogeneous, disregarding gender.

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the FACES IV results, while Figure 1 illustrates the functioning profile of the studied families, according to the converted results (stens), comparing them with the normalized results for the Polish population which were available in the tool manual (Margasiński, 2009).

Table 1
FACES IV results of the parents of children with delayed
speech development (n=72)

Dimension of FACES IV	Mean	SD	Percentile	Sten score
Cohesion	25.5416667	6.27747482	15	4
Flexibility	21.3472222	5.62979929	19	4
Disengaged	18.8472222	6.27909503	92	8
Enmeshed	13.9027778	4.46002502	44	6
Rigid	17.8888889	4.71304918	59	6
Chaotic	18.3472222	5.80713433	78	7
Family Communication	33.3194444	9.72991089	15	4
Family Satisfaction	32.9027778	9.6708648	30	5

Figure 1
Statistical analysis of the results of the parents of children with delayed
speech development – calculated FACES IV sten scores (n=72)

The sten scores illustrated in Figure 1 create a hypothetical profile of a parent of a child with verbal developmental delay, as built by the results. This profile does not coincide exactly with any of the six profiles outlined in the Polish normalization of the FACES IV questionnaire. However, one may notice that the distribution of the average results is close to Profile 5: Rigidly Disengaged. After comparing the results of the respondents with the norms for the Polish population (Margasiński, 2009, p. 32), statistically significant differences were found in the following dimensions of

family functioning profile: Cohesion (t=-4,3597; p<0,00004; df=370), Flexibility (t= -3,9889; p<0,00003; df=370), Disengaged (t=-4,1576; p<0,00002; df=370), and Chaotic (t=-4,0596; p<0,00003; df=370).

The parents who were examined on the Scales of Balanced Cohesion and Balanced Flexibility obtained average results, but at the same time their scores on the Scales of Disengaged and Chaotic were high, and for Family Communication they were relatively low. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was confirmed; it assumed that the profile of family functioning in the study group of parents of children with delayed speech development is less favorable than the profile of people in the general population in the controlled variable scales.

In the next stage of statistical analysis, adequate to the normal distribution of results, the relationship between the overall scores of the children's speech understanding from the PPVT-C test (M = 59.79; SD = 2.71) and the family profile and ego-resiliency of their parents was examined. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
**OTSR Scale results compared to the family profile of FACES IV
and ego-resiliency (n=72)**

Dimension of FACES IV	Mean	SD	$r(X,Y)$	r^2	t	p
Disengaged	**18.847**	**6.27909**	**-0.259**	**0.06744**	**-2.25001**	**0.02759**
Enmeshed	13.9028	4.46003	0.00880	0.000077	0.07364	0.941506
Rigid	17.8889	4.71305	-0.0570	0.003256	-0.47818	0.634016
Chaotic	18.3472	5.80714	-0.1342	0.018026	-1.13356	0.260845
Cohesion	**25.542**	**6.2774**	**0.2389**	**0.05707**	**2.05839**	**0.04327**
Flexibility	21.3472	5.62979	0.21006	0.044127	1.79764	0.076547
Family Communication	**33.319**	**9.7299**	**0.3256**	**0.10606**	**2.88189**	**0.00524**
Family Satisfaction	**32.908**	**9.6708**	**0.3501**	**0.12259**	**3.12737**	**0.00257**
Ego-resiliency	**35.931**	**4.2003**	**0.4175**	**0.17435**	**3.84470**	**0.00026**

According to the analysis of the data presented in Table 2, statistically significant relationships were confirmed between the children's understanding of language and the following dimensions of the profile of their

family functioning: Disengaged, Cohesion, Family Communication, and Family Satisfaction. A negative correlation was found between PPVT-C results and Disengaged, while a positive correlation was found between speech understanding and Cohesion, which means that a higher rate of disengagement in the family system was associated with a lower level of speech understanding by the child. Cohesion in the family system, as with Family Communication and Family Satisfaction, coexists with a higher level of children's speech understanding. These relationships are statistically significant, but the strength of the confirmed relationship is moderate.

A positive correlation was also confirmed between the parent's ego-resiliency and the child's level of speech understanding (a strong, statistically significant correlation was found).

Therefore, these results allow for a partial confirmation of Hypothesis 2, which assumed that families of children with less speech understanding display less favorable functioning profiles in the dimensions of Family Communication, Cohesion, and Flexibility. In the case of the Flexibility variable, a statistically significant relationship was not confirmed.

These results also confirm Hypothesis 3, which stated that children of parents with higher ego-resiliency, despite confirmed verbal developmental delay, are characterized by higher speech understanding than other children in the study group.

