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Heidi Flavian &
Günter L. Huber (Eds.)

Building Bridges

Center for
Qualitative
Psychology



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The Challenge of Interindividual Diversity

The article of *Stefanie Horn* on "**Security, Threat, and Attitudes Toward Minorities**" aims to examine the relation between perceptions of security, economic and symbolic threat as important explanations of the development exclusionist and hostile attitudes towards minority groups. The author's mixed-method study tries to unveil the socio-psychological links between the three concepts. Israel and Germany serve as two case-studies for an international comparison. Based on her findings, the author concludes that "exclusionist attitudes towards minority groups always decrease the quality of life, personal freedom and possibilities for self-determination of the targeted outgroups and threatens democratic values and human emancipation in a society. Research should be dedicated to discover ways how to assure personal liberty and assist individuals to overcome social restrictions derived from 'race', gender, sexual orientation, and social status. Only if the various sources of exclusionist attitudes are understood, those goals can be achieved. The challenge is to raise our future generations toward humanity and emancipation and only through education can we overcome fear and build bridges between cultures, countries and people."

The contribution of *Esther Kalniskey* on "**Increasing Ethiopian Immigrants' Access to Higher Education and Employment: A Unique Teacher Education Program**" starts from the observation that on the one hand higher education serves as a significant vehicle of integration of immigrants, but on the other hand "in some cases, the integration process is blocked prior to the stage of academic studies. This situation has resulted in the creation of a teacher education program for Ethiopian students in an Israeli academic college of education for the purpose of bridging the gap between higher education and employment, and increasing the chances of the graduates' admission into the field of teaching."

Maria Concepción Domínguez Garrido, Antonio Medina and C. Medina Domínguez describe the "**Design of a Support Program for Education and Romani Culture**" taking as a starting point the awareness of a multitude of problems and difficulties and of the cultural diversity that characterize Romani students. Thus, there is much "evidence of constraints that interfere with their current formation in primary and secondary schools."... "Because of these students' decrease in academic performance" the authors "felt compelled to design a comprehensive training program that allowed students and their families to accept the challenge of acquiring basic competencies and at the same time feel relaxed in the domain of school culture."

The study by *Erez C. Miller and Heidi Flavian* on "**Self-Representation and Social Support Among Adolescents with Asperger Syndrome in Online Communities**" examined specifically online interpersonal communication and self-

representations among children and youth with AS who participated voluntarily in Internet forums. "Children and youth with special needs often encounter difficulties while looking for social groups for sharing and receiving information, identification and support. The literature suggests that children view the internet as a social medium that promotes communication and personal relationship. The internet could also be used as an efficient source of information and support for children and youth with learning disabilities" ... ", but little is known about the types of interpersonal communication and modes of self-representation used by children and youth with other types of disabilities..." From their findings the authors conclude that "online communities are powerful media that can help adolescents with AS form relationships, gain support and advice for the challenges they face, as well as share and exchange interests common to many of their peers without AS".

Security, Threat, and Attitudes Toward Minorities

Stefanie Horn

Introduction

Exclusionist and hostile attitudes towards minority groups have been a subject matter of the Social Sciences for many decades. Numerous scholars have tried to elucidate how and why exclusionist attitudes develop and from that research, several valuable explanations from various theoretical vantage points were given. Besides a range of other aspects, individual threat perceptions were mentioned very early on as crucial explanatory factors for prejudice, stereotypes and intergroup hostility (Allport 1954). Since Allport, various studies have examined and validated the effects of threat perceptions on exclusionist attitudes (e.g. Bobo & Hutchings, 1996; Levine and Campbell 1972; Quillian 1995; Raijman 2010; Scheepers et al. 2002). Several of these studies differentiated between various threat perceptions such as economic and symbolic threats (e.g. Raijman & Semyonov 2004). Very few researchers operationalized an additional source of threat or differentiated from those two – namely security threat perceptions in the sense of crime, war or terror threat concerns. Canetti-Nisim et al. (2008) claim that the role of perceived security threats in predicting negative political attitudes is still particularly understudied. In a time where war and terror are realistic threats for many societies in the world it is imperative to take security threat perceptions into account (e.g. Huddy et al. 2002).

This article aims to examine the relation between security, economic and symbolic threat perceptions by employing a mixed study in order to unveil the socio-psychological links between the three concepts. Israel and Germany serve as two case-studies for an international comparison. Both countries exhibit a wide range of dissimilarities such as their history of

origin, their social cleavages, composition of society, characteristics of migration, and their political situation. All of these aspects are assumed to have a relevant impact on the outcome of this research endeavor and become especially apparent by employing qualitative methods in order to unveil aspects of the collective psyche in both societies. Alternatively, similarities between the two countries are reported in the comparative literature, such as the fact that both are developed Western states, are considered as two of the largest immigration receiving countries and are ethno national states which function under the *jus sanguinis* principle. Additionally, the presence of a variety of groups of migrants challenges the ethno-national definition of respective societies (Rajman et al., 2003 & 2008).

This research helps to comprehend and divulge the roots of exclusionist attitudes in a more precise manner than in previous research contributions.

Research Question

Following Canetti-Nisim et al. (2008), the question is raised if perception of security threats can be conceptualized as its own cause of exclusionist attitudes alongside economic and symbolic threat perception. So far, Canetti-Nisim et al. have only investigated the issue in a purely quantitative study; since this concept is rather new, it seems highly promising to investigate this more profoundly through the implementation of qualitative methods. It is examined which similarities and differences can be discovered in Germany and Israel and how those can be explained.

Theory:

Prejudice, Perception of Threat and Hostile Attitudes Toward Minorities

According to the classic definition by Allport, "Ethnic prejudice is an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed toward a group as a whole, or toward an individual because he is a member of that group" (Allport, 1979 [1954], p. 9). Thereby, prejudice is understood as a precondition for discriminatory

attitudes toward minority groups. Intergroup prejudice and hostility is often determined by the perception of intergroup threat (Duckitt, 2003; Quillian, 1995; Rajman, 2010). The general effects of threat perceptions on attitudes, cognitive processing, and behavior have been known for many decades, researched in a wide range of studies and within different approaches (e.g. Levine & Campbell, 1972; Quillian, 1995; Rajman 2010; Sullivan, 1985; Struch & Schwartz, 1989). Those perceived intergroup threats can be distinguished between security-, economic-, and cultural threat perceptions.

a) Security Threat perceptions

When speaking about security threat perceptions the salience of one's mortality comes into play and thereby the psychological conception of fear. According to the literature, fear requires perception of security threats as a condition to be created. In this manner fear is conceptualized as an automatic emotion based on the perceived present and the memorized past (Bar-Tal & Jarymowicz, 2006). This implies that historical and political contexts are indispensable when investigating security threat perceptions in a certain society. In line with Bar-Tal and Jarymowicz (2006), fear leads to freezing of beliefs and conservatism which makes this concept so pertinent for this research. Also, Bonnano and Jost (2006) propose that extreme psychological threats such as 9/11 catalyze a shift toward more conservatism, political-right wing orientation and a desire for vengeance. Huddy et al. (2005) can illustrate how Americans who maintain a high perception of terrorist threats are more likely to negatively stereotype Arabs and demand more restrictive immigration regulations.

This inquiry distinguishes between collective security threats as war and terror and personal threats as crime (Canetti-Nisim et al., 2008). Within the international comparison between Germany and Israel, this dichotomy is assumed to be significant in order to explain found differences in both societies.

b) Symbolic or Cultural Threat Perceptions

The concept of symbolic threat perceptions finds its roots in Social Identity Theory which argues that perceived threats of an outgroup would bring about feelings of animosity on part of the ingroup toward this outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). "Symbolic threats arise because of perceived group differences in morals, values, norms, standards, beliefs, and attitudes. Symbolic threats are threats to the ingroup's worldview" (Stephan et al.,

2000, p. 241). Raijman and Semyonov (2004) applied this conception whereby they specifically referred to perceived threats to national and cultural homogeneity within the Israeli society. The authors found a significant correlation between right-wing political orientation and religious fundamentalism and negative attitudes toward members of an outgroup (Raijman & Semyonov, 2004). Also a range of other studies substantiate the impact of symbolic threat perceptions on exclusionist attitudes towards minorities (e.g. Esses et al., 1993; Raijman, 2010; Scheepers et al., 2002; Stephan et al., 2000).

c) Economic Threat Perceptions

Rational group conflicts over scarce resources are the defining elements of economic threat perceptions. This particular source of threat finds its origin in Realistic Group Conflict Theory in accordance with Levine and Campbell (1972). The authors state that "false perceptions of threat from out groups cause increased ingroup solidarity and outgroup hostility" (Levine & Campbell, 1972, p. 41) where the link lies to exclusionist attitudes toward minorities. "Thus the perception of threat or fear of competition rationalizes the exclusion of subordinate minorities (e.g. labor migrants) from equal access to societal and material goods" (Raijman & Semyonov, 2004, p.784). Bobo (1996) describes Blumer's Group Position Model as the most suitable one in order to elucidate intergroup hostility stemming from perceived competitive threat. He argues that "Feelings of competition and hostility emerge from historically developed judgments about the positions in the social order that in-group members should rightfully occupy relative to members of an out-group" (Bobo, 1996, p.955). According to Blumer (1958) it is crucial to meticulously examine collective processes in a society and to acknowledge that an individual sense of group position is a historical product.¹

Empirically speaking, a significant relationship was discovered between respondents of low socio-economic status and their exclusionist attitudes towards foreign workers in Israel (Raijman & Semyonov, 2004).

¹ Bobo (1996) argues that explanations for hostile attitudes which are solely based on self-interest, the classic prejudice model, or stratification beliefs are insufficient and that taking into consideration group status is a crucial underpinning of the phenomenon of prejudice.

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that security threat perceptions can – and need - to be coherently distinguished from economic- and symbolic threat perceptions and that these different dimensions can be found in the mixed method study within the German and the Israeli sample. Having this tripartite concept in mind, it is of special interest towards which social groups different dimensions of threat perceptions are triggered and portrayed and how they are justified by the respondents. It is assumed that different social groups trigger dissimilar threat perceptions and therefore diverse justification attempts to hold hostile attitudes towards them.

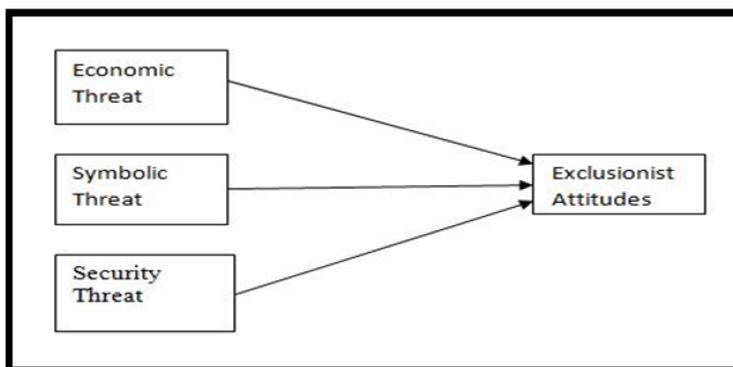


Figure 1: The three different sources of threat (Source: Own design).

It is assumed to find the following pattern regarding minority groups and the threat perceptions they are most likely to trigger within the respondents:

Table 1: Israel - Expected Threat Perceptions Triggered by Minority Groups*

Social Groups	Security Threat	Economic Threat	Symbolic Threat
(Muslim) Arab Population	×(Canetti-Nisim et al., 2007)	×(Canetti-Nisim et al., 2007)	
Labor Migrants		×(Rajjman & Semyonov, 2004)	×(Rajjman & Semyonov, 2004)
Refugees	?	?	?
non-Jews from Former Soviet Union		×(Canetti-Nisim et al., 2007)	×(Canetti-Nisim et al., 2007)

* The parentheses indicate previous studies which suggest those findings for Israel.

Table 2: Germany - Expected Threat Perceptions Triggered by Minority Groups

Social Groups	Security Threat	Economic Threat	Symbolic Threat
Turkish Migration Background/ Muslims	×		
Italians/former working migrants		×	×
Refugees	?	?	?
"Russlanddeutsche"		×	×

For Germany the assumptions are drawn from the mentioned theories and it is tested if the same assumption regarding comparable minority groups can be applied. For instance it is examined if the Turkish population will trigger the same threat perceptions as the Muslim Arab population in Israel. Accordingly, labor migrants in Israel are expected to trigger the same threats as former labor migrants in Germany, e.g. Italians.

Lastly, it is assumed that depending on the historical and social background of a society, different psychological explanations are given for their hostile attitudes by the German and Israeli respondents respectively. In accordance with Bar-Tal and Jarymowicz (2006), Blumer (1956), and Bobo and Hutchings (1996) it is assumed that historic and political factors have an impact on the psychological mechanisms which explain hostility toward outgroups.

A Mixed Methods Study

Denzin (1970) – one of the pioneers of the mixed method approach – defines mixed methods or triangulation as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena" (Denzin, 1970, p. 297). He argues that the researcher should attempt to examine research objects from as many methodological perspectives as possible. Usually, this is achieved by the usage of a variety of research methods and the application of more than one paradigm (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Flick, 2008).

The Mixed Method study discussed here follows the so called concurrent nested strategy and combines quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2003). In this strategy one data collection phase is implemented and precedence is given to one method – in the case of this paper to qualitative methods. This article only portrays one aspect out of an overall study which covers a range of additional research questions. For this particular aspect the qualitative outcomes are most relevant and therefore less space is dedicated to discuss the methodological features of mixed method studies.

Generally, a critically discussion regarding the combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches and their underlying paradigms is crucial for a fruitful implementation of mixed methods. Due to space restrictions this cannot be achieved in this paper. For further insights in the discourse regarding different paradigms and mixed methods see Adorno (1972), Creswell (2003), Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2009), Sale & Brazil (2004), Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), and van de Vijver and Chasiotis (2010).

The Questionnaire

Helfferrich's (2009) guidelines served as a source for designing and conducting the qualitative questionnaire. The qualitative interview was divided into seven separate parts which were designed in accordance with the elaborated theoretical considerations regarding security-, economic-, and symbolic threat perceptions. Every individual section started with a broad formulated question to reduce the pre-structuring of the respondent's answer by the interviewer. Only when crucial issues were not addressed by the respondents themselves, did the interviewer add an additional question regarding the missing aspects. This strategy grants more guidance to the

respondents and unveils which issues and topics are most salient in their minds (Helfferich, 2009).

In the initial section questions were raised on the subject of respondent's perception of the security situation in their respective country, regarding the importance of security for them personally and security threat perceptions. The succeeding section was concerned with the perceived relationship between security and immigration while respondents were questioned about the influence of several social groups on the security situation.

The third section examined respondent's perceptions and opinions concerning equal treatment of different social groups in their society. For instance it was enquired if different social groups should receive the same rights as Israelis or Germans respectively. The fourth section touched on the issue of symbolic threat perceptions and started with a question regarding the meaning of Israel as a Jewish state or Germany being a state influenced by Christianity respectively. It was continued with questions on the subject of threat perceptions towards this religious or rather, cultural orientation. Also, the respondents were asked about their thoughts and reaction if one of their children would hypothetically marry a non-Jewish person or a non Christian person correspondingly.

The fifth section was dedicated to economic threat perceptions as competition at the labor market and also again about threat perceptions towards the cultural life in respective countries. Lastly, the respondents were questioned concerning their army experiences and if they ever experienced a war or a terror attack. In this section it was evaluated if respondents think that having those experiences or not had an impact on their attitudes and belief-systems. The purpose was to elucidate if respondents reflect in such a way on the political situation they live in and if they acknowledge that those aspects influence their socialization. ²

For the quantitative component of the questionnaire, items were drawn and utilized from the European Social Survey 2002/2003 regarding threat perceptions. Moreover several characteristics of the respondents were collected whereby questions from the European Social Survey were

²

The author of this study is aware of possible sequence-effects of the asked questions; meaning the first asked question might trigger certain thoughts within the respondents and therefore influence the answers for the following questions (e.g. see Diekmann, 2005). Due to time concerns, no pre-tests were conducted to test of those effects.

implemented due to their confirmed validity and reliability. Those questions were concerned with which political party respondents voted for, their self/assigned left-right wing political orientation, level of religiosity, country of origin, when respondents came first to Israel (if not born there), how frequently respondents discuss political affairs, occupational status, household income, year of birth, level of education and current place of residence. Finally, the interviews in Israel were conducted in English and the respondents in Israel were asked how comfortable they felt conducting the interview in English and not in Hebrew. No serious concerns or discomfort was reported by the Israeli respondents. Welch and Piekkari (2006) even report possible positive effects of conducting an interview in a foreign language such that a greater openness on the part of the respondents as social desirability effects are reduced toward a foreigner (meaning the interviewer) and the need for the respondents to provide more detailed explanations since nothing can be taken for granted.

Five pre-test interviews were carried out in Israel and one pre-test interview in Germany.³ One pre-test in Israel was conducted with a non religious, left wing Palestinian woman with a Muslim background in order to gain the perspective of one of the outgroups in Israeli society. This interview was highly beneficial in the sense that new ideas were raised and the interviewer was sensitized towards specific discrimination patterns. All the respondents received an information letter about the interview and the research project and had to sign an agreement before the interview to assure data protection for the respondents. All the interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder (Olympus VN-5500PC) and transcribed by the interviewer.⁴ The interviews were conducted between April and September 2010 in Israel and Germany, whereby the Israeli interviews were carried out first.

3

Originally, item batteries were included in the pre-test questionnaire to measure social desirability, need for social approval and the perception of what is socially desirable in Israel and Germany (from the ALLBUS 2006). Those items were too time consuming to adapt to the Israeli setting and raised confusion within the Israeli respondents. Therefore those items were removed. Still, it seems highly important to find a way how to measure those aspects since they influence interview outcomes.

4
No notes about non-verbal expressions like gestures during the interview were made and verbal expressions like "ehm" or "hmm" were not written down.

The Sample

The so called snow-ball system was implemented in order to recruit respondents in Israel and Germany (Helfferich, 2009). In the case of this study for Israel self-assigned religious orientation (non religious vs. religious), self-assigned political orientation (left wing vs. right wing orientation) and social status (blue collar vs. white collar)⁵ were varied with each other. Due to time and money concerns no other variables were controlled for.⁶ For the German sample religious orientation was not varied as religion is assumed to play a less significant role in this society than in Israel where the state is intertwined with Judaism. The respondents had to classify themselves according to the control variables. In Israel, nine interviews were realized and in Germany five interviews were carried out.

For the Israeli sample no respondent was found with the combination of "left wing, religious and blue collar"; all other variations of the control variables could be realized. In the German case it was challenging and time consuming to locate willing right wing oriented respondents but in the end this could be achieved. It is assumed that this difficulty can be explained by the effects of social desirability.

The social desirability effect is a systematic distortion explained by the cost and utility considerations of a respondent. This kind of distortion occurs when a respondent expects social disapproval due to his or her answer in an interview (Diekmann, 2005). According to Esser (1975) the behavior of respondents is influenced by two motivational desires: Need for social approval and avoidance of social disapproval. It is reported in several studies that while trying to measure and evaluate social attitudes towards minority groups or questions about income this is an especially crucial problem (Diekmann, 2005; Reinecke, 1991; Stocké 2004 & 2007). Also this matter cannot be further discussed due to space restrictions.

⁵

Respondents were categorized as blue collar if they perform manual labor, are part of the working class and have a low level of education. They were categorized as white collar if they perform semi-professional office, administrative, and sales-coordination tasks and have a relatively high level of education.

For instance, region would have been an interesting control variable. The difference between big cities (e.g. Tel Aviv vs. Jerusalem) or rural versus urban regions could have been examined (also East vs. West Germany). Moreover, ethnic background in Israel would have been interesting to control for.

Findings

To assure a satisfactory degree of transparency and comprehensibility for the reader of this study, quotes are utilized for illustration of the research findings. Using quotes is an important quality criteria for the qualitative element of a Mixed Method study (Sale & Brazil, 2004). Quotations are utilized due to their evidentiary power, their aesthetic value, to offer evidence for a conclusion or claim, and since they are rhetorical devices intended to persuade readers of the trustworthiness of this study (Sandelowski, 2003). Additionally, quotes are portrayed to enable alternative interpretations by the reader of the research findings as it is desirable to have more than one subjective analysis (Lamnek, 2005). Every quote from a respondent is accompanied by information about the three control variables, that is respondent's self assigned level of religiosity, political orientation, and social status. Quotes from the German transcripts were translated into English by the interviewer. ⁷

Quantified Threat Perceptions: Israel

For Israel table 3 shows the threat perceptions towards different social groups which were found to be verbally expressed by the respondents in the qualitative part of the mixed method study.

⁷

On several instances it is mentioned how many respondents out of the whole sample expressed certain issues or topics. The intention of this information is to provide more transparency and accuracy; it is not intended to imply that the sample is representative or that generalizations toward a wider population can be drawn.

Table 3: Quantified Threat Perceptions* for the Israeli Sample

Social Groups	Security Threat	Economic Threat	Symbolic Threat
(Muslim) Arab Population	Case 2,3,4,5 & 7	<i>no findings</i>	Case 4 & 7 <i>(contradicting)</i>
Labor Migrants		Case 1 (only vague) ,4, &5	Case 1 & 5
Refugees	Case 4 & 7	Case 4 & 7	Case 7
non-Jews from Former Soviet Union		<i>no findings</i>	Case 2

* bold = in accordance with assumption; *cursive* = *not in accordance with assumption*

Most dominant are security threat perceptions towards the Muslim Arab population. In accordance with the hypothesis, this social group was perceived by several respondents as a security threat. Two respondents perceived refugees as a security threat, but only if they are Muslim and in these cases coming from Sudan. Contrary to the previous assumption, the non-Jewish Arab population was not perceived as an economic threat in the sample and by only one respondent (Case 4) as a potential symbolic threat. ⁸

Labor migrants are perceived as a potential symbolic threat to the Jewish character of the state, in the case that they remain in Israel and don't return to their home-countries. One reoccurring finding concerning labor migrants is that they are perceived by many respondents (Case 1, 2, 4 & 7) as temporary guests who are not part of the Israeli society, that they don't see the need to integrate them or allow them the same social rights as Israelis. Only two respondents perceive them as a potential economic threat who take away jobs from Israeli citizens. Most respondents perceive them as only doing jobs which Israelis are unwilling to do and as being important for the economy. Therefore the initial assumption is only satisfied regarding symbolic threat perceptions.

Refugees were mainly imagined as Muslim people coming from Sudan which triggered all three different threat perceptions. Respondents who perceived them as a threat imagined people who are illegally in Israel and

⁸

Case 7 is contradicting himself in the interview. On some sections he stated that Arabs are not a symbolic threat, and in one section he states they are one.

who, according to the law, don't deserve refugee status. Interestingly, non-Jews from the former Soviet Union who came to Israel under the law of return did not trigger many threat perceptions within the sample. ⁹

To summarize, security- and symbolic threat perceptions were dominant in the Israeli sample while Muslims were a main source for threat perceptions. Table 3 shows that Israeli respondents who perceived a certain group as a certain kind of threat – security-, economic-, or symbolic threat – do not necessarily perceive those groups as another threat. For instance Case 2 perceives the non-Jewish Arab population as a security threat, but not as an economic or symbolic threat. This supports the first hypothesis that the three different threat perceptions can be distinguished in meaningful ways from each other. Case 9 (left [2]; non-religious [2]; blue collar) from the Israeli sample even stated the following after being asked at the beginning of the qualitative interview if he thinks that immigrants influence the security situation in Israel (he did not express any strong negative threat perceptions):

Case 9: *"No [not the security situation]. I think immigration affects mostly culture; Maybe economics a bit."*

Quantified Threat Perceptions: Germany

For table 4, which portrays the quantitative distribution of threat perceptions, the broad category "immigrants in general" was added, since some respondents did not specify their statements to any particular social group like immigrants with a Turkish migration background or ethnic Germans from Russia.

9

This is surprising since Canetti-Nisim et al. (2008) for instance found threat perceptions towards this groups due to symbolic threat concerns.

Table 4: Quantified Threat Perceptions* for the German Sample

Social Groups	Security Threat	Economic Threat	Symbolic Threat
Turkish Migration Background/ Muslims	Case 2,4 & 5		<i>Case 1, 2, & 5</i>
Italians/former working migrants		<i>no findings</i>	<i>no findings</i>
Refugees	<i>Case 1, 4 & 5</i>		
"Russlanddeutsche"	Case 4 & 5	Case 2	<i>no findings</i>
Immigrants in general		Case 2 & 4	Case 4

* bold = in accordance with assumption; *cursive* = *not in accordance with assumption*

Examining table 4, it can be observed that in Germany, people with a Muslim background – which are mainly individuals of Turkish origin – were perceived as a security- or a symbolic threat by four out of the five respondents (Cases 1, 2, 4, & 5). As in the Israeli Case, symbolic threats toward Muslims were not expected within the hypothesis. Also in Israel, groups with a Muslim background were the main target for threat perceptions with the difference that in Israel they were mainly perceived as collective security threats and not as individual threats as in the German sample. Interestingly, when directly asked, the German sample respondents claimed that religious backgrounds don't play a significant role within their judgments about social groups and their potential threats.