Calculating Pearson's correlation coefficient also confirmed the expected, though moderate, relationship between children's speech understanding and their age. The coefficients describing the correlation between the ages of the children and parents (statistically insignificant) with the general indicator of language understanding as measured by the PPVT-C are listed in Table 3.

Table 3
**Analysis of the relationship of the children's speech understanding
and the ages of the children and parents**

Age	Mean	SD	$r(X,Y)$	r^2	t	p
child (months)	70.01389	4.445264	0.257844	0.066484	2.232779	0.028764
parent (years)	34.91667	5.272170	-0.0624	0.003899	-0.5234	0.602302

In order to determine which of the demographic and intrapsychic variables considered in the study could most significantly explain the indicator of speech understanding by childr0en diagnosed with verbal developmental delay, multiple step regression analysis was performed.

Searching for the most selected model for analysis, the variables from the FACES IV test, the ego-resiliency scale, and demographic variables (collected from the classification questions) included the child's and parent's ages, the parent's education and marital status, the number of children in the family, the place of residence and economic situation of the family, the child's birth weight, any illness of the parents or child, and any particularly stressful events that the child's family experienced in the last 16 months.

The regression model for the dependent variable, the child's speech understanding (defined as the overall score from the PPVT-C test), explained 34.1% of the variance. The test result was F = 10.326 (p <0.001), which allows the model to be considered fitted to the data. For the model in question, the significant predictors turned out to include ego-resiliency, Family Satisfaction, and the family's economic status. Table 4 presents detailed statistics on the predictors that were in the model.

Table 4
Statistics for predictors from the multiple step regression model for the dependent variable – speech understanding (general indicator)

Variables in the model	Non-standardized rate	T	Standardized rate	p
	Standard error		Beta	
Ego-resiliency	0.194	3.707	0.441	0.001
Family communication	0.173	2.987	0.351	0.007
Family economic conditions	0.619	2.539	0.280	0.019
Intercept	5.639			

Note. R= 0.505; R^2= 0.403; adjusted R^2= 0.341; F= 10.326; p= 0.001

Discussion of results

The epidemiology of verbal developmental disorders in children is an important problem today in health promotion because it provides information not only on the number of people requiring intervention, but it also indicates groups of children who are at potential risk (Topczewska-Cabanek et al., 2012). It is statistically assumed that in Poland 8%–9% of children develop speech sound disorders (this percentage has increased in recent years), including 5% of children who manifest them in the first grades of primary school. The family environment provides a child with a special kind of stimulation which inspires the child to enter into new social interactions and motivates them to learn and use new words. Parents are the first significant people for the child, creating conditions and context for their development, thus it was considered important to also include in the context of verbal developmental disorders of children the aspect of the family system (Davis & Broadhead, 2007; Evans & Whipple, 2013). Parents provide the child with a sense of security, which allows the child to become independent and familiar with its surroundings. The current study confirmed that in the profile of the functioning of a preschool child's family, in terms of the verbal development of the child, the quality of family communication and closeness (the opposite of the Disengaged profile) in relationships with significant people are particularly important factors. The bond with parents and the observation of the relationships between them becomes an important reference for building subsequent relationships and is reflected in the child's social interactions (Bowlby, 2007). Brzezińska (2014) proved that parental care based on positive emotions, love, and sensitivity has a positive relationship with the child's cognitive development. In accordance with the assumptions of FACES IV, children in families characterized by a higher disengagement rate may experience a lack of boundaries in the sphere of social requirements and some chaos in the pedagogical influence of parents (Olson & Goral, 2003; Margasiński, 2011).

This study revealed a positive correlation between the competence related to a child's understanding of language and other selected aspects

of the family functioning profile—Family Communication and Family Sat-isfaction (the last dimension was ultimately not included in the regression model due to the moderate strength of the relationship, caused by the limited size of the study group)—and the parent's ego-resiliency. In this context, it is worth recalling Bruner's view (2010), which is that a readiness to shape a given cognitive competence in a child emphasizes the need to create favorable conditions for development. A child who understands language acquires new ways of adapting to their environment, expands their competence in relation to others, develops at the personality level, and exhibits different behavior. It can therefore be assumed that the par-ents' task is first to support the child in achieving specific stages of cogni-tive development, and then to support the child in the development of independent learning (Vandell et al., 2010). The current study has shown that parents' psychological resilience is an important predictor (the result of step regression analysis) of a child's speech understanding. It is possible that a parent with a higher rate of ego-resiliency provides the child with more varied and secure ways of making contact with others, thanks to which it assimilates social rules faster and learns the communicative func-tion of the language more efficiently, even when a developmental delay is found for various reasons in the verbal sphere.