Contrary to the expectations Italians were mentioned a couple of times by some respondents but not described as any threat. They were rather portrayed as culturally close to the German host society in contrast to Turkish immigrants or ethnic Germans. This similarity might be a reason why they are not perceived as a threat. The assumption could be formulated, that the culturally further away or the more different a social group is perceived, the more likely it is that those groups trigger certain threat perceptions.

Refugees were described by Case 4 & 5 as a security threat in the sense of their higher likelihood of committing crimes. Case 1 stated that refugees could be a security threat since they are unable to work, which makes them less integrated and more likely to commit a crime (see remarks above). Ethnic Germans from Russia ("Russlanddeutsche") were perceived by two respondents (Case 4 & 5) as a security threat (contrary to the assumption) and by Case 2 as a potential economic threat (in accordance with assumption) while they were portrayed by Case 4 and Case 5 as a different "kind of people" ("ein anderer Menschenschlag").

Finally, three respondents referred to immigrants in general without specifying a social group which was perceived as an economic or symbolic threat.

The dominant threat perceptions in the German sample were clearly security threat perceptions and symbolic threat perceptions, the same as in the Israeli sample. Additionally, the table shows that German respondents who perceived a specific group as a particular kind of threat – security-, economic-, or symbolic threat – do not necessarily perceive those groups as other threats as well. For instance Case 5 perceives refugees as a personal security threat, but not as an economic or symbolic threat.¹⁰ The same was found in the Israeli sample. This supports again the hypothesis that the three different threat perceptions can be distinguished in a meaningful way from each other. At the same time respondents who perceived one social group as a security threat tend to also perceive other social groups as security threats. For example Case 4 and Case 5 expressed security threat perceptions towards Turkish immigrants, refugees and ethnic Germans from Russia. This observation holds not for other threat perceptions. It might be possible that security threat perceptions have a greater tendency for generalizations beyond one social group. This examination was not made for the Israeli sample and there is not enough evidence to follow this assumption within this inquiry.

Comparing the Two Samples – How do Respondents differ in their psychological explanations for their hostility toward minorities?

Examining the differences between the two samples emphasizes the importance of historical and political contexts which shape identity, psyche, and mind of the micro and macro levels of a society which is in line with the third hypothesis of this study. Additionally the argued utility of qualitative methods is emphasized within this study since they allow the unveiling of socio-psychological explanations and mechanisms within the respondent's mindsets which could have not been uncovered with purely quantitative questionnaires.

¹⁰

Case 4 is an exception in the sample and carries all three threat perceptions towards all mentioned social groups. He was also the respondent with the most radical statements which might explain his answers.

Security Threat Perceptions

Salience of Security Threats – Collective versus Individual

The first crucial difference between the German and the Israeli sample is the kind of security threats which are salient in respondent's minds. For Israelis' collective security threats such as war and terror which emphasize one's mortality, (Bar-Tal & Jarymowicz, 2006) were salient, while for Germans crime and minor offenses such as theft were dominant in people's minds.

Israel

In general, it can be stated that all Israeli respondents had collective security threats like war and terror in mind while answering the questions. All respondents except of Case 9 perceived security threats in the form of war and terror but at the same time, state that they feel safe living in Israel.

Case 1 (left [3]; non-religious [2]; white collar) perceives Israel as a safe place to live, but is at the same time worried about the readiness-state of the army and is also convinced, that another Intifada will happen eventually:

Case 1: I think Israel is a very secure country.... [...]... I hope I can trust the army. But there are times that I'm not very convinced that it is prepared well for the next time it will have to show its abilities."

Interviewer: "And why?"

Case 1: "Because if, for example, the thing with the boat [referring to the MV Mavi Marmara incident on May 31, 2010], the army was not prepared enough. There were scenarios which were not taken into consideration. This raises questions because there could be more scenarios."

Interviewer: "Does that worry you for the future?"

Case1: "Yes. There will be a time when we will be using the army to defense, to offence, and yes, we are worried that it should be strong enough to help us."

Case 1 from the Israeli sample refers to political matters which have an impact on Israel's security situation. At the same time, Case 1 rarely holds any negative attitudes towards minorities living in Israel.

Germany

Within the German sample, crime was the most salient security issue which was mentioned after asking the first question of the qualitative question-

naire. Case 1, 4, and 5 thought firstly about crime but differed in their feeling of safety. Case 1 (left [3]; religious [5]; white collar) for instance has absolutely no security concerns and the first statement he articulated in the interview were the following:

Case 1: "I can say abstract, I see my safety as provided. I don't have any problem. I experience this by myself, that the perceived or felt insecurity is not the same like the real existing insecurity. That means I put my wallet openly on the table when I'm at an ice-café, also I don't lock my car all the time. I never lock my trunk; also at home I like to leave the front door stand open. I'm now 42 years old and I never made bad experiences."

Case 4 (right [6,5]; non-religious [3,5]; blue collar) differs from Case 1 in the sense that he expresses clear security concerns while he also only refers to crime. Case 4: "From year to year, I feel less safe. They broke into my car in 2008, here at our courtyard, and stole my wallet, BMW."

The Relation Between Security Concerns and Hostile Attitudes

Israel

After evaluating the statements of the Israeli respondents, it can be concluded that even if almost all respondents consider security as highly important and see several potential threats to Israel's well being, not all of them showed exclusionist attitudes towards outgroups. Issues like loyalty claims, the feeling of losing control and disappointment in the government's action against the Arabs were raised. It seems for the here discussed sample that political orientation which is able to predict hostile attitudes towards outgroups. In this sample religiosity and social status seem not to be able to predict those attitudes:¹¹

Case 2 (right [8]; religious [8]; white collar) might be the most extreme example when it comes to security threat perceptions and hostile attitudes toward Arabs in Israel. She also seems to change her reality perception according to her political beliefs (thinking back to Allport's (1954) remarks on this issue). She de-humanizes the Arabs as a group and portrays them as devoted to killing:

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It is empirically supported that those variables are important variables when it comes to predict exclusionist attitudes (e.g. Rajzman et al. 2003). The intention at this point is not to challenge those findings, but rather to show that political orientation might be the strongest or most crucial predictor.

Case 2: "the security? We need it! The Arabs are always trying to kill, it is their specialty. The Jews in Israel bring progress. Their [the Arabs] specialty is to kill. ... [...]... They [the Arabs] have totally taken control of Haifa University. Jews can't even go there anymore. They do whatever they want. They have these riots there. Jews are afraid to go to the Haifa University today and no one does anything."

On several occasions Case 2 complains about the fact that the government is not doing enough against the Arabs and that they are treated with too much sensitivity.

In contrast Case 8 (religious [8]; left [1,5]; white color) – who is practicing as a Rabbi – expresses no hostile attitudes:

Interviewer: "Ok, and do you think the non-Jewish population in Israel has an influence on the security situation?"

Case 8: "Like I said at the beginning, for me, being secure in my country it's not just being the strong one who can protect himself. Security, in my personal view, it brings together values, way of life, choices; like if you are for our society being a moral society, and that's for me, being secure. If my society strives for peace, then that makes things secure. If my country was a one-dimension country, like an Army-country, then I will not feel secure. So, all the people that are coming here as well as all the people that are here, no one is a threat to my own security. On the other hand, everybody can be a threat to my own security; it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a non-Jew. So, as long as we keep on searching for and dialoging about values, democracy, peace, coexistence, then it doesn't matter who is here."

Germany

For Germany, all respondents who described security as something important for them also expressed hostile attitudes toward minority groups. Case 4 (right [6,5]; non-religious [3,5]; white collar) for instance, expresses very negative attitudes towards ethnic Germans from Russia and Romania and – similar to Case 2 in the Israeli sample regarding the Arabs – dehumanizes them. He states that the crime rate rises every year in Germany and that he feels more insecure every year. After the interviewer asked how he explains those developments, he states the following:

Case 4: "I would say, definitely because of the decline in values and morals ("Werteverfall"). What is also a big problem is the enlargement of the EU to the East. ... [...]... Yes, Yes, I saw already a couple of reports about this. The people who come here from Romania and

countries like that. They have a totally different attitude towards life. For them a life means nothing. They just stab you to death without ... they don't give a shit! I also saw this already, the police can't get control over the situation. Meanwhile, in Berlin, it is like you know it from the TV. They come to your car when you are waiting at a red light. They spray your windshield and if you don't pay, they become violent and stab you with a knife! ... [...]... The police arrested them but had to let them go because they didn't have any proof against them."¹²

He also expresses the feeling of a lack of control over the situation, also similar to Case 2 in the Israeli sample. He categorizes people from Eastern Europe into an outgroup which is criminal, extremely brutal and without any respect for human life. He claims that he gained his proof for this point of view from some media reports which – in his mind – justify generalizing those extreme cases of violence.

Generally, the dehumanization of a certain outgroup is used to support and justify one's negative prejudices towards them in both samples (Case 2 in the Israeli sample, Case 4 in the German sample). Additionally, the feeling of lack of control concerning the security threat of certain migrants is expressed (also a parallel to the Israeli sample). Another aspect in the German sample is the role of work which is conceptualized as prevention for crime and an indicator for socially desirable behavior.³¹

One of the most striking findings is the relation between the perception of security threats and hostile attitudes towards minorities which only holds true for right-wing Israeli respondents and all German respondents who express security concerns. Therefore, the third hypothesis holds mostly true since the disparate historical backgrounds and political situations lead to distinctive psychological explanations on the part of the respondents.

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On this point the question should be raised which psychological effect is served by this argumentation and dehumanization. One suggestion would be that this kind of portray of the outgroup makes it impossible to develop any feeling of empathy and understanding for the outgroup. This supports the outgroups isolation and strengthens the in- and outgroup differentiation.

¹³ All those new aspects are considered as significant findings but cannot be addressed in a satisfactory way within this inquiry since they don't address the here raised research question and due to restrictions of space.

Symbolic Threat Perceptions

Israel – The Jewish State as safety from Antisemitic Persecution

The analysis of the interviews according to symbolic threat perceptions unveiled a distinctive feature regarding the Israeli sample. For Israeli respondents a relationship was discovered between security threat perceptions and symbolic threat perceptions mediated by the perceived threat of antisemitic persecution. Four respondents (Case 1 (left [3]; non-religious [2]; white collar); Case 8 (religious [8]; left [1,5]; white color) and Case 4 (right [7,5]; religious [5]; blue collar) referred to the Jewish state of Israel as a guarantee of safety from antisemitic persecution while only a few of them used this argument as a justification for their hostile attitudes toward minority groups. Case 1 for instance emphasizes how important it is that Israel is a Jewish state and states clearly that she does not perceive Arab Israelis as any kind of threat and refers to Arabs and Jews living together in Haifa as a very positive actuality. Despite her general universalistic approach to minorities in Israel she expresses clear exclusionist attitudes toward foreign workers since they are a symbolic threat to the "Jewishness" of the state.

Interviewer: "Do you think they [labor migrants] should be part of Israeli society?"

Case1: "No. I don't think they should be part of the society because I think labor migrants don't want to be part of the society. They are coming here for ...I think as I said before; this country should be Israeli and a democratic country. I don't think labor migrants from the Philippines who come here for work for 5 years just to send money to his family should be part of the society. We should treat him well; he should have the right to earn his money. But after 4 or 5 years, I don't know exactly the law, he should go back to his society. Because if we let labor migrants come here for good, like it happened in Germany with the Turkish population¹⁴, it will not be a Jewish Israeli country. This is the why we established this country."

Interviewer: "So, also if they would like to, you think it would not be a good idea to give them citizenship and rights?"

Case 1: "No."

¹⁴

Case 1 is under the impression that 20% to 30% percent of German society is Muslim. It would be interesting to examine the origin and function of the reoccurring theme of Muslims in Europe and Germany as a symbolic threat in future studies.

The question as to why so many respondents fear the loss of the Jewish character of the state of Israel even if they describe themselves as secular. Case 1, who is not religious, explains this as follows:

Case 1: "I think the proper way to say it is not that Israel is a Jewish state but a state for the Jews. It is very crucial. I'm not a religious woman; I don't want this country with religious law and religious constitution. I want it to be a place where I as a Jew will have the chance to live my own life with no antisemitism, antisemitic steps. And I will educate my children according to my values as a Jew. Some of the values are very universal. So it is not a Jewish state but a state for the Jews."

Interviewer: "Do you think for example it is important for being secure that the state of Israel is Jewish?"

Case 1: "I think that the fact that the state of Israel is Jewish prevents antisemitism and neo-Nazism in Israel."

This quote portrays again a connection for the respondents between symbolic threat and security threat perceptions in Israel. The Jewish State of Israel isn't only a source for a psychological identity construction in a patriotic, nationalistic or ethnocentric sense, but rather perceived as a guarantee for safety and protection against antisemitic persecution for its Jewish inhabitants. The sample shows that the arguments for the necessity of a Jewish state can be used to justify exclusionist attitudes towards outgroups as we saw with Case 1 concerning the labor migrants.¹⁵ It is crucial to note that thinking positively of Israel as a Jewish state does not have the logical consequence of hostile attitudes towards non-Jewish outgroups. Case 8 (religious [8]; left [1,5]; white color) for instance, a Rabbi who didn't express any negative attitudes toward minorities, shows that perceiving Israel as a Jewish state as a necessity doesn't need to lead to exclusionist and ethnocentric attitudes towards non-Jewish outgroups.

Case 8: "So, the essence for me is to have the Israeli society at a whole, Jews and Arabs, accept everybody, and be open to the difference of

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Case 1 contradicts theoretical expectations about her attitudes, since she is left-wing, non-religious and white collar – all of this attributes would predict non-exclusionist attitudes. Interestingly, in general she holds very liberal opinions, but when talking about labor migrants she holds strong exclusionist attitudes because she sees the Jewish character of the state threatened.

religion, culture, and if we will have that, then it doesn't matter who is the majority."

Interviewer: "And would you still say you want Israel to stay a Jewish state, or. . .?"

Case 8: "does it matter what I say? I don't know, in some way this is part of my own security; my own feeling of being safe."

It is suggested to conceptualize antisemitic persecution as an own source of security threat perceptions in Israel, next to individual threats as crime and collective security threats as war and terror. Thereby, it was argued that antisemitic persecution can occur as a personal threat (e.g. antisemitic attacks on a personal level as it was reported by Case 4) or a collective threat like terror attacks carried out by Hamas or war threats formulated by Iran. The fact that five respondents – independently of being religious or not - expressed symbolic threat perceptions towards the Jewish character of the state along with the statement of Case 8, show the relevance of this issue within the Israeli sample.¹⁶

Another dominant topic which was prevalent in the Israeli sample but not in the German one, was interfaith marriage. Three cases (2, 4, & 5) were openly opposed to their children marrying someone non-Jewish.

Germany – Christianity providing Source for Identity Construction

Generally all respondents except for Case 3, expressed positive or neutral opinions about Christian cultural dominance in Germany. For Case 1 (left [3]; religious [5]; white collar) the Christian character of the state is highly important for him but serves a different main-function than for the Israeli respondents:

Interviewer: "You already mentioned it before. Germany is a country with a Christian character. Could you please explain to me what this means to you personally?"

Case1: "To have a country which is characterized by Christianity means

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The author of this paper is aware of the possible effects of her German origin which was known by the respondents. This might have had the effect that topics like the Shoa and Antisemitism were more salient for the respondents. It might be to a certain degree an interviewer-effect which might not have occurred to this extend had the interviews been conducted by an Israeli or a person with another nationality. Nevertheless, those topics were raised by the respondents and seem to be of a certain importance to them, which makes them relevant for this inquiry.

that we all have quite the same moral concepts. This is crucial for me. ... [...]... We have shared concepts of how Christmas proceeds, we have shared concepts how to behave towards an adult. Therefore, this is something which unites us. The shared moral concepts, that most people have a Christian background."

Interviewer: "So, is this something which is personally important to you?"

Case 1: "Yes, this is important for me. To give me orientation, to give me orientation within this society. I find that very important."

Christian moral concepts have the social function for Case 1 to supply him with orientation and to bring more unity to the society even if he is not describing himself as very religious. He expresses symbolic threat concerns towards social groups which are not part of this Christian value consensus:

Case 1: "One [he refers to people with a Christian background] has a different thought- and behavioral structure. It is the fear that for instance a Muslim suddenly wants to start praying. I don't know, I never had an employee of this kind. I have to acknowledge, that I also had applications of this kind [applications from Muslims to work for him], but I never decided in favor of them. I don't want to claim... or maybe I want to I think I didn't had a candidate who was the best qualified one. But I'm not free of prejudices. I don't know if closeness ... I never experienced it by myself. "

... [...] ... I'm expecting from you [refers to the interviewer] that you will remain in your chair while we do this interview, but I don't expect, that you will start praying. This calculation of "the other", if I would hire him, you don't think about it and then you have a cut [meaning something unexpected happens]; one is just afraid, that such cuts infiltrate into your normal life."¹⁷

Case 1 seems to be afraid of an inability to predict behavior of Muslims like he thinks he could do with Christians. It could be assumed that he is

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Case 1 mentions during the interview that he is strongly opposed toward Muslim institutions in Germany such as school or kindergartens. He also expressed his discomfort with so called parallel societies in Germany and the fact that Muslim students are allowed to pray during their working- or study-hours.

afraid to lose his "orientation" in society and therefore his control of a social situation. He constructs "the other" as different to his own ingroup and not possible to predict and understand. He justifies his point of view by assigning them a different thought- and behavioral structure which – according to him – prevents any mutual understanding. He wants to be able to predict other people's behavior and facing another culture or religion threatens his concept of reality. This kind of personal logic was not found in the Israeli sample and can be understood as further disparateness.

Lastly, in the German sample no objections against mixed marriages were openly expressed.

Economic Threat Perceptions

Israel

For Israel, the Arab population did not trigger any economic threat perceptions and only two cases view working migrants as an economic threat. Most respondents stated clearly that they perceive working migrants as essential for the Israeli economy. Case 7 (right [9]; non-religious [0]; white color) is given as an example:

Case 7: " Without them [labor migrants] the economy is going to ... I don't want to tell you going to crash, but actually face a very very hard time. Because those guys actually work in the most hardest work ever in the agriculture, in factories in cleaning houses, working with old people. The Israelis don't really want to do it; it's not good money, it's not really actually keeping with their own dreams, no one dreams about breaking stones in the field, plugging the ... or helping old guys. So, it's good they are here."

On the one hand, those respondents depict labor migrants as welcomed but only temporary guests which are not a real part of Israeli society and therefore do not deserve the same rights.

Case 7: "[...] ... they [labor migrants] are coming from outside to find a job, I mean ok, but, they must do it properly and leave here after a couple of years. They cannot stay forever, this is a threat! ...[...] ... I mean, they are welcome, but it must be strict, with the law, names and passports with everything; they must understand that this is not their country!"

The reason why labor migrants should return back to their country of origin is explained by the respondents through their potential symbolic threat to the Jewish character of the state which was also expressed by Case 1. This was already discussed in the previous section regarding symbolic threat perceptions.

Refugees in comparison to labor migrants raise much clearer economic threat concerns than labor migrants within the Israeli sample. Case 4 – similar to Case 5 regarding labor migrants – also sees a problem if refugees are illegally in Israel and claim to be refugees but according to him, are not refugees. It is important to mention that Case 4 (right [7,5]; religious [5]; blue collar) believes that almost all refugees are not "real" refugees:

Interviewer: "Right now when you refer to refugees, like people who flee from their country... [Case 4 interrupts the interviewer]"

Case 4: "This is a TV brain-wash! Not all the people are refugees. Most of them just want to have a better life in another country. That is human beings. Those people are not really refugees and they did not pass a Holocaust over there or got killed by other people. I think they should not let them in. I'm for Israel letting in refugees that passed, or their families got murdered. Or genocide, because the Israelis passed that and we should not people who passed the same events in their lives, we should not let them be killed in their country. We should help them. But some people just want to make money. Go back to your country! What should you do in Israel? Here you have 300.000 who are unemployed."

Claiming the illegality of certain people – or in this case the majority of a social group – seems to be used as an argumentation strategy to undermine their legitimacy to live and work in Israel. In this instance, refugees are described as an outgroup which clearly competes with Israelis for scarce resources in the labor market.

After being asked about them by the interviewer, Case 7 (right [9]; non-religious [0]; white collar) also describes refugees as an economic threat but clearly states again that labor migrants are not such a threat – on the contrary:

Case 7: "For sure, for sure, those that are staying in Eilat, those 6000, the refugees, the refugees, for sure, we must to stop them but the labor immigrants that are coming here under the law, we must to have it."

Within those quotes, economic threat perceptions were expressed by the respondents according to the definition given in the theory section and in accordance with Realistic Group Conflict Theory.

Germany

Economic threat perceptions were expressed by two respondents namely Case 2 (right [5,5]; religious [5]; white collar) and Case 4 (right [6,5]; non-religious [3,5]; white collar). As already reported in the section about security threat perceptions in Germany, Case 2 sees ethnic Germans from Russia as a potential burden for the welfare-state while he would not call it a threat but rather a "challenge" for the German state.

Case 2: ...[...]...When we talk about ethnic Germans from Russia I would not speak of a threat, but it can definitely become a burden for the welfare state."

Economic threat perceptions in the sample were portrayed towards ethnic Germans from Russia and immigrants in general. Case 4 will be quoted as an example:

Interviewer: "Do you think immigrants who come to Germany influence your personal economic situation?"

Case 4: "The economic situation... Obviously, if I apply somewhere for a job and some immigrant comes who is better than I'm, the working-place will be gone. Of course it will be like that. Then, of course, I think to myself: 'Shit! He should have stayed where he came from!'"

Case 4 sees himself in accordance with Realistic Group Conflict Theory in a competition situation with migrants and sees his personal economic situation influenced and from his point of view faces competition.

It can be stated that evidence was found in the sample that immigrants are perceived as a potential economic threat in the form of competition over two different scarce resources: labor market competition but also in form of a threat to the welfare-system. Here a typical contradiction and irrationality of economic threat perception became visible: On the one hand, the immigrants are blamed for taking away jobs from German citizens while on the other hand are accused of not working but relying on the welfare-state and social benefits.

Compared to the other threat perceptions, relatively little economic threat perceptions were expressed in the German sample. Compared to Israel, the statements were less clear and less strong and no positive remarks towards immigrants were made in the German sample. One significant difference between the two countries seems to be the perceptions of immigrants according to their time of stay in the respective country. It was shown that in Israel, labor migrants are perceived to be temporary "guests" who will return to their home-countries after a certain amount of time. This was a similar situation in Germany, when working migrants mainly from Italy, Turkey and Greece came into the country. Those so called guest-workers were firstly recruited from Italy in the 50s due to the manpower shortage after the Second World War in Germany. At this time, those "guest-workers" – as implicated by the defining term given to them - were also expected to return to their country of origin after their labor force was not needed anymore. These historical details show again how important their impact is on people's perception of reality.

Conclusion

The primary goal of this paper was to examine if security-, symbolic-, and economic threat perceptions are three distinguishable theoretical concepts which can be found within this empirical endeavor. The following hypothesis were tested:

- a) The three sources of threat can be empirically and meaningfully distinguished from each other.*
- b) Different social minority groups in a society trigger different threat perceptions.*
- c) Depending on the historical and social background of a society, different psychological explanations are given by the German and Israeli respondents.*

The main focuses were the subjective reality perceptions of the respondents and their reasoning for threat perceptions and exclusionist attitudes towards minority groups in Israel and Germany. The inquiry was designed as a mixed method study which follows the concurrent nested strategy according to Creswell (2003). In the case of this particular study, quotes extracted from the qualitative interview served as the main data-source.

It was shown above that the three threat perceptions – security-, economic-, and symbolic threats – could be meaningfully distinguished within the mixed method study for both country samples. In both countries, security threat perceptions were dominant, followed by symbolic threat perceptions and lastly economic threat perceptions. It was found that different minority groups trigger particular threat perceptions and exclusionist attitudes which are justified by the respondents in distinct ways depending on the historical and political context they live in. Thereby not all expectations regarding the second hypothesis were met.

It is important to emphasize that security values played a significant role for almost all Israeli respondents due to the prevailing political situation of war and terror threats but did not - like in the German sample - lead all respondents toward more threat perceptions of minority groups and therefore more exclusionist attitudes towards them.

Moreover, it was found that the perceived threat of antisemitic persecution was a dominant topic for the Israeli respondents and facilitated a link between symbolic and security threat perceptions. When contemplating future quantitative inquiries, instruments should be developed to control for the salience of this source of threat.

Generally, this paper is a valuable contribution to current research on exclusionist attitudes towards minority groups. As stated before, Canetti-Nisim et al. (2008) pointed out the lack of inquiries taking security threat perceptions into account as a single predictor for hostile attitudes towards minority groups next to other sources of threat. This paper conceptualized security threat perceptions as a single source for exclusionist attitudes, proofed its applicability, placed it in relation to other sources of threat and expanded it to a third dimension –antisemitic persecution. Moreover, crime as a personal threat was distinguished from collective security threats and taken into account in the study. Furthermore, this paper regarded a broader range of minority groups in Israeli society as potential targets for threat perceptions and applied a cross cultural comparison with Germany. In addition no other inquiry which applies qualitative methods to examine security threat perceptions in relation to economic and symbolic threat perceptions exists yet.

Regarding the applied methodology this paper substantiates that incorporating qualitative methods in an inquiry can be highly beneficial and it is argued that the achieved insights could not have been gained with a purely quantitative approach. For instance, the different salience of certain security threats and the detailed reasoning of respondents' in both country samples could not have been analyzed with closed and standardized questions. Additionally, the pre-structured nature of quantitative instruments would not have allowed for the conceptualization of antisemitic

persecution as an own source of security threat perceptions. Additional unanticipated matters such as work-ethics, loyalty claims and cultural closeness were discovered and have the potential to inspire future studies; qualitative as well as quantitative.

This research contribution also has crucial social implications and is applicable to today's political and social life. The violent demonstrations in Israel targeting Sudanese migrants in Tel Aviv's Hatikva neighborhood is one among many examples which verifies the relevance of this research (Lior & Zarchin, 2012). Moreover, in light of the current international financial crisis and changes in the socio-economic makeup of many societies, threat perceptions and the search for scapegoats are likely to become more ubiquitous.

Exclusionist attitudes towards minority groups always decrease the quality of life, personal freedom and possibilities for self-determination of the targeted outgroups and threatens democratic values and human emancipation in a society. Research should be dedicated to discover ways how to assure personal liberty and assist individuals to overcome social restrictions derived from "race", gender, sexual orientation, and social status. Only if the various sources of exclusionist attitudes are understood, those goals can be achieved. The challenge is to raise our future generations toward humanity and emancipation and only through education can we overcome fear and build bridges between cultures, countries and people.

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Increasing Ethiopian Immigrants' Access to Higher Education and Employment: A Unique Teacher Education Program

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Abstract

In modern societies, where higher education serves as a significant vehicle of integration, the inclusion of immigrants within the realm of higher education is not a foregone conclusion. This is the result of cultural, economic, and social gaps (Agur & Rosenberg, 2006). In some cases, the integration process is blocked prior to the stage of academic studies. This situation has resulted in the creation of a teacher education program for Ethiopian students in an Israeli academic college of education for the purpose of bridging the gap between higher education and employment, and increasing the chances of the graduates' admission into the field of teaching.

The aim of this study was to examine the success of the program, emphasizing the graduates' integration into the teaching profession. It was conducted by means of Mixed Methods research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). An examination of the data indicates that a reasonable proportion of the graduates were integrated into the various educational settings. It also reveals the improving status of the graduates as well as the influence of the program on their personal and professional development

Theoretical Introduction

1. Ethiopian immigrants in Israel

The Ethiopian immigrants who arrived in Israel during the two waves of organized mass emigration from Ethiopia in 1984 and 1991 were

ideologically motivated: they dreamed of reaching the "promised land" in Zion. The 1984 migratory wave was particularly difficult (Malko, 2005). The hardships endured by the migrants on their way to Israel were analyzed by Ben-Ezer (2007), who drew the themes characterizing the collective identity of the Ethiopian immigrants as a community from the stories of young people who survived and succeeded in reaching Israel. These themes were *Jewish identity*, *suffering*, and *courage*. The first theme, *Jewish identity*, represents above all the immigrants' conviction that their journey to Israel was guided by God. They felt worthy of Israeli society's appreciation of and respect for their physical and mental *suffering*. However, a segment of Israeli society, which perceived the immigrants as people who totally lacked support and who had come to Israel in order to escape hunger and persecution (Ben-Ezer, 2007), reacted with a certain degree of discrimination.

From the point of view of ethnicity, the Ethiopian Jewish immigrants represent the greatest cultural differentness that currently exists in Israel. Even though they may well constitute the only community of black Jews in the world, the Ethiopians did not feel "black" until they came to Israel (Erlich, Salmon & Kaplan, 2003).

From an objective viewpoint, the facts reveal that a significant percentage of this population occupies the lowest socio-economical level in the Israeli social structure, manifesting economic, educational, and social gaps along with high rates of unemployment (Israel Association for Ethiopian Jewry, 2003).

CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics) employment data from the years 2002/3 clearly demonstrate the major impact of education on employment rates. Ethiopian immigrants who graduate after less than eight years of schooling have a 30% employment rate, as opposed to the 54% employment rate of youngsters who graduate after 12 years of schooling (Haas, Association for Ethiopian Jews, 2006). This signifies that despite the recent improvement in the employment status of people of Ethiopian origin, there are still differences in the chances of getting a job between the educated and the less educated. This would indicate that among Ethiopian immigrants, too, education serves as a contributing factor with regard to integration into society.

The significant differences that exist between the Ethiopian culture and the dominant Israeli culture pose a major difficulty in acquiring education. Most immigrants came from rural areas in northern Ethiopia – areas where there were no formal studies – and brought with them person-

al and behavioral norms that characterized the culture in which they lived (Ben-Ezer, 2007; Shabtai, 2001). The combination of cultural differences and the economic situation affects many aspects of the lives of Ethiopian immigrants and their offspring in respect not only of the number of years of schooling but also of the chances of the second generation becoming socially mobile.

2. The difficulties experienced by the second generation in being accepted to higher education settings

Among immigrants in general and among the "Beta Israel", as the Ethiopian Jews immigrants are called, in particular, the intercultural encounter has triggered complex challenges in various domains (Mirsky, 2005), especially as concerns access to higher education, employment, and social and economic integration within the new society.

Many of them are exposed to such challenges, principally as a result of belonging to the weaker socio-economic strata (Israel Association for Ethiopian Jewry, 2003). A brief glance at the per capita income published by the Central Bureau of Statistics (2006) presents the social stratification map as the result of educational data, migration period, and income. The link between education and employment in the various population groups frequently reveals an extreme polarity between Jews and Arabs, veterans and immigrants, and immigrants and natives (Adler & Blass, 2003, 2009; Schleicher, 2006). From this point of view, the Ethiopian community is a well-defined group in Israel's social mosaic.

The difficulties of integrating into higher education settings, particularly into teaching, are partially attributable to language difficulties, a lack of familiarity with cultural codes, difficulty in understanding social modalities, and an overall conceptual outlook which differs from that of the mainstream (Malko, 2005; Schatz-Oppenheimer & Kalnisky, 2012, in press). Ethiopian immigrants' cultural patterns, such as the code of respect toward one's elders and toward authority, the inability to adhere to a schedule, and the absolute commitment to family that may affect not only learning outcomes but also the extent of equal integration into society, constitute difficulties that come to the fore in the psychometric test (required for acceptance to colleges and universities) (Ben-Ezer, 2007; Cook-Golan, 2008; Mirsky, 2005; Weill, 1994).

Some studies show linguistic difficulties in the literacy of second-generation Ethiopian children. For instance, in a study on the acquisition of written language, Shani (2006) revealed learning gaps between Ethiopian children and other pupils with regard to level of knowledge, solution of complex problems, and literacy. Moreover, according to Shani's study, some of the Ethiopian students' linguistic abilities were found to be inferior to those of the general population. These difficulties are also typical of Israeli-born children who belong to the lower socio-economic strata. On the other hand, a notable improvement was found when the Ethiopian students chose their own contents to write about; in those cases, the quality of their writing was higher (Schleifer, 2007).

Consistent with this chain of events, the distribution of Ethiopian teachers throughout Israel's education system also fails to reflect the proportion of Ethiopian immigrants among the entire population. In 2008, the Ethiopian population numbered over 106,900, of whom 23,000 were children aged 5-19 who were attending the Israeli school system. According to the Ministry of Education, there were only about 135 Ethiopian teachers working in the education system at that time (62 in kindergartens, 55 in elementary schools, and 18 in middle schools; there are no data for secondary schools). Young Ethiopian students relate to the teaching profession as a field by means of which they can effect changes on a personal level in order to *improve their position in society*. In addition, they believe that by teaching, they will have the power to implement significant social and ethical changes (Rubin, Millet, & Gilat, 2008).

Among other things, the Ethiopian culture is characterized by very good interpersonal relationships. The effective communication between children and parents has been recognized as contributing to Israeli teacher education, and this is proof that differences occasionally give rise to advantages.

This is one of the justifications for the establishment of an intercultural program that will be described briefly below, as opposed to the reductionist approach that focuses on cultural diversity from the perspective of the immigrant minority as the "other culture", divorced from the social factors that influence academic training. It is an attempt to develop an educational type in which interculturalism is allied to curriculum development – a dynamic practice with significant components to the attendant differences (Peñalva Vález & Aguilar Idáñez, 2011).

3. A unique teacher education program

Recent decades have witnessed multiple approaches supporting the need to expand the access of students from different sectors and with diverse learning characteristics to higher education (Burdett, 2004; Lidor & Dahan, 2006, 2008; Moses, Yun & Martin, 2009). Frequently, this development is also anchored in laws supporting the rights of disabled students in Israel (2008), for example. However, only a small number of institutional initiatives have been launched for the purpose of facilitating the access of students from different cultural sectors or with special skills to higher education. Such initiatives include the teacher education program for the Bedouin sector (Reingold, 2007) and teacher education programs for excellent students (Klavr, Cohen, Abadi & Greinfeld, 2009; Magid, 2009). The admission requirements and the curricula of these academic programs have been modified to conform to the students' characteristics.

The year 2001 heralded the inauguration of a unique program for Ethiopian immigrants at an Israeli academic college of education. While the program is based on the current curriculum in accordance with the existing academic institutional structure, and includes the pedagogic requirements for all students who participate in the traditional teacher education program, it contains additional policies and provides extra hours in order to increase the inclusion of Ethiopian students. This pluralistic model (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Reingold, 2007, 2008; Yogev, 2001) includes:

1. Expanded curriculum: Placing particular emphasis on fostering literacy by increasing the number of language courses and holding workshops that focus on learning strategies;
2. Expanded enrichment program: Placing particular emphasis on fostering general and personal empowerment by holding workshops on employment issues;
3. Enhanced digital domain: Assistance in purchasing computers; training students in the use of relevant applications;
4. Leadership development: All teachers face the reality of the cultural heterogeneity in Israel in their everyday teaching. Leadership development among teachers of Ethiopian origin may lead to the development of new models of multicultural inclusion so as to improve the social climate

regarding the issue of accepting diversity, which heads the agenda of Israel's education system;

5. Academic and economic support for students;
6. Program evaluation: An examination of efficiency, of the extent to which the modified acceptance conditions predict the integration of graduates into employment settings, and of other integration indices;
7. Strengthening cultural ties to the Ethiopian heritage in the form of a special course on Ethiopian Jewish heritage; in-service training focusing on the culture of the Ethiopian community; the development of an Ethiopian Jewish Heritage Center; and, at the end of the training process, *a journey to Ethiopia*. The journey is perceived as having the potential to strengthen the cultural and professional identity (Reingold, 2007; Schatz-Oppenheimer & Kalnisky, 2010);
8. Post-graduation follow-up and support: supervised workshops during the graduates' integration into the teaching profession and guidance during their search for employment in the teaching field.
9. Facilitation of access to teacher education as a result of special acceptance criteria.

Because it reinforces cultural and experiential aspects, the program is innovative as compared with conventional methods, which seek one main model that is consistent with the ideal national values. Underlying the program is the idea of pluralism and respect for diversity and acceptance. We are striving to ensure that the graduates imbue schools with a breath of fresh air in the form of their contribution of values, tolerance, and acceptance.

The purpose of the present study is to describe the students' characteristics over the years since 2001 and study a number of employment issues in teaching from an objective perspective as well as from the graduates' perspective.

Methodology

Research approach

The study examines the characteristics of the students of the first¹ special program for training teachers of Ethiopian origin as well as trends of change between the years 2001 and 2009.

The first section deals with the contribution of the training and with employment-related issues based on the subjective data obtained from graduates (2005-2009). This year (2012), the graduates' employment status was examined and updated.

Research population

A majority of the students, who are natives of rural areas in Ethiopia, arrived in Israel during the waves of immigration in 1984 and 1991, and were later accepted to the program. Prior to commencing their studies, they had been employed in semi-professional occupations in which they served as community leaders, youth leaders, assistants to kindergarten teachers, instructors in enrichment classes, work coordinators for new Ethiopian immigrants, workers at absorption centers for new immigrants, and coordinators of social and cultural activities at community centers.

Ethiopian college graduates in the years 2005-2009

The research group consisted of 75 graduates who had completed their studies in the program between 2005 and 2009. Of them, 55 graduated with B.Ed. degrees. In this study, only 40 graduates (30% men and 70% women) who had commenced their studies between 2001 and 2005 and completed them at some point between 2005 and 2009 responded to the questionnaire. They had all acquired preschool and elementary school teaching certificates as well as B.Ed. degrees in a variety of specializations (special education, history, literature, and education systems management).

Their ages ranged from 22 to 38 (Mean 28; ST=5.00). With regard to their marital status at the beginning of their studies, 50.0% were married,

¹Nowadays, four additional programs similar to the one described here are offered at other colleges of education.

42.5% were single, and 7.5% were single parents; 47.5% had no children, 27.5% had one or two children, and 25% had three or more children.

Pertaining to the year of their immigration to Israel, 62.5% immigrated between 1982 and 1987, and 37.5% between 1988 and 2001. There were no Israeli-born graduates. Their academic performance prior to their college studies was reflected in their matriculation scores (Mean 76.84; SD 9.12). At the end of the first year in the program, the mean score had risen to 80.22 (SD 4.06).

Data collection tools

First stage: Demographic data were retrieved from the college database, and open questionnaires dealing both with the subjective contribution of the training and with employment aspects were administered to the graduates.

Second stage: A brief telephone interview regarding the graduates' actual occupational status was conducted.

The research process

A Mixed Methods approach was employed for examining the data, adopting an embedded design (Creswell & Plano, 2007).

Both statistical and conventional content analyses of the qualitative data were conducted. An analysis of the data collected from the questionnaires was performed, and the data were restructured into meaningful categories according to the subjects of the analysis approach (thematic analysis), targeting sections of texts while maintaining the significance of the context (Denzim, 2008; Ryan & Bernard, 2000). In order to validate the questionnaire, a preliminary exploratory study was conducted on a small group of eight students.

For the purpose of examining the internal consistency of the above mentioned categories, the researcher implemented the process of "reliability between judges" (Anstai, 1990; Shkedi, 2003). The categories proposed by the researcher were compared to those of two fellow researchers who were experts in the field, yielding a correlation of over

90% between the researcher's opinions and those of the other experts. In cases of disagreement, dialogue among the researchers resulted in a consensus.

Findings and Discussion

The contribution of the teacher education program

The main research question in the study focused on the participants' perceptions of various aspects of their training and the contribution of these aspects to their development.

The analysis of the open questionnaires yielded two main content categories: (1) the *areas of contribution of the program*, and (2) the *personal contribution* of the program to the *participants*.

The areas of contribution

The areas of contribution of the training yielded the following sub-categories:

Pedagogy classes;

Practical training;

Social pedagogy courses such as psychology, developmental psychology, and violence prevention;

Extracurricular activities such as workshops on individual and group empowerment, workshops focusing on seeking employment, activities fostering professional empowerment, leadership development, seminars on Ethiopian Jewish Heritage, trips and tours, the journey to Ethiopia at the end of the program, and special lectures.

Table 1 presents the meaningful language units that were counted.

Table 1: Contribution of the components of the training

Component	Percentage
Extracurricular activities	26.58%
Practical training	22.78%
Pedagogy classes	20.25%
Social studies	16.46%
Specialization studies	10.13%
Personal support	3.8%

(Kalnisky, E., Millet, S. & Cohen, N. (in press). From Gondar to Jerusalem. Tel Aviv: The MOFET Institute.)

Table 1 shows that the graduates perceived the experiential extracurricular activities (Schatz-Oppenheimer & Kalnisky, 2010) as contributing the most, followed by the practical training, and displays the rates of the contribution of the pedagogy and pedagogical-sociological courses. The graduates stressed the experience of learning, the classroom atmosphere, and the possibility of applying the topics to their private lives and to their jobs. Certain aspects of these findings are in line with the findings pertaining to graduates of other colleges of education in Israel. Pasternak's (1991) study on the evaluation of professional teacher education determined that graduates evaluated the practical work component as making the largest contribution.

In another study that examined college graduates' characteristics as reflected in their opinions, beliefs, and activities, the role of teaching was perceived as very practical, as concentrated primarily within the walls of the classroom, and as employing well-utilized and efficient teaching methods (Shachar, Kainan, Munk & Kezef, 2002). These findings are consistent with the Ethiopian graduates' choice of practical training and pedagogical studies as contributing the most in our study.

The impact of the experience, the excitement, and the practical interest constitutes an important component in the Ethiopian graduates' assessment of various courses. This result further supports experiential learning that was grounded in the training they received, and was also one of the theoretical pillars of the program. Furthermore, the experiential learning was compatible with the cultural learning patterns of Ethiopian students. Conversely, it might have been a kind of delayed experiential

education that compensated for the childhood experiences of which the immigrants had been deprived as a result of the intercultural transition.

Empowerment by means of the experiential and cultural aspects that characterized some of the program activities is unique and innovative as compared with conventional teacher education methods (Yogev, 2001). The program underscored the idea of pluralism and the acceptance of differences in the hope that the contribution of these graduates would be to imbue education in Israel with values, tolerance, and acceptance (Reingold, 2008).

Contribution of the program to the graduates' development

A content analysis of the open questionnaires yielded two major subcategories:

Contribution to personal development – This category included statements relating to self-confidence, expanding knowledge, an overall change in personality, and an improvement in personal and social status.

Contribution to professional development – This category included statements relating to teaching experience, academic achievements, and contribution to work in general – not necessarily only to teaching jobs.

Table 2 presents the contribution of the studies as perceived by graduates:

Table 2: Individual contribution of the studies

<i>Contribution</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Graduates' Quotations</i>
Professional Development	59.46%	<p><i>"Pedagogy enabled me to shift from a narrow view to a broad view"</i></p> <p><i>"The ability to see the field and adjust to the theory"</i></p> <p><i>"When I come to work, the theory becomes a reality"</i></p>
Personal Development	40.54%	<p><i>"Today I see myself as capable of doing everything and as having the capacity to cope in every field"</i></p> <p><i>"[The studies in the college] have changed my world-view"</i></p> <p><i>"I graduated from college as a different person in all respects – in my personal, social, and communal status" "I discovered new things about myself"</i></p>

The table shows that the teaching graduates recognized the contribution of the studies to teacher education (59.46%). This view is consistent with the purpose of the actual preparation and similar to the perceptions of other graduates of colleges of education. Unlike other graduates, however, the Ethiopian graduates consider their studies to make a very important and unique contribution to their personal development (40.54%), as witnessed by their enhanced self-confidence and social status.

A perusal of the research literature (Shagrir, Fishel & Barak, 2010) furnishes numerous similarities between Ethiopian graduates and other graduates from colleges of education with respect to their evaluation of the contribution of their training to their conduct as teachers. However, the significant difference between them resided in the Ethiopian graduates' approach to personal development..

The similarity between the two groups of graduates may be indicative of some transformational processes and may point at the integration of the Ethiopian immigrants into Israeli society. However, there are also differences between the groups that may foreground the fact that the Ethiopians' chosen mode of integration preserved cultural values alongside the adoption of new patterns (Mirsky, 2005).

Rates of employment – before and after the program

A combined analysis of quantitative and qualitative data was performed. The participant's jobs were classified according to the graduates' pre- and post-program occupational levels. The categories that emerged in this study from the information supplied by the questionnaires were as follows:

- A. Semi-professional employment in education and health: mediators at absorption centers, translators for old Ethiopian immigrants, youth leaders, coordinators of senior citizens' clubs, instructors at hostels for handicapped children;
- B. Community service in education: for instance, kindergarten assistants;
- C. General service jobs: supermarket cashiers, telephone survey personnel, secretaries, taxi drivers;
- D. Professional teaching jobs: elementary school teachers, adult education teachers, kindergarten teachers, substitute teachers, special education teachers;
- E. Administrative positions: project managers, absorption center managers;

Table 3: Contribution to enhanced employment status

After 2012	After 2009	Before	Employment
6 (20%)	9 (23%)	23 (70%)	Semi-professional employment in education and health
2 (7%)	5 (12%)	13 (30%)	General service jobs
7 (23%)	5 (12%)	-	Administrative positions
15 (50%)	21 (53%)	-	Professional teaching jobs
30	40	33	N

According to Table 3, of the total number of respondents (40), 53% were employed in teaching in 2009 and 50% in 2012. Between 47% (2009) and 50% (2012) were engaged in other works, some of them in management positions in education.

In 2009, 60% of the graduates were part-time workers and 40% full-time workers. In 2012, the proportion of individuals involved in teaching decreased (50%), but there was an increase in the proportion of individuals occupying administrative positions in education (23%).

The findings show that in 2009, 28 (65%) of the respondents significantly enhanced their employment status as compared with 12 (25%) for whom no such improvement occurred.

It is evident that the improvement was greater after 2012: 73% of the 30 respondents improved their status, while 27% reported no change.

Similar findings emerged from a study accompanying a program for the empowerment of Ethiopian students for educational leadership implemented at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem since 1999 (Agur & Rosenberg, 2006). The latter research shows the post-study rate of occupation to be as follows: 64% of the graduates found employment, 57% of them full-time; 90% worked in education; 82% indicated that they intended to find employment in education; however, they reported difficulty in finding work due to the lack of available jobs.

In contrast, a review of the current research on college graduates involved in teaching in the country revealed that 78%-90% were employed in teaching (Shagrir, Fishel & Barak, 2010). In the present study, however, we found the proportion of Ethiopian graduates employed in teaching to be lower than the overall proportion of all graduates in the country. While they may indeed have improved their employment status, it is still inferior to the norm. Assuming that the country's teacher education standards are uniform, this presents an alarming picture. What is the underlying reason for the differences? Why is the proportion of Ethiopians employed in teaching lower than that of other graduates?

A partial answer to this question can be found in the graduates' perception according to which Israel is still afflicted by some degree of discrimination based on skin color. This serious claim has to be investigated by studying the young teachers' ability, experience, and other qualifications pertaining to the teaching profession.

Although there is a significant improvement in employment rates in the field of teaching, additional employment indices were deemed necessary. To this end, the unique teacher education program mentioned in this study was devised, part of which involved offering support and mediation in the post-program stages.

Difficulties in finding employment

The findings show that although 43.24% of the respondents did not encounter any particular difficulties in the process of looking for work, 45.95% described a variety of difficulties they had experienced in this process. The remaining 10.81% had not yet commenced their search for employment. An analysis of the responses yielded several content categories:

- "I have a resource in my hands"
In this category, the participants expressed their suspicion that the chances of getting a teaching job depended on the practical resources available to the school (for instance, the hours allocated by the Ministry of Education for the employment of immigrant teachers) or intangible resources (such as personal connections) without which the participants were not hired:
"Maybe if I did not have the six hours per week for immigrant teachers, the school would not absorb me. These six hours help to open the door even if they are only a few."
- "There's no work in the profession I acquired"
This category includes the graduates' perceptions of the difficult stages inherent in looking for work. They pointed out a lack of employment opportunities, the Ministry of Education's stringent requirements of the teacher, and the inadequate teaching schedule:
"In my profession I had some trouble finding a job. Someone was told that the profession was too general. But I want to tell you I'm not out of work (hungry)"
"I have not found a place where I can develop in the field of education"
"Lack of experience. They are always looking for people with experience"

Appearance-based discrimination:

"There were situations where everything went well during the phone conversation, but when I appeared for the interview they said: 'Oh it's you'"

The graduates' words indicate that they recognized the major difficulties inherent in the employment-seeking stage as well as in the availability of employment opportunities. While these findings should be

taken into account in the programs that aim to promote the integration of Ethiopian graduates, the vast majority of programs are designed to promote the integration of the weaker group with less formal education (Haas, 2006). Moreover, they pointed out that only those equipped with the correct resources (teaching hours or personal connections with influential people) can obtain employment.

These statements reveal a discriminatory attitude toward the Ethiopian teachers on the part of employers, parents, and work teams. The discrimination, as it is manifested in these quotations, is characterized by a reluctance to offer equal opportunities, thereby reinforcing the existing hegemony.

Other possible reasons for the difficulty experienced by Ethiopian teachers in finding suitable work may be attributed to cultural patterns that are incompatible with the competitive employment-seeking patterns that are prevalent in Israel. A competitive market requires assertiveness strategies and personal and social resources in order for a candidate to succeed (Kalnisky, 2007). Some studies have identified personal variables that might not only explain the differences among people during the transition to work, but also predict success or failure. Blustein, Philips, Jobin-Davis, Finkelberg and Roarke (1997) identified three personality traits that may serve as predictors of success: (1) active awareness of careers, employment, and alternatives, (2) personal and environmental resources available to the individual, and (3) a coherent self-concept.