Parents with a higher ego-resiliency rate and a high level of intra-family communication are factors which seem to inspire a child with de-layed verbal development more easily and adequately to enter bravely into situations requiring independence. They encourage the child to make choices and create opportunities for the child to realize their own ideas. These aspects of parental activities are conducive to the develop-ment of a child's verbal competences and to leveling deficits in this as-pect. This corresponds to the results of other research (Brzezińska, Matejczuk, Jankowski, & Rękosiewicz, 2014; Brzezińska, Appelt, Jabłoński et al., 2014; Kielar-Turska, 2010) which showed that a child aged 5–7 years shows great cognitive curiosity, often asks questions, and demonstrates a motivation to learn, expecting adequate and active support from the people close to them. The way adults meet the child's cognitive needs during this period translates into their developmental achievements.

Children whose emotional and cognitive needs are not properly met in the context of conflicts, excessive stiffness, or entanglement in the family system may be less interested in learning about the surrounding world. Stimulating the development of a child should, according to numerous researchers (Kielar-Turska, Lasota, 2010; Sikorska, 2016; Lasota, 2017; 2019), take into account the current psychological needs of the child and the level of their mental functioning and should prepare them for the formation of new ones. However, this is possible in a balanced (functional) family system, which the results of this study seem to confirm. Other studies (Haden et al., 2001) have demonstrated that children are better at recalling events which they and their parents experienced and discussed together than those which they did not talk about with their parents, or about which only the parent or only the child spoke. These findings correspond to the results of the current study, in which intra-family communication is an important aspect of the development of language understanding in a child with delayed verbal development.

The results are accepted with caution and are planned to be replicated. They confirm that the foundation for the child's language initiative—alongside obvious neurocognitive factors—are their sense of security, autonomy, and freedom of action, which are formed on the basis of their previous experiences. In this aspect, it seems that the variables that were included in the multiple-step regression model for the dependent variable, defined as the child's understanding of speech, fit exactly into this interpretation. They make it easier for a child to safely and boldly absorb cultural tools, which include concepts and symbols, in addition to material objects. Language, as numerous researchers have indicated (Vygotsky, 1980; Piaget, 2002; Chomsky, 2006; Gleason & Ratner, 2017), mediates between the individual and the society. The interpersonal aspect of language mainly concerns interpersonal relationships and how they affect individual development. That is why communication and bonding within the child's family system are so important.

Analyzing the important and beneficial area of ego-resiliency in the parents of children with verbal developmental delay in a model explaining the level of speech understanding by children, it is worth recalling

the study by Connor (2006), which indicated that ego-resiliency is important in dealing with various types of stress. Ego-resiliency is an important factor which determines how people (including the parents of children with developmental deficits) deal with stress (Zhang et al., 2015). Zhang et al. (2015) connected it with the measure of coping capacity, which describes the characteristics of a person that allows individuals and communities to grow and develop when experiencing adversity. It is possible that this feature in some of the surveyed parents also means that they are more determined to be motivated to take action that stimulates the verbal development in their children.

A child's emotional development is parallel to cognitive changes. Talking about emotions allows the child to confront them and provides an opportunity to share with other personal experiences. Conversation related to emotions helps them to understand other people's behavior and to experience a variety of feelings. It is easier to achieve this in families with more consistency and a higher rate of intra-system communication.

Conclusion

The study can be summed up with the following conclusions:

1. The profile of family functioning in the study group of parents of children with delayed speech development is less favorable than the results achieved on the scales of controlled variables by the general population, which are available in the standardization manuals of the research tools used.

2. Families of children with lower scores of speech understanding present less favorable performance profiles in the selected dimensions of FACES IV: Family Communication, Cohesion, Disengaged, and Family Satisfaction. However, the hypothesis that there is a relationship between Flexibility in the functioning profile of the families under study and the indicator of speech understanding by the child was not confirmed.

3. Children of parents with more ego-resiliency achieve better results in speech understanding.

4. A strong, statistically significant relationship was confirmed between the economic situation of families of the examined children and their level of speech understanding. The expected relationship between the speech comprehension and the age of a child with delayed verbal development was also observed.

However, the relationship between a child's understanding of speech and other demographic variables, such as the child's and parent's ages, the parent's education and marital status, the number of children in the family, the place of residence and economic situation of the family, the child's birth weight, any illness of the parent or child, and any particularly stressful event that the child's family experienced in the last 16 months, was not confirmed.

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