It is likely that among Ethiopian immigrants, not only is their awareness of career and employment insufficient, but they also lack the social and financial resources during the transition to work.

The poor integration of Ethiopian immigrants into employment can be ascribed to numerous instances of discrimination in conjunction with a lack of the personal, social, and cultural resources for equipping them with the requisite tools for social mobility. As a result of the complexity of the issue, it is suggested that comprehensive studies be conducted with the objective of addressing the question of employment from various points of view.

In conclusion, the data regarding the rate of employment may constitute an objective reality, but in order to gain a deep understanding of the issue, the subjective vision of the candidates, as presented in the quotation, is an essential component.

Employment difficulties

Of the graduates employed in teaching, 57.15% reported that they had not encountered any particular difficulties at work, as compared to 42.88% who reported various difficulties in seeking employment that can be divided into several categories:

- Discrimination

"At work I have to deal with difficulties such as non-acceptance of racial differences, ethnicity, etc."

"In the teachers' room ... It's difficult for the school staff to accept new teachers"

"They (the teachers) are trying to take advantage of my naïveté. As it happens, I'm fine and doing well. They are trying to set me up"

"When I worked as a kindergarten teacher in an after-school program, the parents did not accept me, the teacher's assistant was not cooperative, and it was hard for them to accept that I'm the teacher and not the teacher's assistant. Now everyone has adapted to the situation and supports me"

- Employment conditions

"It's a profession without social conditions and without a future. Minimum salary"

"Luckily, I have not encountered problems that depend on me, but there are problems on an organizational level, for example: I have no fixed classroom in which I can teach my students. They are children with special needs and I run around with them to find an available room. It's difficult for students who need a defined and fixed environment"

The sense of discrimination in the workplace is the most prominent theme associated with Ethiopian graduates employed in teaching. Strong feelings of discrimination are more typical for graduates once they are employed than before they began working. While it is difficult to alter common stereotypes in society as a whole, educational settings can and should be aware of internal discrimination processes occurring within schools and work toward rectifying them. On the other hand, it should be mentioned that the Ethiopian community in Israel is convinced that it is the object of racial discrimination and consequently ascribes any obstacle it may encounter to this factor. Among those who succeed in finding employment, there is also a recurrent reference to objective external

conditions such as salaries and physical conditions as serious difficulties even after they have found a job.

It should be noted that studies on attrition among Ethiopian teachers demonstrate it to be a result of integration, status, and salary problems (Millet & Michael, 2003). Job satisfaction is a "critical mass" that serves to prevent attrition and foster persistence in the profession (Katzir & Kramer, 1993, Kremer-Hayoun, Ziv & Shalev, 1991). Although the participants in the current study were not questioned directly about job satisfaction, it can be concluded from their feelings of disillusionment in various fields both before and after finding employment that these can lead to dissatisfaction and attrition. Indirect questions about their difficulties at work probably yielded more valuable information than direct questions, which are inclined to generate stereotypical responses.

Since this study identifies areas of discontent, it has the potential to enlighten the powers that be with regard to the situation of Ethiopian graduates and to ameliorate it. It is important to address real opportunities, support the graduates during the employment-seeking phase, and act to prevent discrimination at work.

CONCLUSIONS

Insights and implications

The appropriate employment of Ethiopian college graduates is an issue that relates to all areas of employment and not only to teaching (King & Valda Tzadik, 2006). This issue has been examined in recent years following efforts expended by education and financial institutions in the hope that they would culminate in suitable employment as a proof of the effectiveness of the investment in education. Such efforts notwithstanding, findings on the integration of Ethiopian academics into the labor market indicate the difficulties and obstacles that exist in their quest to find employment that is appropriate to their level of education (Haas, 2006). Conversely, there are findings that show an increase in employment rates among Ethiopian academics.

The aims of the teacher education program described in this study were to enable the Ethiopian students (1) to integrate into higher education, (2) to be included in the employment world, and (3) to become

leaders endowed with the ability to effect the desired changes in the institutions in which they work so as to improve intercultural education. The curriculum was built according to this orientation.

The results presented here demonstrate that the unique teacher education program offered at the college is helpful in promoting immigrants' social mobility as based on reasonable rates of employment. The influence of the program on the Ethiopian graduates' personal and professional development also foregrounds the importance of utilizing the curriculum to deal with personal as well as professional development. The program aims to provide specific responses to specific needs by means of personal conversations, financial support, or guidance vis-à-vis family and social behavior. This, however, is not sufficient; it is also necessary to investigate the employment options and prepare the new teachers to cope with the alarming reasons for the difficulties that exist during the process of finding employment as well as in the jobs themselves.

The examination of the data indicates that the graduates were being integrated into the various educational frameworks at a reasonable rate and that their status was improving. Taking these results and the growing interest in Ethiopian students on the part of other colleges of education into consideration, the Ministry of Education decided to extend the original program to a number of other colleges with the aim of furnishing a solution for young people who possessed suitable qualities for teaching but were finding it difficult to fulfill the acceptance requirements.

This study identifies pockets of discontent that should be identified and eradicated. It is important to ensure not only that genuine opportunity are afforded at the employment-seeking stage, but also that action is taken to *prevent discrimination in workplaces after the Ethiopian immigrants have been integrated into them.*

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Design of a Support Program for Education and Romani Culture

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Abstract

The culture of the Romani is based on a considerable set of values and the development of an intense solidarity, but it is also characterized by the knowledge about tremendous risks arising from the current socio-economic crisis.

Romani students, particularly in secondary education, participate mainly in compensatory education programs that give attention to cultural diversity. Because of these students' decrease in academic performance we felt compelled to design a comprehensive training program that allowed students and their families to accept the challenge of acquiring basic competencies and at the same time feel relaxed in the domain of school culture. In this program we have applied the ludic principle, using OOJJ, motivating web sites and case analysis to assist in developing a new culture of families and institutions.

Introduction

The actual research is focused on finding answers to the question, whether we really know about the educational demands of the Romani community in the neighborhood of Carabanchel Alto and zones of Úbeda and Granada and the didactic needs of Romani participants involved in the global program of integral education in these communities. We are aware of the amount of problems, difficulties and cultural diversity that characterize Romani students and of the evidence of constraints that interfere with their current formation in primary and secondary schools. These constraints are the more serious the higher the school level.

The education of this minority must become a core concern of the educational centers in this area. The program of integral education demonstrates a commitment to the needs and expectations of Romani students and of the Romani community as a whole.

Previous research has highlighted the challenges posed by a comprehensive training of Romani students in this program. By applying the program design and its basic tasks these challenges can be met successfully. Most important is to support teaching by didactic means like the ludic-inquirer, video games, open and flexible instructional web sites as well as joyful situations that demonstrate the positive aspects of the teaching-learning processes. Another study by Medina, Domínguez and Medina (2011; 2012) shows a fruitful line of improving educational practices with Romani students by using video games.

Research conducted by Anderson et al. (2010), Medina Domínguez and Medina (2012) suggests that an excessive use of violent or aggressive video games does not improve interactive behavior, interfere with formative activities and create barriers between the interaction of different cultures. Anderson et al. (2002) demonstrate that violent or aggressive games produce distinctive levels of aggression dependent on the type of the cultures (Western Cultures/Eastern Cultures).

The video game is a resource that properly used and inserted in educational processes encourages motivation and stimulates the development of competencies: digital, linguistic-communicative, mathematical, social, environment knowledge, etc.

The video game must be oriented in its design and use to the students and their ideas, therefore, in this study we followed processes as pretended described in Bruner's vision of "the act of discovery, who describes the purpose and effect of discovery learning". The solution of a problem has to be posed in accordance with Beer (2012, p. 67), also based on Bruner (1961):

"This hypothesis is that it is only through actually attempting to solve a problem do we become good problem solvers. This presented an interesting challenge for me, as I had believed that children should be free to prioritize the means over the end in order to be truly playing. However, what I am trying to achieve is a period of target free play, combined with a problem solve, to develop discovery learning."

Accordingly, the processes that we continue correspond with the findings of Beer (2012, p. 67):

"My hope is that by designing an activity that requires the children to investigate principles of the interface for themselves they will become capable learners able to problem solve."

Video game design requires a creative activity and decision-making processes, which recognize students as future narrators of stories that will promote creativity, problem solving and the opportunity to apply most of the important elements of Romani culture, such as musical texts, living in open places, the sense of trade, but also experiences of displacement. These elements should appear in narratives and scenarios of video games meaningful in the Romani culture.

The use of ICT by the Romani culture, in general (Granados, 2008), is more restricted than in other groups, given the cultural and economic constraints, however, in the group of students present in the two case studies (Atkins & Wallace, 2012) and particularly in Madrid, the use of video games, Internet access and the incorporation of this modality of ICT, mobile phones and abundant use of cyber-games and entertainment scenarios, is as common as in the other cultures present in the neighborhood – and in some cases it is more intense.

Granados (2008, p. 435) emphasizes "that there is a full implementation in the leisure of young Gypsies of using video games, taking advantage of the video game consoles and other media that deploy with preference motor skills." However, in our field the presence of computers in family environments is plentiful, contrasting thus the 2008 study, just like the widespread use of mobile phones and Internet use, online games and SMS, more accessible through new resources and technology networks facilitated by Tuenti and WhatsApp.

Marqués (2000) notes that the great variety of video games and their dissemination among all social strata have promoted an increasing use among the various users, but the initiation is usually in games with dual character tasks and limited cognitive development.

Romani children prefer video games linked to motor tasks, such as sports games and tense motor reactions. They use less games like *Dragons*, *Caesar*, etc., which focus on historical processes and demand more reflection and symbolization. However, when Clemente (2012) created instructional situations to develop knowledge in a creative and systematic way, Romani students have been involved and solved with pleasure and rigor the classroom tasks using historical games as: *Age of Empires*, *Rise of Nations*, *City building* in various versions, *Sims City*, *Lincity*, *Caesar III*.

For Romani players it must be possible to actively intervene and to arrange things. Some institutions and families enjoy the media for playing video games, for instance *Play Station 3*, *Xbox 356*, *Wii*, etc. These media make it easier for teens to use video games and to integrate educational processes into their leisure.

The ecosystems of relatives, schools and especially the program of Romani community care have promoted the use of soft-intensive games

and ludic tasks and the positive socialization of students. Medina, Domínguez and Medina, (2012, pp. 52-53) confirm: "The present study analyzes the research done by Huber (2008), Medina, Domínguez and Medina (2012), who recreate this vision and tell us about the didactic value of video games, i.e., "creating means lucid innovative scenarios", involving players in the process of "learning location design of new tasks and mastery of competencies (communication, digital, artistic, environmental, knowledge, math, learning to learn)."

Young et al. (2012), Tobias and Fletcher (2012), Young, Slota and Lai (2012) found evidence for the impacts video games can have on students' achievement; this is obvious especially in learning second languages. At the same time they underline how important it is to limit the analysis not on achievement effects, but to include emotional and social consequences of playing video games.

Medina, Domínguez and Medina (2012, p. 53) state that "educational video-games are oriented to show new realities to students and return the satisfaction offered by playful situations to them to create virtual valuable realities. This challenge implies using video games as a didactic means, as conciliator of emotions and enabling actions for learning practice."

The Romani community values the creative, collaborative and efficient use of video games in families, especially among teenagers. We have incorporated into the program the creative and complementary use of video games for students to participate in the program conducting time targeted periods to complete the tasks assigned and suggested by teachers in the classroom. Video games in the program meet the following purposes:

- Socialize program students.
- Complete the activities carried out and assigned as needed in classrooms.
- Meeting the expectations and requests of students to use predominately sports games like Formula 1, as well as compensate with satisfaction the time spent on the tasks assigned in class.
- Involving students as a team in a more responsible use for instructional ends and peer support.
- Using video games to create a playful atmosphere and to compensate for the activities assigned in class.
- Promote greater cooperation between teams, dyads of students to the use video-games as FIFA, Evolution-2012 and video-games adventures.

- Invite students to reflect and configure video games that encourage and consolidate the Romani culture and intensify their cooperation for rationally use of ICT.
- Consolidating a rational, tailored and creative use of some video-games.
- Encourage students to perform narratives of new video games which promote respect for Romani culture and their involvement and mastery of ICT.
- Integrate ICT practices in the educational center with the proper use of such technological means.

Training programs to support the Romani culture are based on complementarity between indispensable attention to each student and community actions, which integrate everyone in their group, advancing according to a synthesis between the needs of each learner, his family context, the needs of his life in the classroom and most relevant actions in an open and shared cultural identity and characterized by full cooperation between members and development with the global community, the neighborhood and the city, Urban Education. We know that video games promote these goals only with limits, but they can be used in innovative ways.

Medina and Medina (2011) have started to design narratives with students at the levels 9 and 10 (13-14 years), predominately girls and students from a Romani environment. We propose narratives for video games to support and improve relationship and increase knowledge of Chinese culture.

Previous studies (Medina, Domínguez & Medina, 2012) demonstrated the views of teachers who support the use of video games, which promote the following competencies:

- Communication skills.
- Social skills.
- Knowledge of Physical Education.
- Digital culture.
- Artistic values.
- Inter-cultural competencies.

Contextual Frame

Romani communities in Spain and our case study, objects of our task innovative and inquiring, as characteristics minorities, represent a complex

reality of full creative scenarios construction. The two cases that we surveyed to know their evolution in the last two years and during this process, as construction cores of Romani culture, are characterized (Carabanchel, Madrid, and Úbeda-Linares, Jaen) for its insertion into the area, its involvement and intense collaboration and breadth of family environments.

Our proximity to Carabanchel group allowed us to know the school map of the area (a multipurpose center secondary school and two Primaries) which constitute an educational complex updated and adapted to the challenges of neighborhood, committed to multiculturalism and development of appropriate programs with the needs of people and communities of the socio-community context.

The group of students participating in the program case study in the south-west of Madrid is formed by students between 9-19 years, who collaborate in the program and feel involved in the objectives, actions and comprehensive development framework of all participants. The majority of participants are in the age range of 17 years. As model for the other participants, main emphasis is put on students in the first and second year of secondary school.

The working scenario has its limits, the students' interest is situational, that is they come irregularly to the weekly sessions. Thus, the impact of the program on achieving the objectives and the development of basic competencies is reduced.

Research Design

Research problem

The research problem is to identify the basis for designing a comprehensive training program for students and Romani communities, deepening the relevance of video games to achieve the training of students and its creative use to improve the cultural complexity of today's classrooms, through the design of new multi-media with didactic principles that stimulate the due attention to each person, communities and different human groups. Among the didactic means we must investigate the most appropriate to serve the needs for recreational and collaborative activities among students to prepare them for participation in a culturally complex society.

We wanted to examine the need for a new method to improve collaborative processes between and among teachers and students. The program must incorporate the video game as one of the most represen-

tative resources of our visual word, by identifying the most appropriate to promote the integral development and construction of video games according to the needs of Romani culture. We believe that it is possible to motivate and activate a new generation through new methods of communication among youth.

Objectives

- (1) Design a program tailored to the expectations and needs of Romani students and their communities.
- (2) Discover the use of video games by Romani students.
- (3) Estimate the impact of video games in educational processes and learning of Romani students.
- (4) Discover whether the teacher sufficiently values the formative use of video games.
- (5) Identify narrative patterns/modalities which serve to develop video games that will foster intercultural competence and the development of a culture of cooperation as well as improve social cohesion.

Research Questions

- How can we integrate design and practice of video-games in inter-cultural classrooms?
- Which modalities of design, graphic styles, scenarios, schemas, as well as text, characterize those video games which support the development of intercultural competencies and consciousness?
- Do text, image, and sequential discourse need to be present in video-games, if one wishes to facilitate knowledge acquisition in inter-cultural settings?
- Which video games are most pertinent in motivating knowledge acquisition of other cultures?

Research process

- Selection of various video games pertinent in developing intercultural competencies.
- Proposal of narratives, texts, schemas which promote knowledge and empathy between cultures.

- Discover teacher perceptions in relation to video games, which facilitate education of Romani students.
- Develop certain elements of video games which promote teaching and learning of students from a Romani culture.
- Advance the development of new educational focuses of the use of video games which improve the educational experiences of Romani students.
- Evaluate the use of video games by teachers, who work with Romani students.

Methods

The methods used have integrated quantitative and qualitative methodology, but we have focused more on a qualitative approach through dialogue with the participants in the focus groups, in-depth interviews, analysis of narratives proposed by students and especially applying the analysis to the study of the contents presented in video-games:

- Evaluation methodology of the contents of video-games in relation to Romani culture.
- Design of an ad hoc questionnaire, consistent with previous ones. (Medina, Domínguez & Medina, 2012).
- Quantitative methodology (survey, Lickert scale, interviews).
- Analysis of administrator perspectives and attitudes on potential of video-games in facilitating positive interactions between students of different cultural backgrounds.
- Use of in-depth interviews to students and teachers.
- Research has focused on the use of semi-open questions, inviting the respondents to answer in a flexible and comprehensive the issues presented.
- Content analysis by experts of didactics.
- Case study.

Case Study

(17 Romani students filled in the questionnaire and participated in interviews)

The set of students participating in the community development program and integral training of children and adolescents is characterized by:

- Difficulties in the program monitoring in their respective courses.
- Limitations for a regular and normalized attendance in classes' development.
- Delay of at least one year, in secondary education, in relation to the course to perform.
- Interest in development of program activities.
- Satisfaction with the activities and program development.
- Implication in the objectives, guidelines and program performance.
- Generation of a collaborative team of students and a creative environment, compensatory and personal and community integrated development.
- Integration of teachers, families and leaders in the program development.

The students answered key questions about the questionnaire, whose most representatives dimensions are:

- Identification of video games that they have liked best.
- Video games of which they have the best souvenir.
- What games do you choose to share with colleagues?
- What video game helps you for life and for your professional future?
- What video games have you produced dissatisfaction?
- What video games have influenced you negatively?
- Write your story and structure that you would like to use to design your own video game: present your screen model and development.

Interviews with students: The case of Jaén

Table 1. Description of video games more used by students. (The descriptions were done by them)

Age	Video-game	Description
14	Super Mario Bros	Pass phases
13	Jinx	Leave rooms
13	Throw Goals	Shoot at goals
13	Torture Game Two	Torturing people

13	Penalty Fever	Awarding penalty kicks
14	Free Kick Mania	Throwing fouls
15	Goal rush	Playing football
12	Ikariam	Building a city
13	Dangerous	Kill people
13	Girl Rescue Games	Rescuing girls
13	Mania Operation	Saving people

The answers given by the surveyed students to questions / dimensions presented have been the following:

(1) Video game that most you liked:
PES Evolution-2012; FIFA- 2012.

(2) Video games of which you have best memories of:
PES-2012; Tekken-5; FIFA-2012.

(3) Games to share with class-mates:
FIFA-2012; PES-2012; UFC-2009 and HOT PURSUIT.

(4) Video-game that helps you for life and for your professional future:
Mostly (none), some (25%) TOY STORY.

(5) Video-games that made you dissatisfied:
LOBEZNO, GTA IV. (A minority has not found any).

(6) Video-games that have influenced you negatively.
BOXEO, UFCE-2009, GTA IV. (A minority answered none).

(7) Write a story and structure that you would like to use to design your own video-game, present your screen model and development:

- Adventure Games.
- A video game in which the family participates.
- Presenting a man who has lived with great distress and Jesus Christ redeemed him.

- Presenting situations which are overcome and the hero is able to solve many problems.
- History is the process followed by youth teams, who play football and are prepared intensely to become stars of this sport with worldwide recognition.
- Games that provide pleasant leisure situations, using the spaces and times of low activity.
- Discover treasures and follow the adventures to get them.

Discussion Group

The discussion group of Romani students, about the educational value of video games, their learning content, integration of those in training processes and their adaptation to the educational process, expressing the following voices:

- Students express that video games should be included as additional resource in the means employed by teachers, but adapted to the teaching-learning process.
- Some students say that video games would serve to learn and improve their training if it working on the quality "of its contents" and in the tasks and activities required each participant, if desired the improvement of educational practices.
- The greatest difficulty lies, in the opinion of group participants, is to integrate some video games like adventures, of knowledge like Caesar, City, etc., and related to training activities carried out in the classroom.
- Students value positively the use of video games to facilitate learning and to avoid discouragement and lack of interest, being necessary to involve all people to value the different cultures present in the classroom.
- Different visions emerge of the relevance of video games to improve educational processes and the most appropriate actions to advance in independent learning, creative and individual.
- Students bring their visions to perform new stories and activities which must include video games in coherence with their own needs and of educational processes.

- They suggest new ways in the narrative of activities, images and schemas that new video games have to synthesize and integrate to give adequate responses to the demands of each student and teams.

Actions and proposals

- Create sports games that prepare students to develop values of collaboration, openness, initiative, honesty, loyalty, etc.
- Use adventure video games that stimulate creativity, ideas and stimulate the imagination, for the improvement of the environment, creating optimal search scenarios.
- To progress in different forms of narrating the Romani life events and generate dialogue spaces, to facilitate and strengthen the bases of Romani culture and provide them with continuous improvement.

Some statements should be quoted literally:

"Video games have occupied me a long time from 11 to 13 years."

"I have enjoyed and I continue to enjoy sports video games."

"I prefer to study and then use video games."

"The adventure video games have given me new ideas and I have facilitated new ways to spend well downtime".

"We prefer to play in pairs and learn to collaborate and overcome the colleague".

Analysis of in-depth interviews by experts

Several experts (4), with extensive experience in the didactic use of video-games have participated in interviews and in a fruitful dialogue to "discussion group mode" with investigators and a leader of the Romani community, likewise the data of a dialogue meeting with six teenagers and the leader of the Roma community of Madrid are incorporated into the qualitative analysis. In this way have been carried out triangulation processes among:

- Expert interviews, first reporting.
- Group of dialogue with students and their leader Romani.
- Complementariness between the answers of the questions to experts and expressions and experiences with video-games of adolescents and young gypsies in the dialogue with their leader.

Data Analysis

Romani students use video-games with more intensity between 12 and 13 years, they also point out that the majority employs them more on weekends, and may use them even more than three hours, although more than 40% of students manifest that they use them at least two hours per day.

The favorite Video games for the students are primarily sports and adventure, with particular interest for those related with football and adventures like FIFA 2012 and PES Evolution, 2012, followed by games of boxing and UFC 2009.

Students experience playful situations with recognized satisfaction and they find new answers to games that integrate emotion, pleasure and collaboration, as happens in FIFA games. These games are developed in pairs in which two teams of worldwide recognition are competing; in these games students must demonstrate their expertise to the development of match, encouraging each participant to combine the best plays and demonstrate mastery of controls, as well as the combination of valuable moves to get the highest number of goals in the shortest time possible.

FIFA has been the favorite game for the majority of students, especially between children and adolescents, who dedicate lot of time on this activity, followed by other virtual sports video-games like tennis, paddle tennis, basketball, among others.

Girls, by cultural accuracy, prefer video games focused on fashion, dances, representations of cities, and stories with more imagination, they are interested in new worlds and scenarios with higher social relationships between humans and socialization styles more paused and creative.

The preferred narratives to develop video games are consistent with the preferred video games both for boys as girls. Favorite stories among children are in the line of video-games focused on sports, adventures and discovery of treasures, while some students proposed religious stories that empower young people to achieve a transcendent vision of their lives.

The harmony between the responses about favorite video games and the themes expressed by the students in the narratives, confirms the expectations in the more desirable modalities and in the experiences and practices of video games conducted. This harmony confirms that students who have lived through experiences with video games provide these perspectives and lay the foundation for creating new stories. Although, among students, is detected an omission of the keys and preferences for their own culture, in some proposals are evidenced eigenvalues of Gyps culture and of characteristic groups such as:

- Family values: cohesion and collaboration among family members.
- Transcendental values: recognition of religion and the significance of the person of Christ in their lives.
- Artistic values: it is estimated that the songs, dance and movement sports are essential in this culture.

Data evidence that the Romani culture in its European projection is little incorporated into the content and activities of video-games most recognized and preferred by students, although this limitation can facilitate to these students the learning of prototypical actions of adolescents and youth through employment and enjoyment of the video games typology more extended and used by the younger generation and that, at least in Europe, are of maximum employment and diffusion, as: FIFA 2012, PES Evolution 2012, adventure video-games, sport video-games (Tennis, paddle tennis, basketball, etc.), which provide the leisure activities most widespread in adolescents and young Europeans.

In addition to the above mentioned aspects, an analysis of selected video-games demonstrated that

- a narrative structure which positively values multi-cultural processes can develop intercultural consciousness.
- identification of a message within the video-game linked to the development or intercultural characteristics within the classroom.
- selected activities drove students to better know other cultures.
- photographs, schemas and narrative support influence the disposition of players in relation to the culture presented within the game.
- the musical soundtrack of the video-games, improves the approach between the participants of the game and the symbolism of the new/different culture.
- the sequence of activities intensifies and stimulates collaboration between players and improves positive perceptions and images of the cultures within game.

The analysis of the terms and manifestations of experts is summarized in the following points, showing that video-games should be designed to promote intercultural dialogue as evidenced in (key findings):

- Facilitate the relations between people of diverse cultures.
- Facilitate knowledge of relevant aspects of different cultures.
- Discover values and elements most significant of cultures.

- Intercultural values should highlight the key characteristics of the video-game.
- Capacity to become a resource support in intercultural education.
- Promote empathy within people and consciousness of the richness of culture.
- Enrich the interaction within the class and the community.
- Plan activities which increase cultural knowledge explicitly with video-games.
- Creative educational resource with favorable impact.

The analysis of interviews by experts in the basic dimensions, demonstrate the following relevant aspects:

- First Dimension: didactic possibilities of video-games in learning processes of Gypsy students. Teacher responses on role of video-games in Gypsy education.
Question: Which video-games are most adaptable to Gypsy culture?

Experts A, A1 and B, B1

The synthesis of the contributions expresses, that video games more employees and with greater possibilities to improve the learning processes of students, which are considered highly relevant are:

- Role playing games.
- Educational games.
- Intercultural games.

These options are specified in phrases like:

"Romani adolescents should adapt in becoming citizens of the world without losing their roots and establish new connections with other people and at different levels. They should integrate their Romani culture within the new reality for which they find themselves living."

"An educational video-game creates cinematic spaces (3D video) with test (Cogicas). The video-games are capable of developing theoretical elements in an enjoyable manner. While in the tests (cogicas) abilities are formed in the learning of music."

- Second Dimension: Learning contents of video-games.
Question: What content of video-games are most relevant for the Romani culture?

Experts A, A1 and B, B1.

The experts consider that video-games content are relevant to develop:

- Digital competence.
- Role-playing games
- Romani culture.

These considerations are specified in phrases like:

"Students of this ethnicity are interested by questions which relate of their culture and in their surroundings, perhaps for themes such as the nomadic lifestyle dedicated to work or temporary roles, profiting from what gives them life at that moment, without having a long-term perspective."

"A video-game which takes as a common thread the daily aspects of the nomadic/Romani lifestyle and their most rooted questions. One example of this may be the 'Flamenco.' In addition, the inclusion of characters of gypsy ethnicity as protagonists in relevant historical events within role-playing games could be a consideration."

- Third Dimension: Integration of video-games in learning processes.
Question: Vide-games are a resource that can be integrated into the learning process?

Experts A, A1 and B, B1.

- Adequate learning resources.

The main consideration of the experts is:

"More than video-games, it is applied video in the classroom. In reality, video-games are an area, which is little used in general educational processes."

- Fourth Dimension: Processes of change and improvement in the educational use of video-games.
Question: How can the improved use of video-games serve educational processes?

The experts' opinions are synthetized in the following phrases:

"Games should demonstrate the functioning of other cultures, the integration of diverse persons who perform work or roles within games without pigeonholing for sex, age, education, etc."

"Evaluate the eagerness of teaching digital competencies and values in order to overcome the effect of aggression."

- Fifth Dimension: Processes and use of video-games in education. (This dimension has been highly valued by experts).
The experts' opinions are:
 - Video-games facilitate new forms of collaborative relations.
 - New possibilities for the Romani culture.
 - Involve students in evaluating and criticizing the contents of video-games.

The synthesis of these opinions is:

"In general, the computer education programs which, on occasion, produce teachers through programs which are adapted for specific groups under certain specific characteristics."

The recommendations from Educational Center Directors are the following:

Video-games should be designed to:

- Respect cultures and enhance dialogue to improve teaching and learning processes.
- Stimulate development of digital competencies and cultural awareness.
- Be integrated as an imaginative resource which stimulates cultural enrichment and improves student-teacher relations.
- Impart new methods and a task which develop and adapt to teaching and learning processes.
- Innovate teaching to foster values which overcome situations of catharsis and facilitate knowledge of other cultures.
- Promote student roles which facilitate the development of the Romani culture.
- Stimulate the participation and initiation of students to create adventures which magnify cultures.
- Stimulate the imagination and creativity among players to advance new solutions to problems encountered.
- Serve Romani students that they can anticipate problems and encounter new solutions tailored to the principal needs of their community.

Complementarity Between Data

The following table represents the relations between our findings:

	In-depth interviews with experts	Discussion Group of students	Results of the questionnaire
<p>Didactic possibilities of video-games in Romani students.</p>	<p>An educational video-game creates analytic spaces (3D video) with tests. The video-games are capable of developing theoretical elements in an enjoyable manner. While in the tests abilities are formed in the learning of music.</p>	<p>"The adventure video games have given me new ideas and I have facilitated new ways to spend well leisure time." "Some adventure video games have helped me to learn."</p>	<p>It can be use those video-games which serve them and help: - Fifa 2012 - PES-Evolution 2012.</p>
<p>Learning contents of video-games.</p>	<p>"A video-game which takes as a common thread the daily aspects of the nomadic/gypsy lifestyle and their most rooted questions. One example of this may be the 'Flamenco.' In addition, the inclusion of characters of gypsy ethnicity as protagonists in relevant historical events within role-playing games could be a consideration." Design video games that integrate problems and solutions for which competencies are necessary.</p>	<p>The contents of the video games are more entertaining than class-work.</p>	<p>- Sports, - Adventures, - Cities to discover</p>
<p>Integration of video-games in learning processes</p>	<p>"More than video-games, it is applied video in the classroom. In reality, video-games are an area which is little used in general educational processes." "Select teaching/learning situations and elaborate narratives which promote better understanding and motivate meaningful learning."</p>	<p>"Video games help me with some tasks I perform in class, especially adventure games."</p>	<p>Apply the ones they like and use most often: - PES- Evolution 2012. - Tekken 5. - Fifa 2012.</p>

	In-depth interviews with experts	Discussion group of students	Results of the questionnaire
Processes of change and improvement in the educational use of video-games.	<p>Games should demonstrate the functioning of other cultures, the integration of diverse persons who perform work or roles within games without pigeonholing for sex, age, education, etc."</p> <p>Select videogames that stimulate creativity and initiative of the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adventuras. - Science. - Sports. <p>- Include students in the development of narratives, stories, various scenes.</p>	<p>Some tasks of video games have given me new and appropriate ideas."</p> <p>"The sports video games have helped us improve our reflexes and be attentive to the traps that put us the other players"</p>	<p>Video games that they like to change the stories.</p> <p>Thus, students narrated some stories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complicated adventure game in forests, rivers, etc. - Designing video games for the whole family use. - Present difficult situations to overcome.

Discussion

The research conducted highlights similarities in our own work (Medina, Dominguez & Medina, 2012), shaping the vision of Batlori (2012, p. 10), if play is fun in itself and to think is something that serves very well to train our brains "What can be better than doing these two activities simultaneously"? – Having fun and learn – .

This view has been reflected in this research and innovation program which aims to support the comprehensive education of students from Romani communities, in the cases mentioned and especially Madrid, promoting the complementarity between performing tasks oriented and decided by their teachers and stimulate the complementary use of some video games, in coexistence with students, primarily video games sports, adventure and instructive.

Students experience that video games, which they like more are sports, adventure, intense action heroes, and they choose to intensifying monitoring the actions required in the video game, which is achieved in the opinion of Gonzalez (2012), exploring complicated maps, solving complex problems and persisting in the search for new solutions.

Tobias and Fletcher (2012) find in their study that when there is a rational and appropriate use of video game use it improves the performance of students.

Differences are found in some aspects highlighted in other studies (Dominguez, Medina & Medina, 2012), since in the evolution of video-games use it was confirmed that the time and dedication decreased from 14-15 years, but in the Romani culture, at least in a significant percentage, there is no such regression, on the contrary, at least games of sports and adventures, continue to be used with an intensity similar to the previous periods (12-14 years).

Vera and Cabezas (2008) show that cognitive processes to understand geographic concepts are improved by employing creative and adapted video games. Also the ability to solve problems was expanded.

Gálvez (2010) emphasizes the formative incidence of some video games, highlighting the game "Alexander the Great" because of its relevance to influence the understanding and interrelation between diverse events, actions and its consequences in various societies.

We appreciate the selection of video games made by the above mentioned authors and their impact on creating learning scenarios closest to the expectations and needs of Romani students, coinciding interviewed experts on the need to design narrative, generate stories and tales, which are closer to the Romani culture, adapting the use of ICT to the actual

experiences and needs experienced by students and families of Roma culture.

Conclusions

The research already conducted and in future expansion has achieved the following objectives that are confirmed in the process undertaken to review the objectives:

(1) Design a program tailored to the expectations and needs of Roma students and their families.

We have designed a work plan to respond to needs of students and families Roma adapted to the expectations of learners and with a double sense:

- Complementarity and support for the implementation of tasks and studies proposed by the Schools.
- Fostering a sense of community, by its projection on the improvement and commitment to students' family culture.

The program activities have been intensified in the relationship between families, students, teachers and researchers, achieving recognition of those involved and the collaboration of some families and schools.

It perceives the program projection in some families, students and groups with special involvement of five young, who act to promote the use of education as a way of authenticity, integral development and improvement in social participation.

The program future design is extended to new studies in the European context, with involvement of other countries, particularly Romania and Latvia.

(2) Discover the use of video games by Romani students.

The use of ICT, which is manifested in the high use of mobile phones, networking, video games and searchers (Google), is very intense with this program and are used every day by students, with greater skill and intensity that their families.

Students enjoy using video games like FIFA 2012, PES Evolution 2012, of adventures like Tekken, among others.

The use of video games is majority among students attending the program, all students have used for training purposes some video games

and they used too websites, both instructive (development of linguistic competence, mathematics, social, etc.), as recreational by accessing of way tutorizada to the selected websites in Internet / Google.

The use of video games represents progress in digital competence for these students and are involved several brothers and sisters thus there is greater use of ICT by the families of those present at the program.

(3) Estimate the impact of video games on educational processes and on Romani student learning in:

- Increased motivation to do the classroom assignments.
- The creation of pairs of students who have performed tasks with video games such as FIFA 2012, which required a high skill in the use of controls and an attitude of collaboration between the various couples involved in these games.
- Advance the proper performance of classroom assignments, since it at the end, the students had the possibility to use recreational Sites on Internet, video games and entertainment spaces.
- Narratives that integrate families in the use of video games.
- Discover new heroes and propose appropriate and valuable tests to be overcome.
- Recover transcendent values of the culture and beliefs of Romani in Spain and Europe.
- Recreate experiences and scenarios that foster the competence artistic and emerge the meaning of flamenco, music most general of Roma culture, dances, different scenarios, etc.

The research shows that the video game is a valuable didactic resource, which must be integrated into a comprehensive program that takes and stimulates the culture and Romani community in its integrity, providing new and rich narratives, to make of video game an appropriate means for learning, have fun and think of the real keys to a holistic and creative development, which concerns everyone in the educational institutions and requires for a new dialogue between schools, universities, comprehensive development centers, etc., to achieve:

- New models of education and social renovation.
- Practices teachers and learners supported in the professionalization, didactic research and innovation.
- Scenarios of genuine collaboration between everyone in the Educational Communities.

- Methods based on holistic projects, problem solving and collaboration, with increasingly personalized tasks and cooperatives.
- Media, ICT and resources such as video games, websquest, networks, e-books.

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Self-Representation and Social Support Among Adolescents with Asperger Syndrome in Online Communities

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Abstract

Children and youth with special needs often encounter difficulties while looking for social groups for sharing and receiving information, identification and support.

The literature suggests that children view to the internet as a social medium that promotes communication and personal relationship. The internet could also be used as an efficient source of information and support for children and youth with learning disabilities (e.g., Raskind et al., 2006), but little is known about the types of interpersonal communication and modes of self-representation used by children and youth with other types of disabilities, such as Asperger Syndrome(AS).This study examined specifically online interpersonal communication and self-representations among children and youth with AS who participated voluntary in Internet forums.

The basic assumption of this study was that while online forums are open for everyone, children and youth with special needs refer to them as a secure space in which they can be honest about themselves and their challenges.

Using content analysis, all texts that were written throughout a year, were analysed separately by two researchers, who discussed their results only at the end of the process.

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People with AS find it most difficult to overcome their disabilities in regard to social relations and in result they learn less about themselves (Ruta et al., 2010). This study present alternative way to overcome these difficulties. Using online open forums, for youth with AS allow these children to better learn both about social norms and about themselves, without actually being with others. The main outcome of this study is the call to parents and educators to teach youth with AS how to wisely use the internet, in order to develop social skills and better self-representation skills.

Rationale

Technological advancements, especially in the information and communication fields, enable people with and without disabilities to gather information, communicate with others and collaborate in ways that could not be imagined 10-15 years earlier. However, the information regarding the communication characteristics and self-representation of adolescents with disabilities is still scarce.

We were interested in learning about children and youth with various disabilities or chronic illnesses through their written communication in online forums. These forums serve as communities which provide these individuals with a sense belonging, a platform to explore their identity and self-representation. The present study examined an international, open online forum of adolescents with self-reported Asperger syndrome (AS). Specifically, we were interested in their insights, self-perceptions and self representations.

The results could expand the knowledge of coping resources and processes and of self-representation of adolescents with AS, and explore some ways in which they differ from, as well as resemble, their typically developing peers.

Prevalence and Characteristics of Adolescents with AS

Asperger syndrome is one of the disorders in the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)². It is less prevalent than autism, and current estimates of AS are 6-9.7/10,000, compared with 60-80/10,000 in ASD. These estimates

suggest that AS is the most common neurodevelopmental childhood disorder (Fombonne, 2009; Lazoff et al., 2010).

Schaefer and Mancil (2009) reported in their review of academic skills and achievements of students with AS that there was a high correlation between intelligence and achievements in reading, mathematics and writing. Still, most of these students had attention problems, graphomotoric and organizational skills, complex processing in various domains such as problem solving, calculations, listening and reading comprehension.

Up to a certain grade level, students with AS may succeed in age-normed tests, similar to or even better than their peers. However, later on they perform at a significantly lower level on such tests.

In addition to difficulties in communication, language and other cognitive processes which underlie academic functioning, many children and adolescents with AS present more obsessive-compulsive symptoms (hoarding obsessions and repeating, ordering and hoarding compulsions) than their peers without disabilities (Ruta et al., 2010).

Students with AS with lower cognitive and communication functioning are usually placed in special education settings. Parents of most students with AS reported that their children received special education services at school, usually language and communication supports (White et al., 2007).

The Internet as a Rich Source for Social Research

The wealth of technological advancements (e.g., smartphones and tablets), the increasing speed and breadth of broadband networks, and the decreasing cost of computers and Internet connections (including cellular networks), have turned the internet into a prevalent, convenient and useful tool for adults and children alike (Barak, 2005). According to the Pew Internet & American Life Project survey (2009), 73% of American youth use online social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook.

² The clinical definition of ASD and Asperger syndrome may change markedly after the release of DSM-V. For more information about these expected changes, see [http://www.dsm5.org/Documents/12-03 Autism Spectrum Disorders - DSM5.pdf](http://www.dsm5.org/Documents/12-03%20Autism%20Spectrum%20Disorders%20-%20DSM5.pdf)

The internet has a tremendous potential for social researchers as it provides a comprehensive and complex documentation of human exchanges. The internet transcends distances and barriers which may otherwise obstruct human communication, and enables complete strangers from different parts of the world to collaborate or share experiences and ideas. Thus, it provides social researchers new opportunities to explore documents, text-based, still pictures and video-based testimonies, reflecting discourse among people across cities, countries and continents (Barak, 2005; Dowdell, Burgess & Flores, 2011; Hewson, Yule, Laurent & Vogel, 2003; Mann & Stewart, 2000; Murray & Sixsmith, 2002; Sarkadi & Bremberg, 2005; Scheitle, 2011). Thus, it serves as a powerful instrument for collecting rich information about people and their behaviours on and off-line, which can be analyzed using various qualitative methods (Mann & Stewart, 2000; Wilson, 2006).

The Internet as a Medium to Study Coping Mechanisms of People with Disabilities

Internet access can provide children and youth with disabilities a wealth of information about their condition from sources such as organizations, voluntary associations and medical databases (e.g., Harmse & Pottas, 2010). Individuals can receive professional advice or information from personal Web sites created by individuals who cope with similar medical condition (e.g., www.autism.org). It can also serve as a useful source of support from others who experience a similar situation (Fox, 2011). Consequently, the Internet is a first-rate source of information about networking and information gathering habits of individuals with disabilities, as well as a source of narratives of people with health problems and how they and their families cope (e.g., Han & Belcher, 2001; Huws et al., 2001; Porter, 2006; Suzuki & Kato, 2003; Suzuki, & Beale, 2006). A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center on adults with chronic health conditions, revealed that about one in four adults have gone online to connect with other individuals with similar health concerns (Fox, 2011).

In recent years, the importance of the Internet has increased as a research arena for examining coping mechanisms of individuals with disabilities (e.g., Fleischmann & Miller, 2013). Still, studies about the nature of online communities of children and youth with disabilities, their self-representation in these online communities, and the meanings that they

attribute to these communities are scarce. Thus, the present study attempts to explore these uncharted waters online communities of adolescents with AS.

Some researchers used qualitative methods to explore the characteristics of E-mail and other forms of communication of people with disabilities. For example, Brownlow and O'Dell (2006) investigated interpersonal communication exchanges of people with Asperger syndrome who used chat rooms to examine their autistic identity and voice.

Many students with special needs, especially those who study in inclusive schools, find it difficult to be involved in a social group with which they could consult and receive support for various issues, including their particular special needs. Thus, many of them experience loneliness (e.g., Margalit, 2010; Most, 2007).

Thus, for many of them, the Internet became an alternative route for communication with peers. For example, Valkenburg and Peter (2007) reported that the Internet was perceived as an instrumental social communication channel by typically developing youth with social anxiety.

Internet communities offer individuals with disabilities a sense of belonging – to groups which may have not evolved otherwise (Barak, 2005; Cummings, Sproull & Kiesler, 2002; Sharabia & Margalit, 2011). These communities enable their members to be involved in discussions and interactions of mutual support which help them cope with various challenges they face (e.g., Raskind, Margalit & Higgins, 2006).

Recently, the Internet has been shown to be useful in gathering information about AD(H)D and the inner lives of children with learning disabilities (Foroushani, 2008; Raskind, Margalit & Higgins, 2006). Raskind et al. (2006) examined online messages of children with learning disabilities. These children participated in a Web site designed to provide a safe and anonymous environment for children with learning and attention problems. They found that these children identified themselves as belonging to a group of children with learning disabilities or attention problems, shared their opinions about and emotional attitudes toward their disabilities, and discussed their social and personal difficulties. They seemed to perceive the site as a safe environment that allowed them to explore and discuss their identity at large, including their learning and social problems. In addition, some of these children found relief in belonging to a community or group of children with learning and attention problems and being able to receive support from experts.

A basic premise of our present study is that despite the openness, visibility and risk of exposure in online communities, individuals with AS will view them as a safe haven in which they could present themselves, bring up dilemmas they cope with, and explore common interests and challenges.

The results could expand the knowledge of coping resources and processes and of self-representation of adolescents with AS, and explore some ways in which they differ from, as well as resemble, their typically developing peers.

Research questions

1. What are the interests of adolescents with AS, that were expressed in an online open forum?
2. Do online, anonymous forums of adolescents with AS provide them with social support and networking?
3. How is self-representation reflected in an online community of adolescents with AS?

Methodology

This study's methodology, throughout the process of collecting data, analyzing and presenting the results, is based on the qualitative approach of content analysis. Since all data are based on relatively short written texts, content analysis was the proper tool to discover useful information and examine the interests, aspects of social support and self-representation (e.g., Coulson et al., 2007; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008).

This method of analysis was selected as a helpful means through which our large data set could be systematically scrutinised and postings categorised according to these three main constructs. Therefore, the aim of this analysis was to examine the manifest content of the postings.

Moreover, as a result of the fact that some of the texts described personal thoughts, experiences and reflections, ethnographic research characteristics were also served as tools for data analysis (Shkedi, 2011). Using this type of methodology enabled the researchers to better understand the unique characteristics of the online AS community as a group along with the uniqueness of each one of the participants. The process of

learning about the participants was indirect. The researchers have never directly contacted any of the online community members, but read their texts and analyzed them.

Participants

The participants were sixteen teenagers who acknowledged their Asperger-Syndrome (AS) and voluntarily participated in an open on-line community that was developed specifically for youth with AS, are the core of this study. These participants chose to log into the open-forum, to post new issues they would like to share with others, and to comment on the written postings that other members wrote. From reading the texts, it is clear that one of the members with AS, moderated the forum. Usually, he was the one who decided what the new discussion would be about, and he used to respond to almost all members.

Procedure

First we searched the internet for an open, online forum designated specifically for youth with AS. Only one forum matched these criteria³. Then, we tracked the members' correspondence throughout a 12 months period. The researchers referred to the texts as they were and did not take an active role at any stage of the correspondences.

Data analysis

According to the narrative approach (Shkedi, 2011) the researchers searched for themes and criteria according to which data could be reorganized. These criteria may be developed from the data, or from the literature in regard to the domain of the study. Throughout this study, all written-communications were analyzed according to the updated narrative approach that referred to online-texts (Krippendorff, 2004).

³<http://www.teenagerswithaspergers.com/newforum/forumdisplay.php?fid=5&page=2>

This specific approach was developed as a result of variety of online studies that included teachers, parents and children as participants and focused on understanding their online culture and the variety communications style they developed (Kupferberg & Ben-Peretz, 2004; Raskind et al., 2006) .

Each researcher analyzed the texts individually, writing some initial comments, questions and reflections regarding them (open coding). By the end of this stage, the researchers exchanged notes and commented on each other's analysis. The next stage of the study included discussions between researchers regarding each note. These discussions led to the criteria according to which data were subsequently organized and analyzed (axial coding). Finally the researchers selected together overarching categories which could include the individual categories and terms found by each individual researcher. Then the researchers re-examined the original data to ensure that all the original terms and categories were identified and included (selective coding).

Since all participants were teenagers, in many cases they used their own jargon. Therefore, researchers used variety of internet-sites to better understand the meaning of the unfamiliar concepts, names and acronyms. The researchers also referred to the nick-names each of the participants used on the forum.

Ethical aspects of online research

Our understanding of ethical aspects of using internet content for research in social sciences has made great advances during the last decade (e.g., Buchanan, 2011; Illingworth, 2001; LeBaron & Santos, 2006). In this study, we used the following guidelines to protect the privacy of the participants and to maintain high ethical standards:

1. In our search for online forums, we included only forums that allowed free access with no registration.
2. We respected the privacy of the participants with AS, and we did not actively participate in any discussion.
3. Lastly, although this study strives to uphold conventional scientific standards of qualitative inquiry, we aimed to present the discussions as the participants wrote, perceived and sought to present them.

Results

The results are based on a content analysis of online correspondences within an open forum for adolescents with AS, during 12 months. All the participants identified themselves in the forum as adolescents, ranging in age from 12-17. For some, apparently, it was a self, rather than formal diagnosis. Still, the forum provided them a sense of support and belonging. For example, one male participant wrote:

I haven't been officially diagnosed as an Aspie yet, but, judging from... well, the way I am, I'm pretty sure I am one.

If I go to the doctor's and they test me and say I actually haven't got asperger's, I don't have to leave the site, do I 😞? ⁴

Participating in the forum was voluntary, and it seems that they specifically chose to participate in this forum since it was designated to adolescents with AS. Therefore, these adolescents acknowledged that have AS, as well as some of the characteristics of this syndrome (e.g., obsessions and social challenges).

For example, one male participant, who identified himself as having many obsessions (and who chose the nickname "Obsessed with everything") wrote the following:

the only best friend i ever had is called estber, but she grew out of her imaginary world and obsessions like all the other kids. we don't really see each other a lot any more, because icant really relate to her, even though she lives opposite.

Interests – similarities to typically developing peers

It was interesting to learn that some of the topics, themes and interests of the participants with AS were similar to those of their typically developing peers. They discussed family issues, professional future plans, favorite football teams, holiday plans, and what to buy their family members for the

⁴The citations in the examples were copied without any corrections or editing.

holidays. These issues were either discussed in specific threads, or were posted during threads that originally focused on other issues.

For example, during a thread on plans for the summer vacation, one participant shared the following: *"I love going abroad. When I grow up I want to be one of those people who travel all over the world and don't stay in one place for very long, that would be awesome."*

Still, even when discussing a general topic such as their professional future plans, it was evident that some participants were aware of their unique challenges as individuals with AS. For instance, while one of them planned to be a hedge fund manager, another wrote the following post:

maybe i'll be a vet. i'd have to go to uni for 6 years, but if i want to be a doctor i'll have to live and train in london for 7 years. doctors get paid a little more, but they have much longer hours...if i'm a successful doctor then i'll probably have to live in a town, but if i'm a vet i can live in the countryside (i'm not a towny person - too many people)

Thus, it appears they understand how challenging it might be for them to interact with other people, hence the aforementioned participant's preference to work with animals rather than with people (cf. Oliver Sacks tale of Temple Grandin in "An anthropologist on Mars").

In addition to holding and sharing interests that resemble those of their typically developing peers, some of the participants had some unique interests or viewpoints, such as a discussion on "cats as sadistic serial killers".

The online community as a source of information

One of the most interesting findings was that adolescents with AS follow new tests for Asperger, and even share their results on those tests with their forum members. In a thread entitled "Channel 4 Embarrassing Bodies Autism Test", here is what one participant wrote:

I've just found something very interesting on the Embarrassing bodies website. A test to see if you really do have autism. Here is the link to the quiz...I got 29/50 which means I have mild level aspergers. I'm an Aspie!

A male participant responded: *"My family all did that last week, I got 36! My brother got 6, dad got 26, and my mum got 13. I think that's right anyway!"*

The original participant wrote back: *"Your mum and brother definitely not aspie's, but it looks like your father could be?!"*

The community as a social support network

The participants' conversations revealed that that they used the forum not only as a means for sharing their challenges and frustrations, but also as a source for tips, suggestions and solution to problems they encountered at home or at school. For example, a female 12 year old participant shared the following:

I got bullied on my birthday by my best friend. She told everyone not to give me a birthday card and went around telling me not to talk about my birthday and giving me glares all the time. I cried most of the day but then I saw my other best friend after school so it was alright.

A male participant asked other forum members for their ideas how to solve the following problem:

There's this boy called Tom who sits next to me in Business Studies and I really don't want to upset him or any thing because he's one of the only people who accepts me for who I am (corny line). Anyway, as I missed school due to illness yesterday, I had no idea what I was meant to be doing, so Mr. Weir, my BS teacher, asked me to take Tom's work and write it in my own words... but... God, Tom was bad at grammar. And spelling.AND punctuation. I couldn't make a head or tail of what he had written and I couldn't've just put my hand up and said, 'Excuse me, but this work is so badly written, I can't understand a word of it!', could I? What was I supposed to do?

As a response, a fellow forum member suggested the following:

"You should have just asked him what the topics were, then looked them up on the internet later to catch up."

As part of the participants' awareness of their verbal communication challenges, they admitted that using an online forum, in which they could write rather than meet with people and talk to them face to face, made it easier for them to communicate.

The postings suggest that the forum served the participants not only for sharing their personal challenges and exchanging tips for coping with these challenges, but also as a platform for exchanging their views on films and books which had characters with AS.

For example, during a thread on favourite books, one participant wrote:

"At the moment I'm reading 'Freaks, Geeks and Asperger Syndrome' by Luke Jackson He's thirteen years old and has AS. He's written a book on it. Quite good so far."

Another participant responded:

Freaks, Geeks and Asperger's is a great book! I got that a few years ago and read the whole thing within a week, I was so eager to finish it. Lots of good information in there, and it's very well written too! And, IMO, books like that are the best for giving a proper insight into Asperger's, since we're the only ones who actually know what it's like!

Discussing the film 'Adam' under the thread "Adam - film with Aspie main character", one of the participants wrote:

That looks good, I'm a lot like Adam. I'm going to get it somenben. I don't the fact that he speaks in that slow way, we aspies speak normally (Although some of us, like me, may get very frustrated if we make even the slightest spelling or grammatical mistake)!

The confidence that the online forum, albeit an open forum, provided the participants was reflected not only in the fact that they shared their dilemmas, concerns and negative social experience, but also in their openness to receive feedback (and even criticism) on their writings and even on their phrasing and spelling mistakes. For example, one of the participants wrote a book, uploaded it to the forum and asked fellow members for feedback. A female participant asked others to correct her spelling mistakes.

Even though some people with AS are characterised with difficulty in showing empathy to others or understanding different viewpoints (especially in social situations), all the participants understood that they live in different places, time zone, climates and cultures. In addition, many of the forum participants displayed a good ability to empathize with their fellow forum members, and sometimes used humor or cynicism to cope with their challenges. For example, one male participant ended some of his posts with the following sentence: " R U aUtistic or aRtistic?" Another male participant wanted to share some painful thoughts, but considered other members's feelings: "You've actually posted a lot of the stuff I was thinking of posting, but didn't in case anyone got depressed." When a female participant complained about her social challenges, a male participant responded:

Yeab, the understanding barrier is a problem for all of us on the autism spectrum I think. There's not much I can give in terms of that problem, you'll just have to make friends who are understanding I guess.

Self representation online

Since participation in the forum was usually anonymous, the participants in the forum chose three ways to express their individuality and unique character: Their nicknames, their title and a phrase or quotation that served as their 'signature'. The nicknames reflected their personal interests but also what characterized them, such as "Aspeboy - Animal obsesor". Here are some of the names and titles the participants used: iJoshchose a second name "Maybach-Motorenbau" as he likes cars; stephenfryobsessive96 chose a second nickname "Obsessed with everything", Nathan chose the second nickname "Author of BladeMaster " to reflect the name of the book he wrote and uploaded to the forum.

Some participants apparently chose to use their real name or an acronym of their first, middle and last names: Nathan, Anna, and JaViDoX.

Another form of self representation took the form of sharing not only their general interests and hobbies, but also their unique challenges as people with AS. For example, one male participant wrote: "*Although some of us, like me, may get very frustrated if we make even the slightest spelling or grammatical mistake!*" A female participant posted: "*i bang with some people buht not much coz idnt have much socialising skills*".

Discussion

The present study adds to the emerging literature on the lives and coping mechanisms of people with disabilities, chronic illness and their families and communities, using online discussions, narratives and other forms of interactions and representations.

Most of the literature reflects a pathological viewpoint, emphasizing the challenges individual with Asperger face at school, with their peers and at home. Little is known about the inner lives of youths with AS.

In recent years, the Internet began to serve as useful tool for social researchers, to explore and examine human interactions that transcend the boundaries of language, time and geography. The internet also serves as a powerful tool for individuals with disabilities to gather information about their condition, learn about available resources, as well as a means to interact with other individuals who experience coping with the same disability. For some of them, especially those who found it difficult to make friends in their local community and experience loneliness and sometime isolation, the Internet serves as an alternative social support network.

The present study explored the inner lives of sixteen adolescent with self-identified AS, who participated in an open, online forum designated for individuals with AS. We wanted to learn about the interests of adolescents with AS, and whether they were similar to those of their typically developing peers. We were also interested in learning whether adolescents with AS could provide and receive social support using an online forum. Finally, we were interested in learning how these adolescents chose to represent themselves online.

The researchers used content analysis to examine the correspondences of sixteen adolescents with AS in an online, open forum which was designated to youths with AS, over a period of 12 months.

The analysis revealed some interesting results. Although the literature often characterises them with idiosyncratic behaviour or with very selective interests, the results suggested that adolescents with AS may hold interests and topics for discussion that are similar to their typically developing peers, such as favourite football teams, future career plans and vacation plans. However, as expected they also have some unique interests or viewpoints, such as a discussion on "cats as sadistic serial killers".

The results also demonstrate that the forum was an important resource for social support, a place where these unique individuals felt safe

to share their challenges, shortcomings as well as successes. Unexpectedly, their fellow members in the online community showed empathy and provided them with feedback and helpful advice how to cope with their challenges.

The forum was also a useful source of information about new tests of AS. In addition, forum members shared information about books and films with Asperger characters, with whom they compared themselves.

Another interesting finding emerged from the ways in which they chose to represent themselves online, using names, nicknames and unique phrases as signatures. These reflected their interests, unique (and sometimes peculiar) characteristics.

Limitations of present study

This study was based on the correspondences of only 16 adolescents with AS. Since participating in the forum was voluntary, it was not possible to ascertain that each participant was formally diagnosed with AS.

Data were collected as they posted in the forum. The researchers decided not to participate in the forum, respond to posts by forum members or correspond publicly or individually with any of the participants, to avoid any sense of involvement by adults or by those who are not identified with AS, thus interfering with the participant sense of security and belonging to the AS forum community. However, some researchers assert that only through active participation in online communities researchers can gain complete access and understanding of the field (Thomsen, Straubhaar & Bolyard, 1998). Consequently, the researchers were not able to ask the participants for clarification or for their interpretation of their posts.

Conclusions

Online communities are powerful media that can help adolescents with AS form relationships, gain support and advice for the challenges they face, as well as share and exchanges interests common to many of their peers without AS.

Therefore, it is recommended that parents of adolescents with AS and professionals who work with them encourage them to participate in such communities. Furthermore, such forums should be established in

more languages, to enable better access to those adolescents whose English is not their first language.

Qualitative methodology, and particularly content analysis, is a useful tool for analysing texts and correspondences in online forums and support communities. Social researchers are encouraged to embed content analysis in overall ethnographic studies of social interactions in online support communities. In combinations with other methods, like interviews, questionnaires, data logs, social network analysis, among others, it can be a valuable part of a triangulation of methods, which could enrich the findings. Future research should therefore enhance the findings by applying a variety of methods to study online support communities.

Additional online communities of adolescents with disabilities should be explored in a similar manner, which would enable researchers to compare the similarities and differences among adolescents with different disability conditions, such as ADHD or chronic illnesses. Further research in this field could give valuable insight about the suitability and potential of online support communities to these individuals.

In conclusion, we call for additional dialogue among researchers that addresses the ethical, methodological and phenomenological issues of doing online ethnography.

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The Challenge of Diverse Educational Orientations

The purpose of the research by *Samuel Gento* and *Raúl González* on "**Leadership and Quality in Today's Educational Institutions of European Countries**" is "to correlate the quality of educational institutions (particularly of European countries) with the practical execution of pedagogical leadership within educational institutions. The theoretical background considers literature referring to quality of education, quality of educational institutions and of leadership, particularly those related to education and educational institutions. Particular attention is given to national and international reports on quality or effectiveness of education and of its references to European countries. The empirical data were initially collected by members of the Spanish National University of Distance Education. Professors of this University promote data collection, with the help of students, particularly those of post grade courses." ... "Information is mainly taken from schools from Spain's different Autonomous Communities or Regions. Preferred schools are the Secondary Education ones (particularly Higher Education) and of Vocational Education Schools."

Sara Zamir studies in her paper on "**The Reflection of Conflicting Values in Literature Readers for Junior High Schools in Israel: Can Values be Bridged?**" "the way in which the values of Zionism, Judaism and Humanism-Universalism are being combined in contemporary literature readers of religious and general junior high schools in Israel. The author gives relevant examples from literature readers and underlines the efforts to merge the three sets of values, for instance "in the work of three immanent public committees in Israel, during the 90s: The committee 'Tomorrow, 98' (1992) aimed at strengthening the practical disciplines of science and technology, the committee 'Nation and world' (1994) aimed at deepening the Jewish education and the committee 'Being citizens' (1996) intended to educate towards citizenship and democracy (Iram & Maslovety, 2002)." In the "compulsory booklet titled 'Heritage, Zionism & Democracy' (Rapel & Levin, 2003), which brings together at the same level of importance one hundred representative concepts that derive from the three governing values, the minister of education states" (on p. 3) "that the 'education system must pass on the three sets of values to future generations exactly as it was imparted to us, the educators'."

The paper of *Swantje Post* on "**Learning Environments in Private Elementary Schools: Implementation and Students' Perception of High Achievement Expectancies and Differentiation**" describes "the conceptualization and realization of the ethnographic field study 'BIP in Focus' [BIP = giftedness, intelligence, and personality]" in Germany. "A specific characteristic of this study, which is conducted within the quantitative longitudinal study PERLE (Personality and Learning Development of Elementary School Children), is the multifaceted integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, data, and results based on both research methods." A "first analysis of the observation records and the guideline-based interviews with the students and the school administrators illustrated that the

two focused aspects 'high achievement expectancies' and 'differentiation' are implemented in different ways in the organizational frame conditions of the two BIP-schools on the one hand and in the classroom experience on the other hand."

The study of *Helena Maria Sabo* on "**The Information and the Educational Character Given by the Content of Educational Programs of Geography in Secondary School**" outlines "the nature of the educational process and the educational information in the core curriculum in Romania, especially in high schools...". The author analyzes "the features of the formative-educational contents in the school curriculum for class levels 9-12" and presents "the contents of the Geography high school curricula" that were ... "restructured and partially modified starting from present curricula." Since the school curricula do not explain "what tasks students should perform in order to achieve competencies for Geography", the author suggests how to complement the curricula.

Helena Maria Sabo discusses in her paper on "**The Geography Teacher in Romania between Tradition and Modernity**". The results of her study "show that the students expect from their teachers especially good explanations to aid them in understanding new information. Other also appreciated aspects were interesting, diverse, didactic tasks, and the use of modern didactic means. Our students have little attraction towards interactive, teamwork type of learning. It is probable that this type of organizing the learning activity was implemented unprofessionally and without the necessary conditions for maximum efficiency."

Leadership and Quality in Today's Educational Institutions of European Countries

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Purpose and Objectives

The *basic purpose* of the research is to correlate the quality of educational institutions (particularly of European countries) with the practical execution of pedagogical leadership within educational institutions.

According to this basic purpose, the research tries to obtain information referred to the following *objectives*:

- Obtaining information on the importance that the most relevant involved members of educational institutions give to components that could show the quality of such institutions;
- Collecting data referred to the degree of the achievement, existence, reality or effectiveness of components of quality in educational institutions;
- Obtaining information of the importance that the most relevant involved members of educational institutions give to features that make up the dimensions of pedagogical leadership;
- Collecting data referred to the degree of the achievement, existence, reality or effectiveness of features that make up the dimensions of pedagogical leadership;
- Correlate the importance and evidence of the quality of educational institutions with the importance and evidence of pedagogical leadership in such institutions.

Theoretical Background

Theoretical bases of the research imply clarification as the ones that follow here.

The quality of educational systems in the XXI century

If the quality of education is today a widely felt need for individuals and groups for their own development and progress, no educational system can be considered of authentic quality if it does not include the proper educational resources, treatment and results accommodated to this paradigm of quality of all people.

Concept of the term "quality"

Despite the expansion and even generalization of the term "quality," which is today referred to the optimization of means, situations, processes and results within any entity or activity, there is not always clarity and unanimity in the conception and interpretation of the term "quality."

A deep reflection on its meaning leads us to believe that quality is "the trait attributable to individual or collective entities whose structural and functional components meet maximum suitability to criteria expected from them and that produce valuable results in maximum degree, according to his own nature" (Gento, 2002, p. 11). Understood in a general sense, quality may be regarded as "*individual, authentic, integral and supreme fulfilment of all potentialities of a specific being or entity.*"

This conception of quality requires, then, the evidence of the following features:

- It must be the *true accomplishment* of a specific reality that could be evaluated and estimated;
- It *must be peculiar* and specific of the individual, group, institution or entity within its own environment and context: the peculiarity and circumstances of the specific entity must be considered;
- It must be *authentic*, which means that it must be accommodated to the particular condition of the corresponding entity;
- It must be *integral*, i.e.: it must include all the essential dimensions or components of the entity whom is referred to;

- It must be *supreme*, because total or absolute quality is a tendency to perfection that is never reached but towards it one could ever advance;
- It must be *possible or viable*: although total perfection is unattainable, aims and objectives must be realistic and reachable to the people who try to reach them.

Quality of educational institutions

The quality of an educational institution is the product of the excellence obtained in the components of such institution. To this effect, it has been considered that in every institution there are "*identifiers*" and "*predictors*" of quality (*Figure 1*). The former ones would facilitate the identification of the evidence of quality; the latter ones would allow predicting the possibility of such quality. This distinction is a methodological one and is set up to facilitate understanding of one institution global system and of its functioning (Gento, 2002).

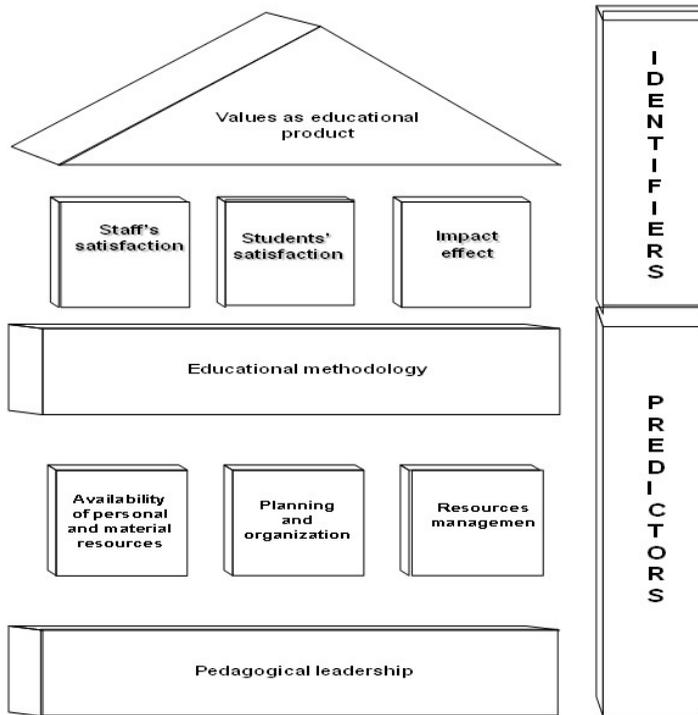


Figure 1: Model of total quality for educational institutions

Identifiers of quality of an educational institution

Identifiers are those components that, connected to the attained product and with the appreciation of the product and of the functioning processes, permit the evaluation of the degree or level of quality reached by an educational institution. Those identifiers are the following ones:

- (1) The *educational product*. In one educational institution this product will obviously refer to the attainment of education. But this general concept implies a diversity of elements that should be specified and made operative, in order to facilitate their control and assessment (Burbules, N.C., 2004: 8). A conceptual analysis and reflection from comparative

studies (UNESCO, 1972; Marín, R., 1993: 44-57) shows that an integral conception of education, particularly within the European context, implies that the most specific asset of education are values that could be grouped around the following types:

- Physical and emotional
- Intellectual
- Moral or ethic
- Aesthetic or artistic
- Socio-relational and environmental
- Practical
- Transcendent

(2) The *students' satisfaction*. This quality indicator is similar to what in a producing company or agency of services is considered as "external customer's satisfaction": it refers to the satisfaction of those who is offered the educational product or who obtain this product (although at an educational institution students are, besides, co-agents of the educational product). For the analysis of students' satisfaction attention the following areas of satisfaction should be considered:

- Basic needs
- Security feeling
- Acceptance received within the group
- Esteem received by the group members
- Opportunity to freely developing themselves

(3) The *staff's satisfaction*. Staff's desire of satisfaction is related to tendencies of organization, where member's participation is an essential principle (Gento, S., 1994). The whole assessment of a school staff's satisfaction affects all sectors that make up such institution, although there exists the possibility of pondering the relative importance of the different sectors' satisfaction when considering its repercussion on the quality of the institution (Braslavski, 2004; Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1994). As possible areas producing staff's satisfaction the following ones could be considered:

- Attention to the material or physical conditions necessary to members' survival and to their functions development

- Labour and professional security
 - Organization and function of the institution they work for
 - Obtained results (mainly students performance)
 - Professional prestige
- (4) *Impact effect of education.* It refers to *the repercussion that education reached by people who have been students of educational institutions has on contexts where such people live or carry out activities of different types.* It is obvious that educational institutions of quality must offer educational products that, not only improve life conditions and personal success of people who have been subjects of education within these institutions, but these educational products must also yield improving effects on contexts where subjects live and act. Contexts where this impact effect could have influence could be synthesized around the following ones:
- The *academic* context: impact of reached education has on success on future educational or academic programmes (Gento, 2002, p. 101)
 - The *social and environmental* context: impact produced by people who attended educational institutions on the surrounding environment and on the society they live on
 - The *labour and professional* context: effect on labour and professional arena produced by people who, after finishing their studies at the educational institution, have acceded to a job or professional position
 - The *familiar* context: effect produced on their families by people who have been students on the corresponding educational institution.

Predictors of quality of an educational institution

Some predictors of quality refer themselves to the point of departure or static "input" (as availability of material and personal resources or the institution's organization or planning); others allude to processes carried out within such institutions (as management of material, personal and functional resources; educational methodology and the exercise of leadership). Although educational institutions show that quality of education is a whole unity whose components act within a compact system, it seems appropriate, for methodological reasons, to try to study each one of these components. Due to such reasons, the following predictors are considered as components of an educational institution of quality.

- (1) *Educational methodology*. For educational methodology it is understood the peculiar way of carrying out functions and tasks that are implemented in order to attain educational objectives. By its etymological origin and its conceptual content, this methodology is of mediational kind as it tries to offer the educational subject the possibility of objectives to be attained by educational processes. The most relevant context of methodological use is the classroom or space where students and teachers most frequently carry out their activity (Scheerens, J. & Creemers, B.P., 1989). As basic principles of an educational methodology of quality the following ones are considered:
- *Planned dedication*: this involving task dedication (individual and collaborative); planning and programming, organization, use of resources, assessment, self analysis
 - *Adaptation*: to people (pupils or students, teachers, parents, etc); to environment and context (social, familiar, educational, labour)
 - *Empowerment of abilities*: positive motivation; formative self-evaluation; positive expectancies; promotion of creativity; encouragement to problem solving; curriculum options; extra curriculum options
 - *Positive inter-relational atmosphere*: emotional attention; security, order, silence or quietness; discipline; open and multidirectional communication; positive interaction
 - *Inter-relationship with other entities*: with families; with social community; with productive, professional and labour sectors; with public administration; with other institutions or entities
- (2) *Availability of personal and material resources*. Within this component are included those personal and material elements that form the patrimony the educational institution possess to perform its activity. Teachers are, undoubtedly, "a very important asset of an educational institution and highly relevant for its quality" (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia (1994: 81-97); but the institution must also have other personal members, such as non the teaching ones and of personal of service (administration, maintenance, cleanness, etc.). Students are also very determinant members of an educational institution and are also a very relevant factor of its quality. There are also material resources necessary for the institution's functioning of quality (such as facilities, didactic materials, technological media, etc.).

(3) *Planning and organization*. This component, sometimes called "*strategic design*", is an initial component of the general frame of an educational institution; but its supervision must take account of its dynamic. Although some authors declare that school organization has a very significant effect on the quality of educational institutions (March, J., 1978), some researches declare that this organization could be a framework propitiating educational practice improvement and research on education (Scheerens, 1992, p. 118). Within the organizational profile of an educational institution, the following elements included next could be considered:

- *Mission*. The feeling of mission is in one institution or entity the expression of the aim or basic reason of its existence (Baker, J. 1990). From this assumed mission will derive the basic orientation of its trajectory. The mission will be made up by the conceptual elements that define the educational project. Such conceptual elements will also determine the most suitable organizational principles. In one educational institution, its mission will orient itself to the attainment of supreme levels of education of quality (in its constitution, processes and results).
- *Functioning principles*. These principles will be determined by considering the mission the institutions will try to accomplish. Some of the possible principles of functioning to be assumed by one educational institution could be: equity; priority of attention to students; institutional autonomy; horizontal functional structure; positive relational atmosphere; care of environment; multidirectional intercommunication; everyone's participation; continuous improvement and innovation; zero defects; immediate intervention; institutional self evaluation; innovative research; educative integration and inclusion.
- *Organization structure*. This element will refer to the setting up of elements of the institution's coordination and management. As a consequence, it will consider organs (personal or collegiate) that assume the responsibility of intervening in the promotion and supervision of process carried out within the institution; it seems, even appropriate, to consider those organs or entities that, although they are not part of the institution's organization chart, have a relationship with it.
- *Written documents of planning*. Every institution hoping to achieve good levels of quality needs some written documents of planning, where the strategic plan of the institution is defined. Some of the documents of planning of an education institution are the following ones: Institution

Educational Project; School Regulations; Institution Curriculum Project; Year and Subject Programmes; Annual Institution Memory.

- *Accommodation to context.* Every educational institution, particularly a formalized one, is part of an educational system and is affected by this system regulation frame. Furthermore, every institution functions within a context and environment that affect it. Apart from that, students attending the educational institution have their own personal needs, expectancies, physical and psycho-pedagogical features that define a particular learning style and behaviour. Even the attention to the particular context of teachers and personal working at the educational institution could be an aspect that somehow should be taking into account.

(4) *Management of resources.* This predictor of quality refers to the use of material and personal resources and of the strategic organization features defining a particular institution. It implies attention to the following elements:

- *Management of material resources:* it affects the incidence that the use of material resources the institution has may affect its quality.

- *Optimization of human resources:* it could be even more important, particularly when considering frequent mistakes appeared if improvement of quality projects is implemented without directing people and staff being suitably prepared, without people having functions clearly defined, or without directing people appropriately prepared and accepted by the responsible staff.

- *Strategic organizational features:* it must define the functioning frame and the management of such frame, both oriented to the attainment of educational quality within an educational institution. Referred to this aspect, Brooker and Cols. (1979) demonstrated that 85% of school's performance variance is determined by the model of social system prevailing within the school.

(4) *Pedagogical leadership.* In our model of quality for educational institutions, the educational leadership plays a fundamental role as predictor of quality. But the implementation of such leadership should be contemplated into different fields of intervention. We understand that *leader is a person (or group of persons) with the ability to provoke liberation, from inside, of the internal energy existing in other human beings, so that these voluntarily*

make the effort to attain, in the most effective and comfortable possible way, the aims they themselves have decided to reach in order to obtain their own dignity and the one of those they live within in a specific environment and context they care for. The leader's potential of producing liberating creativity makes him/her the server of his/her followers, as he/she "assumes the fundamental mission of helping the followers to overcome obstacles in order to being able of putting into action their total capacity to reach their own objectives and the objectives shared with their own group" (De Pree, 1989, p. XX).

The exercise of leadership in education could be considered at different levels: the nuances of its implementation could be specifically peculiar, from the role of the supreme responsible of education within a country, to the one corresponding to a teacher responsible for a group of students and to, even, a student acting as leader of his/her mates. But, as we refer here to leadership as predictor of quality in educational institutions, we will consider such leadership within such context.

The exercise of leadership within an educational institution must be eminently *pedagogical*. As a consequence, although peculiarities commonly applied to any type of leadership could be applied to the pedagogical leadership within an educational institution, the main concern of the this type of leadership should be the promotion of the potentiality of all the institutional members oriented to attain an education of quality, preferably within the approach of total quality. Dimensions that should identify the pedagogical leadership within an educational institution could be the ones described next (*Figure 2*):

- *Charismatic dimension.* This dimension implies that the leader (be an individual or team) is attractive so as to facilitate that other people feel comfortable to be with him/her or they, and is able to provoke that people being around try confidently to be close.
- *Emotional dimension.* In his/her relationship with all the people (of the educational institution or related to it) the leader should treat everybody with the highest kindness, consideration and acknowledgement. At the same time, the leader must also enforce every person's dignity and show esteem and appreciation to all the people.
- *Anticipatory dimension.* Attributed to pedagogical leadership, it means having the capacity of being able of anticipatory vision of what would be the most suitable strategies and activities to solve future challenges or

problems. It will also mean an anticipatory perception of consequences or effects derived from the solutions to be implemented.

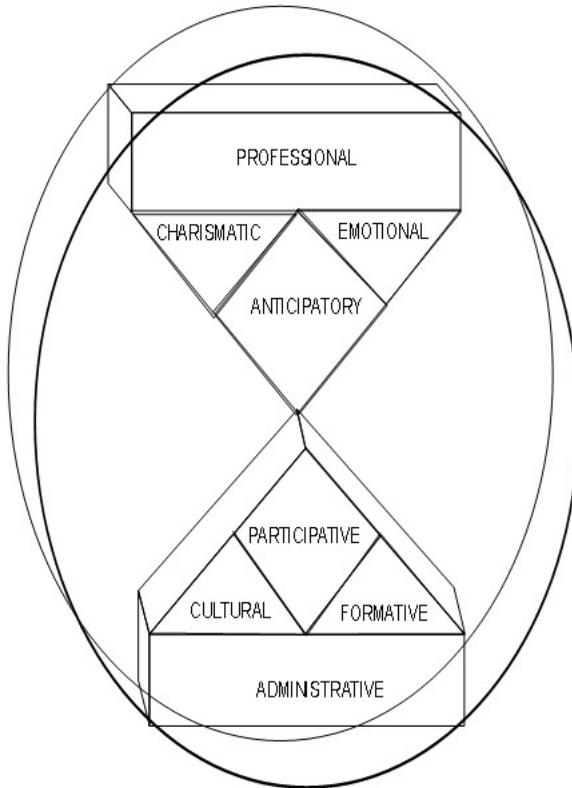


Figure 2: Dimensions of pedagogical leadership within an educational institution

- *Professional dimension.* According to it, pedagogical leaders must impel the institution towards the attainment of educational aims and objectives and must try to facilitate the institution and its members the availability of the required resources and the use of the necessary strategies in order to reach the highest quality of education.
- *Participatory dimension.* It implies that "the best way of encouraging individuals and groups to an intelligent and collaborative work is

stimulate them to offer their cooperative effort in projects they are committed with by their intervention in decisions made throughout every phase. Collected empirical data generally show that in schools of quality all members of the institution work together and that its quality is increased if the educational system acts coordinated with educational institutions.

- *Cultural dimension.* It means that leaders must promote the consolidation of the institution's particular culture or specific profile. Pedagogical leaders should, as a consequence, act with the required commitment in order to clarify, consolidate, defend and extend the institution's cultural profile.

- *Formative dimension.* As one of the essential features of authentic leaders, it requires that they should care of their own continuous training and formation and that they should try to promote continuous training of people working with them. Basic approach of this leadership dimension must, then, be the promotion of personal professional training and of the best qualification to implement the necessary tasks to advance in the quality of education and of the institution's quality.

- *Administrative dimension.* This dimension is the one referred to the administrative routines and to the accomplishment of activities of bureaucratic type. It seems necessary that, in order to reach authentic institutions of quality, bureaucratic activities be reduced or, at least, submitted to educational contents. Anyhow, as these activities could not be totally eliminated, it would be suitable to simplify them and to submit them to the basic orientation of achieving educational institutions of quality

Relationship with European education

Quality of education not only is a worldwide concern, but also a particular intense one in European countries. On the other hand, the research project has been initially elaborated for researches and academics of a European country, including Spain. The first steps and initial data are taken with samples of this European country. But progressively, the project will be extended to other European countries: initial contacts have been carried out to such purpose.

Context and Circumstances

The theoretical background considers literature referred to quality of education, quality of educational institutions and of leadership, particularly the one related to education and educational institutions. Particular attention is given to national and international reports on quality or effectiveness of education and of its references to European countries.

Empirical data are initially be collected by members of the Spanish National University of Distance Education. Professors of this University promote data collection, with the help of students, particularly those of post grade courses. In the first steps of data collection, information is mainly taken from schools from Spain's different Autonomous Communities or Regions. Preferred schools are the Secondary Education ones (particularly Higher Education) and of Vocational Education Schools. Some information proceeding from Universities (courses of grade or post grade) could also be occasionally collected.

Research Design and Methodology

Basic approach

The basic approach of this research is an eclectic or mixed one. Consequently, qualitative and quantitative techniques are used. These techniques are the following ones:

Techniques and instruments

To obtain information on the quality of educational institutions, a *questionnaire on "evaluation of the quality of educational institutions"* has been elaborated (*Annex I*). The instrument is to be answered by committed representatives of school's members and involved personnel, such as: students (particularly from Lower and Higher Secondary Education and other further educational levels), teachers, heads or principals, parents, supervisors or inspectors of education, teacher's trainers and other professionals or involved representatives.

The questionnaire collects information on the given *importance* and on the real *evidence* (attainment, existence, reality or effectiveness) of nine

components of quality of educational institutions (Gento, 2001a; 2002), which are the following ones:

- Values as educational product
- Student's satisfaction
- Staff' s satisfaction
- Impact of educational product
- Availability of material and personal resources
- Organization and planning of the institution
- Resources management
- Educational methodology
- Headmaster's or principal's leadership
- Other directing members' leadership
- Teachers' leadership

To have information on leadership, an instrument has been produced as "*questionnaire on pedagogical leadership on educational institutions*" (*Annex II*). This instrument will offer information in detail on the given importance and on the real evidence (attainment, existence, reality or effectiveness) of the following leadership's dimensions (Gento, 2001b; 2002):

- Charismatic
- Emotional
- Anticipatory
- Professional
- Participative
- Cultural
- Formative
- Administrative

To guarantee the scientific consistence of the mentioned questionnaires, both instruments are submitted to *validation* processes.

With the purpose of obtaining qualitative data referred to pedagogical leadership, *semi-structured interviews* will be made, preferably (although not exclusively) to participants who previously had filled in the questionnaire on leadership or who had been submitted to evaluation with this instrument (*Annex III*). This interview will consider data offered by the questionnaire on leadership and also those given by the questionnaire on quality of educational institutions. The interview will show strengths and

failures referred to the assessed leadership and will try to describe relevant situations.

Qualitative data will also be obtained through *case studies*, referred to pedagogical leadership within educational institutions. Information obtained from case studies will show the reality of pedagogical leadership and its relevance for the quality of one educational institution (*Annex IV*).

Data collection

To collect data on the quality of educational institutions and of pedagogical leadership within such institutions, the research has the participation of UNED (National University of Distance Education) students from the subject "Improvement of Quality on Educational Institutions" of the Master Course on "Strategies and Technologies for the Teaching Function in a Multicultural Society."

Data obtained from the questionnaire on evaluation of one educational institution and of pedagogical leadership on such institutions will be inserted into an Excel file. To this end, participants who will intervene by using these instruments have received the corresponding *Excel files* (one for each questionnaire) to be filled in with collected data. Two *guidelines to collect data* (one for each questionnaire) help participants on the research them insert data on each file.

Information obtained from interviews and case studies will be offered by a description of both techniques use and results.

Data processing

Theoretical bases of the research will be obtained from *relevant literature* related to:

- quality, quality of education and quality of educational institutions
- Leadership, leadership on education and on educational institutions

Empirical data collected from the questionnaires is to be treated with the Programme of *SPSS* (Statistical Package of Social Sciences)

Qualitative data obtained from the interviews and case studies will be treated with the programme *AQUAD* of G. Huber.

Conclusions and proposals

Information obtained from the theoretical study and of the empirical analysis will be submitted to reflection and interpretation, in order to extract the conclusions derived from the research.

The obtained conclusions will offer the opportunity of elaborating some proposals. These will mainly be directed to improve the quality of educational institutions and to promote suitable ways of exercising authentic pedagogical leadership.

The obtained information, conclusion and proposals of intervention will be used as bases to put forward some possible themes of futures researches related to the present one.

Impact of the Research on the European Context

One of the main concerns nowadays of the European education is the quality of education and of their educational institutions. The repercussion of PISA reports on European public opinion, on politicians and on social leaders is one of the features that show such concern. Other relevant manifestation of the European interest for the quality of education is the adaptation to education of the model of quality produced by European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM).

The importance of leadership to promote educational improvement and to eliminate failures influencing on the quality of education is showed by a number of authors, some of them of European context.

Results obtained by this research will be useful to design and implement activities and processes directed to improve the quality of educational institutions and pedagogical leadership in this institutions, not only in Spain, but also in other European countries and even in other non European contexts.

Empirical Data

Results of questionnaire on evaluation of the quality of educational institutions

The research project started during the academic period 2010-2011. As the process of collecting and processing data recently began, it is not possible to offer definitive data. Nevertheless some provisional initial data are offered here: they correspond to the first part of the mentioned academic period and it is expected that more data will be received the second academic period.

Sample description

Provisional data offered here have been offered by a small sample of 50 people who answered the questionnaire to evaluate importance and evidence of the components of educational institution's quality. A description of the sample is included next.

Table 1: Gender of participants

Gender	F	%
Female	31	62%
Male	19	38%
Total	50	100%

Table 2: Type of school

Type of school	F	%
Public	7	14%
Aided	29	58%
Private	14	28%
Total	50	100%

Table 3: Participant's sector

Sector	F	%
Students	1	38%
Teachers	15	30%
Heads/Principals	6	12%
Parents	10	22%
Total	50	100%

Table 4: Education stage

Sector	F	%
Preschool	2	4%
Primary	4	8%
Lower Secondary	38	76%
Higher Secondary	4	8%
Unidentified	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Evaluation of components of quality

Data corresponding to the evaluation of the importance and evidence of components determining educational institutions' quality are included next. As they are provisional data, we only insert the arithmetic mean offered by representatives of Public, (Private) Aided and (Totally) Private institutions.

(1) *Student's satisfaction*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public Sch	Aided Sch	Private Sch	Total Sch
Importance	8,29	6,31	8,43	7,18
Evidence	6,14	6,20	7,86	7,00

(2) *Values as educational product*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public Sch	Aided Sch	Private Sch	Total Sch
Importance	8,14	6,10	7,07	6,66
Evidence	6,14	6,05	6,93	6,54

(3) *Staff's satisfaction*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public Sch	Aided Sch	Private Sch	Total Sch
Importance	8,29	8,31	7,50	8,08
Evidence	6,00	5,41	7,44	6,12

(4) *Impact of the educational product*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public Sch	Aided Sch	Private Sch	Total Sch
Importance	7,29	8,24	7,64	7,94
Evidence	5,57	6,72	7,51	6,84

(5) *Availability of resources*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public Sch	Aided Sch	Private Sch	Total Sch
Importance	8,57	7,86	7,21	7,78
Evidence	5,86	7,52	6,85	7,28

(6) *Organization and planning*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public Sch	Aided Sch	Private Sch	Total Sch
Importance	8,43	7,07	6,93	7,22
Evidence	7,00	6,07	6,36	6,56

(7) *Management of resources*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public <u>Sch</u>	Aided <u>Sch</u>	Private <u>Sch</u>	Total <u>Sch</u>
Importance	7,86	6,34	7,21	6,80
Evidence	6,43	5,66	6,21	6,36

(8) *Methodology*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public <u>Sch</u>	Aided <u>Sch</u>	Private <u>Sch</u>	Total <u>Sch</u>
Importance	8,57	7,62	6,93	7,56
Evidence	6,57	7,48	6,07	7,24

(9) *Headmaster's or principal's leadership*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public <u>Sch</u>	Aided <u>Sch</u>	Private <u>Sch</u>	Total <u>Sch</u>
Importance	8,43	7,21	7,86	7,56
Evidence	6,00	7,00	7,07	7,06

(10) *Directing team's leadership*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public <u>Sch</u>	Aided <u>Sch</u>	Private <u>Sch</u>	Total <u>Sch</u>
Importance	8,00	7,52	8,14	7,76
Evidence	6,43	7,14	7,86	7,24

(11) *Teachers' leadership*

Evaluation category / Arithmetic mean	Public <u>Sch</u>	Aided <u>Sch</u>	Private <u>Sch</u>	Total <u>Sch</u>
Importance	8,14	7,93	7,86	7,94
Evidence	6,29	7,41	7,07	7,16

Results of the Questionnaire on Leadership in Educational Institutions

As it has been commented on the results of questionnaire on evaluation of the quality of educational institutions, data collected by the questionnaire of leadership should also be considered provisional. There are still a number of questionnaires to be received in September and these data will be added to the ones presented here.

Sample description

Educational institutions

Type of school	F	%
Public	14	27,5%
Aided	19	37,3%
Private	17	33,3%
Unidentified	1	2,0%
Total	51	100,0%

Participants' sector

Sector	F	%
Students	9	17,6%
Teachers	22	43,1%
Heads/Principals	7	13,7%
Parents	5	9,8%
Other	5	9,8%
Unidentified	3	6%
Total	51	99,8%

Educational stage

Sector	F	%
Preschool	2	3,9%
Primary	12	23,5%
Lower Secondary	31	60,2%
Higher Secondary	2	3,9%
1 st cycle University	3	5,9%
Unidentified	1	2,8%
Total	51	100,0%

Evaluation of descriptors of leadership dimensions

Data obtained from the collected questionnaires are referred to descriptors defining the proposed dimensions of educational leadership. These data correspond to educational or pedagogical leadership, in general, without specification evaluation to the three types of pedagogical leadership mentioned at the top of the used questionnaire. Data inserted into the following tables offer the *Mode* (M_o), or most frequent mark given to every descriptor.

(1) *Charismatic dimension*

Data obtained from the collected questionnaires are referred to descriptors defining the proposed dimensions of educational leadership. These data correspond to educational or pedagogical leadership, in general, without specification evaluation to the three types of pedagogical leadership mentioned at the top of the used questionnaire. Data inserted into the following tables offer the *Mode* (M_o), or most frequent, mark given to every descriptor.

Descriptor / M_o	Importance	Evidence
Professional profile	9	5
Expertise	8	6
Representativeness	7	6
Personal preparation	7	6
Chosen by selecting process	7	6
Legitimacy (by designation)	7	6
Hygiene and personal care	6	6
Enthusiasm	7	6
Sense of humour	7	6
Coherence and commitment	7	6

(2) *Emotional dimension*

Descriptor / M_o	Importance	Evidence
Acknowledgment of people's dignity	7	6
Id. of collaborators' merit	8	6
Consideration to everybody	8	6
Promotion of collaborators' social esteem	7	6
Expanding collaborators' success	7	6
Being polite and sensitive to all	6	5
Manifestation of esteem to collaborators	8	7
Protection to collaborators' from critic	7	6
Attention to collaborators' needs	7	6
Impulse to collaborators' self-reliance	7	6

(3) *Anticipatory dimension*

Descriptor / M _o	Importance	Evidence
Impulse to institution's mission	7	6
Foresight of needs	7	6
Vision of ultimate goal	7	6
Vision of institution's structure	7	6
Creativity to propose solutions	7	6
Proposals of targets	7	6
Contribution to initiatives	7	6
Stimulus to collaborators' effort	7	6
Planning and management of changes	7	6
Impulse to overcome resistance to change	7	5

(4) *Professional dimension*

Descriptor / M _o	Importance	Evidence
Intervention in professional projects and plans	7	5
Id. in designing methodology	7	6
Id. in evaluation	7	6
Id. in studying impact of education	7	6
Id. in designing structure and organization	8	6
Interest to know other educational institutions	8	7
Promotion of atmosphere to studying	7	6
Impulse to accommodation to context	7	6
Id. to constant improvement	9	7
Stimulus to innovation	7	6

(5) *Participatory dimension*

Descriptor / M _o	Importance	Evidence
Impulse to multidirectional communication	7	5
Choice of collaborators	7	6
Acceptance of collaborators' opinions	8	6
Awarding of trust to collaborators	7	6
Attention to collaborators' proposals	7	6
Facilitation of professional debates	7	6
Impulse to participative techniques	7	6
Promotion of collaborators team working	7	6
Clarification of collaborators' functions	7	6
Balance between delegation and control	7	6

(6) *Cultural dimension*

Descriptor / M _o	Importance	Evidence
Promotion of institution's cultural identity	7	6
Impulse to accommodation to context	7	6
Id. to accommodation to student's culture	7	6
Id. to institution's organizational profile	8	6
Exploration of collaborator's interest	7	5
Clumping of collaborators' ideologies	7	5
Enhancement of interactive atmosphere	7	6
Promotion of order and security	7	6
Impulse to institution's autonomy	7	6
Personal exemplification of institutions' identity	7	6

(7) *Formative dimension*

Descriptor / M _o	Importance	Evidence
Dedication to his/her own training	7	6
Help to collaborator's training	7	6
Supply of training materials	7	6
Promotion of relationship with training agencies	7	6
Facilitation of professional interchanges	7	6
Impulse to research	7	6
Impulse to obtaining grants to research	7	7
Promotion of studying professional themes	7	6
Promotion of debates on professional topics	7	6
Support to innovation	7	6

(8) *Administrative dimension*

Descriptor / M _o	Importance	Evidence
Presidency of collegiate boards	7	5
Supervision of documents	7	7
Management of material resources	6	6
Vigilance of laws and rules compliance with	7	6
Intervention into personnel's cooptation	7	6
Impulse to resources acquisition	7	6
Authorization of spending	7	7
Proposals to collaborators' cooptation	7	6
Information to community on institution's life	7	6
Guarantee personnel's right of assembly	7	6

Results of interviews

Throughout this brief period of obtaining empirical data, little information has been collected of interviews. But as the process of obtaining information continues, it is hoped that more data will be offered in some subsequent reports. Nevertheless, we insert here, as an example, some opinions collected by one interview with a female school head of a private school of Preschool, Primary and Lower Secondary Education of a town placed at the South of Spain ("Roquetas de Mar", Province of Almería). The interviewed opinions are included next, grouped around the leadership dimensions in the questionnaire evaluating this role.

<i>Leadership dimension</i>	<i>Comments from interviewed school head</i>
Charismatic	This is an important dimension of an educational leadership
Emotional	Although the attention to emotions of teachers and all school members is important, sometimes it is not easy to equally treat every person: you feel closer to some people than to some other ones.
Anticipatory	Anticipation to events and consequences of decisions is very effective; but sometimes it is not easy to previously know circumstances and consequences of decisions and actions.
Professional	A good professional leader should be ready to make decisions, although sometimes they will be neither easy nor pleasant The need of making creative decisions would be easier when the leader is helped by his/her collaborators' opinions and proposals. The leader's professional dimension requires a profound commitment to institution's functioning
Participative	An effective educational leader needs to promote teachers' and whole staff's team working Participative dimension also asks for pedagogical leader to impulse fluent relationship with families, students and other involved sectors.
Cultural	A school head's cultural dimension implies the need of creating and expanding his/her school image of institution of quality. This image of quality will be based on students' excellent academics results and on well trained and committed teaching staff.
Formative	A school head's authentic leadership needs a permanent operative concern on his/her own continuous training. A plan of in-service training courses offered throughout the school year should be offered to every school teacher. In fact teachers of this school make two or three in service training courses per year.
Administrative	Bureaucratic activities are somehow necessary although not exactly enjoyable. But these activities are easier to be implemented when the school has a school administrator (as it happens at this school whose head was interviewed).

Results of a case study

The short period of this research field study has not allowed collect many case studies. Nevertheless, we offer an example of case study referred to an event happened at a school and described by one school's member participating in the research. This case could be considered as a typical example of participatory leadership.

(1) Context

The case happens at a school of Primary Education. A teacher of the last form puts forward the directing team and the school faculty the idea of announcing a literary concourse to promote students' motivation and their interest for the language and literature.

(2) Case content

Once the proposal is unanimously approved, the school head designates a commission responsible to organize bases and details of the concourse. In a subsequent meeting of the directing team with the organized commission details of the concourse implementation are approved (themes of students' composition, levels of the participants, contents of student's works, judges to evaluate compositions, calendar, prizes, ceremony of prizes awarding, etc.)

(3) Collaborative participation

The school's directing team contacts Parents' Association to ask them to participate in the concourse and to designate two members who will be members of the evaluation jury. Teachers inform students of the concourse and its details and ask them to participate and to expand the idea among their mates.

(4) Leadership dimensions put into action

Charismatic and emotional dimensions are put into action throughout the whole process of design, preparation and implementation of the concourse. Teachers stimulate students by showing confidence in their abilities and preparation to present works to the concourse. The concourse also contributes to increase students' satisfaction as members of such a dynamic institution.

The anticipatory dimension is present during the careful planning of the whole process that tries to anticipate possible circumstances and events.

The participatory and cultural dimensions are implicit in the intervention of the school directing team and its teachers. Students are committed to intervene not only as candidates to the awards, but also as

members of the organization structure. Parents had also been invited to act as active members and even as been members of the evaluating jury. The concourse contributes to promote the school's own cultural profile.

The administrative dimension has been put into action in order to supply the necessary resources for the prizes, the required facilities, the calendar of the concourse process, etc. The school's directing team, the organizing team and parents' association work together to prepare all the necessary requirements.

(5) Reviewing conclusions

The experience described on this case study represents an example of effective, enthusiastic and participatory contribution of all the involved school sectors. Results have produced and increased enthusiasm in all members and they are decided to successively repeat this experience in subsequent years.

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ANNEX I

QUESTIONNAIRE ON EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION'S QUALITY

This questionnaire tries to collect your assessment of the *importance* given to every component and element that determines an educational institution's quality and to check the *evidence* of its existence in the same institution. Both aspects (importance and evidence should be evaluated in every component and element: to such purpose, every one has the correspondent square where you may write the mark of importance and of evidence. *Your assessment is of extremely great importance.*

Please, proceed the following way:

- 1°. Write or tick the sector you are member of.
- 2°. Assess every **FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENT OF QUALITY** (written in capital letters) by inserting within the corresponding square your mark (from 1, minimum, to 9, maximum) for the importance conceded by the evaluated institution and for the evidence of its existence or attainment.
- 3°. Assess the remaining aspects by inserting within the corresponding square your mark (from 1, minimum, to 9, maximum), for the importance conceded by the evaluated institution and for the evidence of its existence or attainment.
- 4°. You may, if wished, *add other* aspects within the space reserved to that and assess the importance and evidence of them.
- 5°. Assess this questionnaire and add, if any, your observations.

We thank you very much your valuable contribution.

Sectors of opinion:		
Province (State) _____		
Country _____		
Gender: Female	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Type of centre: Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Private aided	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private non aided	<input type="checkbox"/> Preschool Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student (age) <input type="checkbox"/>	Primary Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher (years of experience) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	Lower Secondary Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Head/Principal <input type="checkbox"/>	Higher Secondary Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student's mother/father <input type="checkbox"/>	Vocational Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Inspector/Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/>	Isr Degree University Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher's trainer <input type="checkbox"/>	University Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (indicate) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE AND EVIDENCE (*)
(minimum, 1; maximum, 9)

1. Identifiers of quality

	Importance	Evidence
1.1. “VALUES AS EDUCATIONAL PRODUCT”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.1. Physical and emotional values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.2. Intellectual values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.3. Ethical values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.4. Aesthetic or artistic values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.5. Social and ecological values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.6. Practical or useful values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1.7. Transcendent values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2. “STUDEN’S SATISFACTION”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.1. By attention to their basic needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.2. By their feeling of security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.3. By the acceptance they receive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.4. By the esteem given to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.5. By the opportunity of free self development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(*) *Importance* refers to the value given to each one of the components and elements of quality; *evidence* refers to the existence, attainment, reality, reaching or effectiveness.

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1.3. "INSTITUTION STAFF'S SATISFACTION"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.1. By the attention of their material needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.2. By their labour or professional security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.3. By the institution's organisation and functioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.4. By results obtained by students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.5. By their labour and professional prestige	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4. "IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL PRODUCT"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.1. On labour or professional arena	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.2. On family context	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.3. On scholastic or academic context	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.4. On social context in general	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Predictors of quality

2.1. "AVAILABILITY OF MATERIAL AND PERSONAL RESOURCES"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.1. Building and facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.2. Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.3. Didactic material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.4. Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.5. Economical resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.6. Teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.7. Non teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1.8. Students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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2.2. “INSTITUTION’S ORGANISATION AND PLANNING” ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.1. Meaning of its “mission” or “raison d’être”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.2. Organisation structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.3. Functioning principles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.4. Planning documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.5. Adaptation to context	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3. “MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.1. Management of material resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.2. Management of human resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.3. Implementation of organisational components	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4. “EDUCATIVE METHODOLOGY”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.1. Planning of educational activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.2. Accommodation to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.3. Adaptation to context	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.4. Positive atmosphere of interpersonal relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.5. Positive motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.6. Positive expectations of student’s performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.7. Impulse to creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.8. Positive relationship of educational community with other institutions, families and surrounding community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.9. Optional curricular and extra-curricular offering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.10. Dedication or intense working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.11. Student’s frequent assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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2.5. "SCHOOL HEAD'S OR PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5.1. Emotional dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5.2. Anticipatory dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5.3. Professional dimension (to promote quality of education)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5.4. Participative dimension (to promote participation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5.5. Cultural dimension (to promote institution's identity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5.6. Training dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5.7. Administrative dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5.8.- Charismatic dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6. "LEADERSHIP OF OTHER MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTION'S DIRECTING TEAM"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.1. Emotional dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.2. Anticipatory dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.3. Professional dimension (to promote quality of education)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.4. Participative dimension (to promote participation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.5. Cultural dimension (to promote institution's identity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.6. Training dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.7. Administrative dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.8.- Charismatic dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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2.7. "LEADERSHIP OF INSTITUTION'S TEACHERS"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.1. Emotional dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.2. Anticipatory dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.3. Professional dimension (to promote quality of education)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.4. Participative dimension (to promote participation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.5. Cultural dimension (to promote institution's identity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.6. Training dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.7. Administrative dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.8.- Charismatic dimension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Assessment of the Questionnaire

To evaluate this questionnaire, please tick the square that better corresponds to your estimation of every mentioned criteria, according to the numerical scale from 1 to 5 (1 represents the most negative estimation and 5 the most positive one).

The questionnaire is:

Evaluation		1	2	3	4	5
Useless	Useful					
Confuse	Clear					
Boring	Entertaining					
Monotonous	Interesting					
Unpleasant	Pleasant					

Other criteria (specify):

1	2	3	4	5
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

To indicate if there is something superfluous or not in the Questionnaire, please tick one of every alternative option:

Nothing superfluous Something superfluous

Specify the superfluous content:

To indicate if there is something missing in the Questionnaire, please tick one of the alternative options:

Nothing is missing Something is missing

Specify what is missing

Specify, if any, other observations to this questionnaire:

Date of fulfilment: (day) ____ (month) _____ (year) _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

ANNEX II

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

This questionnaire refers to:

- School Head or Principal*.....
Other Directing Team members.....
School teachers

This questionnaire tries to collect your assessment of the *importance* you give and the *evidence* of the attainment within the institution you assess of every descriptor of the pedagogical leadership dimensions. Such dimensions are referred to: the educational institution's head or principal; other institution's directing team members; or institution's teachers. Both categories (of importance and evidence) will be evaluated on every descriptor: for each one of them you find a square where you will insert your mark corresponding to the conceded importance and evidence. *Your assessment is of extremely great importance.*

Please, proceed the following way:

- 1°.- Tick the top square corresponding to whose sector is referred this questionnaire
- 2°.- Write or tick the sector you are member of
- 3°.- To assess every descriptor of leadership, mark within the corresponding square you evaluation from 1 (*minimum*) to 9 (*maximum*) referred to the given *importance* and to the *evidence* of attainment at the institution.
- 4°.- You may, if you wish to, add other descriptors within the space reserved to such purpose and assess the importance and evidence of them.
- 5°.- Assess this questionnaire and add, if any, your observations.

We thank you very much for your valuable contribution.

Sectors of opinion:

Province (State) _____
Country _____

Gender: Female	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Type of centre: Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Private aided	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private non aided	<input type="checkbox"/> Preschool Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student (age) <input type="checkbox"/>	Primary Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher (years of experience) <input type="checkbox"/>	Lower Secondary Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Head/Principal <input type="checkbox"/>	Higher Secondary Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student's mother/father <input type="checkbox"/>	Vocational Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Inspector/Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/>	1st Degree University Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher's trainer <input type="checkbox"/>	University Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (indicate) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

**ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE AND EVIDENCE OF
LIDERSHIP DIMENSIONS (*)**
(minimum 1, maximum 9)

1. Charismatic dimension

	Importance	Evidence
1.1.- Relevant professional profile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.- Accredited expertise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3.- Representativity or acceptance (been elected or o accepted)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4.- Personal preparation (academic accreditation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5.- Having passed a selecting process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6.- Recognized legitimacy (after designation or cooptation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.7.- Hygiene and personal care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.8.- Enthusiasm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.9.- Sense of humour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.10.- Coherence and personal commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.11.- Other (specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.- Emotional dimension

2.1.- Acknowledgment of every person's dignity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2.- Acknowledgment of collaborators' professional value	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3.- Personal consideration to everybody	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4.- Promotion of collaborators' social appreciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5. Spreading of collaborators' success	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6.- Being polite and sensitive to every person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7.- Publicly expressing esteem to collaborators	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.8.- Protection to collaborators from unjustified critics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.9.- Attention to collaborators' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.10.- Impulse to collaborators' self-reliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.11.- Other (specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(*) *Importance* refers to the value given to each descriptor; *evidence* refers to the existence, attainment, reality, reaching or effectiveness at the institution.

3.- Anticipatory dimension

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3.1.- Impulse to definition of institution's mission | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.2.- Foresight of needs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.3.- Clear vision of ultimate goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.4.- Vision of how the institution should be structured | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.5.- Creativity to propose solutions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.6.- Proposals of demanding but attainable goals | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.7.- Personal contribution of initiatives | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.8.- Stimulus to collaborators' effort | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.9.- Planning and management of the necessary changes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.10.- Impulse y facilitation to overcome resistance to change | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.11.- Other (specify): _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4.- Professional dimension

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4.1.- Intervention in professional projects and plans | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.2.- Intervention in designing methodology | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.3.- Intervention in evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4.- Intervention in studying education impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.5.- Intervention in designing structure and organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.6.- Interest to knowing other educational institutions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.7.- Promotion of an atmosphere of studio | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.8.- Impulse to accommodation to context | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.9.- Impulse to constant improvement | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.10.- Stimulus to innovations | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.11.- Other (specify): _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. Participative dimension

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5.1.- Impulse to multidirectional communication | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2.- Intelligent choice of collaborators | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3.- Acceptance of collaborators' opinions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4.- Awarding trust and responsibility to collaborators | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.5.- Attention to collaborators' proposals | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.6.- Facilitation of debates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.7.- Impulse of participative techniques | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.8.- Promotion of collaborators' team working | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.9.- Clarification of collaborators' functions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.10.- Balance between delegation and control of activities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.11.- Other (specify): _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6.- Cultural dimension

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6.1.-Promotion of institution's cultural identity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.2.- Impulse to institution's cultural accommodation to context | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.3.- Impulse to accommodation to student's cultural context | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.4.- Impulse to institution's own organizational profile | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.5.- Exploration of collaborators' interests | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.6.- Clumping of collaborators' ideologies | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.7.- Enhancement of positive interactive atmosphere | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.8.- Promotion of order and security atmosphere | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.9.- Impulse to institution's autonomy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.10.- Personal exemplification of institution's cultural identity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.11.- Other (specify): _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7.- Formative dimension

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 7.1.- Dedication to own training | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.2.- Help to collaborators' training | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.3.- Supply of training materials (books, documents, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.4.- Promotion of relationship with training agents | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.5.-Facilitation of inter professional interchanges | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.6.- Impulse to research | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.7.- Impulse to obtaining grants to research | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.8.- Promotion of studying professional themes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.9.- Promotion of debates on professional topics | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.10.- Support to innovation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.11.-Other e(specify): _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8.- Administrative dimension

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8.1.- Presidency of collegiate boards | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.2.- Supervision of documents | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.3.- Management of material resources | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.4.- Vigilance of compliance with laws and rules | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.5.- Intervention into personnel's cooptation..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.6.- Impulse to resources acquisition | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.7.- Authorization of expenditures | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.8.- Proposals to attract collaborators | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.9.- Information to community on institution's life | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.10.- Guarantee personnel's right of assembly | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.11.- Other (specify): _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Assessment of the Questionnaire

To evaluate this questionnaire, please tick the square that better corresponds to your estimation of every mentioned criteria, according to the numerical scale from 1 to 5 (1 represents the most negative estimation, 5 the most positive one).

The questionnaire is:

Evaluation		1	2	3	4	5
Useless	Useful	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Confuse	Clear	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Boring	Entertaining	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Monotonous	Interesting	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Unpleasant	Pleasant	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Other criteria (specify):

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

To indicate if there is something superfluous or not in the Questionnaire, please tick one of every alternative option:

Nothing superfluous Something superfluous
Specify the superfluous

To indicate if there is something mission in the Questionnaire, please tick one of every alternative option:

Nothing is missing Something is missing
Specify what is missing

Specify, if any, other observations on this questionnaire:

Date of fulfilment: (day) _____ (month) _____ (year) _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

ANNEX III

SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Interviews will be made preferably, although not exclusively, to people who previously filled in the questionnaire on “pedagogical leadership on educational institutions” or who were submitted to evaluation with such questionnaire. As a technique to collect information based on the procedure of oral interrogation, the interview tries to get information on a specific study or research theme: an interviewed person or people directly answer to interviewer, who makes some questions in specifically prepared situations to such purpose (Powney, J. & Watts, M., 1987). In fact, this technique implies an encounter between two communicators (interviewer and interviewed) who are firmly decided to understanding each other, with profound mutual respect.

Interviews will be semi structured, as a combination of the following types:

- ❑ *Structured*: the interviewer has previously written down a closed questionnaire or, at least, a list with the questions he/she is going to ask the interviewed person.
- ❑ *Unstructured*: the interviewer does not have a previous questionnaire or list of question; he/se ask the questions according to how the interview is being implemented.

The interview will show strengths and failures referred to the assessed leadership and try to describe relevant situations. Te interview could be taped on audio or filmed on video. Material produced this way will be accordingly collected and treated.

In order to collect homogeneous contents, it is suggested that the interviewer should consider data offered by the questionnaire on leadership and also those given by the one on quality of educational institutions. Some of the contents to be treated during the interview could be referred to pedagogical leadership's dimensions such as:

- Charismatic
- Emotional
- Anticipatory
- Professional
- Participative
- Cultural
- Formative
- Administrative.

Considering that the pedagogical leadership could have impact on an educational institution's quality, the interview may also consider contents referred to this topic of institutional quality, such as:

- Values as educational product

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- Student's satisfaction
- Institution's staff satisfaction
- Impact on educational product
- Availability of material and personal resources
- Institution's organization and planning
- Management of resources
- Educative methodology

ANNEX IV

CASE STUDIES

Case studies will refer to examples of pedagogical leadership on one educational institution. Description of these examples will be relevant to show the reality of authentic pedagogical or educational leaders and how they impact the quality of the educational institution they work for.

This technique will be used to collect information obtained by observation and related to aspects that are of interest to know cases or situations connected to the studied topic of pedagogical leadership for the quality of an educational institution. The studied and described case should be representative, have impact or show contents that could facilitate its generalization.

The case study will basically be of *descriptive type*: it will try to inform in detail of the studied phenomenon or reality: here educational or pedagogical leadership for the quality of an educational institution. It may also be a case of *interpretative type*: this will mainly collect opinions or personal estimations of a particular reality referred to the kind of leadership previously mentioned. There is even the possibility of offering case studies of *evaluative type* that will use the collected information to emit an estimation of the respective case or phenomenon.

Possible phases to implement a case study may be the following ones (Pérez Serrano, G., 1995: 101-102):

- a) Phase of *contact with reality*: the researcher familiarizes him/herself with the nature of the studied theme and may determine aspects such as: definition of the case, objectives to be reached, timing, ways of collecting information, etc.
- b) Phase of *collecting information*: valid and relevant data are collected, by using different techniques and instruments. Contents to be collected may refer to aspects such as:
 - Context study
 - Analysis of literature on the topic
 - Specification of categories
 - Formulation of hypotheses
 - Production of generalizing conclusions.
- c) Phase of *analysis and interpretation*: collected information is systematized around categories that allow a profound and structured interpretation of the studied case and of its components. This phase may culminate in the produced report that, after discussion and possible triangulation, will determine the case final report that may include proposals of intervention and of case following up.

The Reflection of Conflicting Values in Literature Readers for Junior High Schools in Israel: Can Values be Bridged?

Sara Zamir

Abstract

The aim of this present research has been to study the way in which the values of Zionism, Judaism and Humanism-Universalism are being combined in contemporary literature readers of religious and general junior high schools in Israel.

The findings have shown that Jewish values are, in fact, the domineering realm in the religious state school readers and they are strongly tied to the other values. Even when the harmony between the three values is not self explicit, the editors add a citation from the scripture to tie the value at hand to a Jewish origin.

However, in the general state school readers, Zionist values are, indeed, the most dominant set of values. Furthermore, in the general state school readers, conflict between values is found in three literary works, each reflects the dominance of humanistic values.

Introduction

The Israeli education system is bound to educate its pupils in the light of three fields of values: Zionism, Judaism and Humanism-Universalism (Peled, 1976).

The value of Zionism includes the conception that Israel is the safe haven for Jews and the perception of loyalty to the land of Israel.

The value of Judaism includes both the acquaintance with the Scriptures (in the secular-general – state schools) as well as the adoption of Jewish rituals and laws (in the religious-state schools).

The value of Humanism and Universalism expresses the Natural and legal rights. Natural rights are rights not contingent upon the laws, customs, or beliefs of any particular culture or government, and therefore universal and inalienable. Although there is no unanimity as to which right is natural and which is not, the widely held view is that nature endows every human (without any regard to age, gender, nationality, or race) with certain inalienable rights (such as the right to 'life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness') which cannot be abrogated or interfered with by any government.

In contrast, legal rights are those bestowed on to a person by the law of a particular political and legal system, and therefore relative to specific cultures and governments.

Explaining the Clash between the Values

The education system, which aims at educating in light of three fields of values: Zionism, Judaism and Humanism-Universalism, could find itself stammering in a situation of possible value conflict.

One possible controversy stems from the gap between universal values that emphasize the welfare of any individual and the Zionist values concerning a question of precedence: what comes first – the individual or the collective (the state)? In other words, the argument is between the approaches which consider the fact of the establishment of the State of Israel as fulfillment of the Zionist vision, and between the approach which holds that the true purposes of the State of Israel have yet to be achieved, and the individual has tasks and obligations in order to achieve these goals.

Moreover: on the surface, it appears that the process of giving up voluntarily parts of the Land of Israel in the service of just humanistic goals (as the rights of the Palestinians or as a release from the role of the conquerors) contradicts Zionist as well as Jewish ideals concerning the settlement of the Promised Land. Ben-Shlomo (1994) writes that as the peace agreements move forward, statements such as “our rights to the land, over all the land, exist and endure forever,” become swear expressions. In his opinion, there exists a double standard in naming "conquered" lands only if they were conquered in the 1967 war and "liberated" only if they were conquered in the 1947 war.

On the other hand, according to Liebowitz (1994), today's education is directed to national values, which entail a significant contradiction to

peace as representative of a universal value. Leibowitz claims that peace cannot exist in the present culture which is founded on varied national and religious values. In his opinion, the essential preexisting condition to a life of peace is the negating of conquest, nationalism as well as militaristic values such as "heroism", "glory", and "victory". In his opinion, sheer education, which lacks nationalistic, religious or patriotic characteristics, can prepare the hearts toward peace.

One possible controversy stems from the gap between universal values that emphasize the welfare of any individual and the Zionistic values concerning a question of precedence: what comes first – The individual or the collective (the state)? Another possible controversy may stem from the gap between religious perception of Israel's borders (the borders of the Promised Land) and any peace negotiation about borders stemming from universal perceptions.

Literature Curriculum as a Source of Value Assimilation

In every discipline, and especially in the humanities, the curriculum is based on two considerations: on one hand, there are pedagogical assessments stemming from the structure of the body of knowledge in the discipline and its pedagogical adaptation, and on the other hand the ideological considerations based, to a large extent, on a philosophy of life, reflecting, through the general aims of teaching the discipline, the character of the society, its identity and values at a given time. Curricula should be perceived as concrete expressions of social processes and social change since they themselves create beliefs and skills that society finds worthy of bequeathing to the next generation (Iram, 1991). This is also true of the literature curricula in Israeli schools of the various sectors of the population; on one hand, literature curricula reflect the changes that have occurred in the notion of literature as a result of a continuous and dynamic process of developing trends in the philosophy of art and literary research; on the other hand, they also reflect ideological changes and identity perceptions.

Since this research deals with the perception of values through the literary selections included in the curriculum, three main questions must be discussed: to what extent does literature impact the reader? What values is literature likely to teach? How does literature intend (aspire) to do this?

According to Cohen (1985), there is no empirical evidence regarding the extent to which literature impacts either young or adult readers since it is difficult to isolate its impact from the impact of other environmental factors; however, there is evidence that literature is a driving force influencing the reader's spiritual and mental environment. As evidence, Cohen presents his research on children's reactions on the subject of the image of the Arab; the research shows clear traces of children's books read by the respondents. Cohen claims that in the area of identity formation and emulation, the power of literature is greater than any other discipline in the curriculum: "The spiritual experience embodied in the book is replicated in the reader's mind; its direct impact on the reader stems from this experience. The reader penetrates into the reality described in the book, becomes part of it and lives it, identifies with the protagonists, with their intrigues, experiences and values, which are likely to become his own" (ibid. p. 8). There is also reason to believe that the child or adolescent encountering narrative adventures for the first time feels a much greater impact than the veteran adult reader, whose reading blends into previous reading, thus decreasing in intensity. The pupil's first encounters with literary adventures have the power of shaping his character, values and world view (ibid. p. 89).

The theory of literary criticism that claims literature instills values and shapes the identity of the reader can be divided into three approaches: the historical-documentary approach, the moral-ideological approach, and the socio-national approach (Feingold, 1977). The historical-documentary approach holds that literature is an important source of information about people, cultures and historical periods; knowing "where we come from" will help the reader answer the question about "where we are going." To "remember" is not a purely intellectual activity, but it can motivate people to act in the present and in the future. This approach holds that literature fulfils a very important function in instilling in the student a national education: reading literature describing the characteristics and the unique features of national life in the past, the reader-learner learns about himself as a member of a nation, intensifying his identification with his people and society (Cohen, 1985). The moral-ideological approach maintains that literature is a means of instilling universal human values; literature enables the reader to assimilate important universal ideals and to deal with the negative influence of extraneous ideals. This approach stresses literary content that supports values claiming that "language is the means and literature is the form; neither the means nor the form possess any

importance in themselves; they are important only because they support human values" (Fisher, 1972). Every discussion about social and moral values is not extraneous to literature (Yehoshua, 2005), and it is not "forced" upon it; on the contrary, it is an immanent part of the literary work. The advocates of this approach claim that literature does instill values, and consequently we should teach and study mainly those authors and works from which the student can learn about man as the epitome of lofty values including "justice, hope, truth, mercy and peace." Accordingly, only through empathy and criticism can the reader "awaken to a really human life (ibid, p. 906). Levingston (1976) too favors character education through literature claiming: "In front of you, today, he is a pupil, but tomorrow he will be a citizen of the great wide world" (ibid. p. 73). The socio-national approach considers literature as a means of instilling in the pupil love and loyalty for his people, country and fatherland. One of the indications of this approach is that it can be felt strongly in periods of national crisis or mental stress; in such times there is a greater desire to see literature as a means to refresh values or to restore them. An outstanding example of this approach can be found in an article written by Iram and Yiaoz (1981) objecting to the prevalent trend to teach literature disassociated from any discussion of values, preferring to stick to the text and its poetic features and perennially trying to forge "tools of literary analysis." In their view, evading any ideological commitment in the realm of nationality, religion and state ("church" and state) exerts a pernicious influence on the image and world of education.

Study: How are values combined in contemporary literature readers

Aim of the study

The aim of this present research has been to study the way in which the values of Zionism, Judaism and Humanism-Universalism are being combined in contemporary literature readers of religious and general junior high schools in Israel.

Methodology

The methodology applied in this study is content analysis; a series of procedures is used in analyzing the text aimed at arriving at significant

diagnoses and generalizations from within the text (Weber, 1985). Compared to other tools of measurement, this method has three major advantages: it is not invasive; contrary to other techniques such as interviews, responding to questionnaires, and projection tests, it is free of errors in data analysis stemming from the respondents' awareness of the examiner's presence and expectations.

Content analysis is able of dealing with puzzling data; while in techniques such as interviews and questionnaires the data is obtained in a structured manner so that every category being investigated is known beforehand, in content analysis the analyst may not be able to predict all the categories before conducting a preliminary check of the text. Context analysis is context sensitive; the interpretation of the data in the process of content analysis is supposed to follow the processes occurring in reality, including political processes; it is a technique that is able to deal with a large amount of data such as data culled from textbooks (Krippendorff, 2004).

The analysis of texts can be carried out by using three primary methods: a) an analysis of qualitative content, b) an analysis of quantitative content, and c) a combination of both (Gull, 1981). Qualitative content analysis is based on understanding the content and the commentary that goes with it. This method gives a description of and comments about the principles and the values characterizing the description of events in the text. Depending to a large extent on the analyst's intuition, the method and the resulting evaluation cannot be expected to be objective. In contrast, quantitative content analysis is an objective and systematic method describing quantitatively clear messages. A distinction can be made between space analysis and frequency analysis; when doing space analysis, the analyst can point to the amount of space given to a certain event by counting the number of pages or lines in the text; the quantities are reported either in absolute numbers or relatively to other subjects. In frequency analysis, the analyst reports the number of times that a concept, a subject or idea are mentioned in a certain part of the story.

The third method is a blend of qualitative and quantitative analyses; in other words, it combines the systematic drawing of valid conclusions derived from a text, and is based not only on the understanding and interpretation of the researcher (naturalistic generalization), but also on numbering outstanding and recurring components in the text itself. In order to classify the utterances and the ideas in texts into unequivocal and independent categories, the method requires a detailed system of criteria.

To balance the disadvantages of qualitative analysis, many passages are quoted from the text being evaluated; the purpose of the quotations is to enable the researcher to reach a high level of precision in reporting the content (Weber, 1990).

The extent to which the qualitative and quantitative methods are blended depends on the views and inclinations of the researcher; in the present study we will use a synthesis of both with emphasis on qualitative analysis.

Data Base

The corpus includes both the contemporary general state school readers (Migvan) and the religious state school readers (Mar`ot and Alei-Safrut) for pupils of Junior – High Schools in Israel, a total of 569 literary works.

Findings

The findings have shown that Jewish values are, in fact, the domineering realm in the religious state school readers and they are strongly tied to the other values. Even when the harmony between the three values is not self explicit, the editors add a citation from the scripture to tie the value at hand to a Jewish origin.

However, in the general state school readers, Zionist values are, indeed, the most dominant set of values.

Also, in the general state school readers, conflict between values is found in three literary works, each reflects the dominance of humanistic values:

(1) The first poem is a variation of Rabbi Nachman of Breslav's quote about the futility of our world: "the entire world is a very narrow bridge, and the most important thing is not to fear at all". Jonathan Geffen rails against this message and praises the fragile living of livings. He chooses to outline his secular message in the shape of main Judaica - Sabbath candlesticks.

Jonathan Geffen, *Courage* (the reader for the 7th grade, p. 250):

In this world
Disconnect between a man

A narrow bridge
And his fellow human

Discussion and Conclusions

In the literary texts of the religious state trend, Judaism as an entire set of values is prevailing and dominant and can be traced in the various chapters of the anthologies. While comparing identical names of chapters, one can notice a significant difference of contents. For example, under the same title: Holocaust and Revival, the religious state anthologies, in contrast to the state anthologies, include also Lamentations.

In the religious state anthologies, the values of Judaism are closely related to the other two sets of values. Even when the harmony between those sets does not emerge naturally, the editors intervene and tie the values of Judaism to humanism or Zionism. For example, in Ehud Manor Poem "Israeli native" (the reader for the 9th grade, p. 60) that discusses Jewish immigration to Israel, the editors add the citation from Genesis (BeReshit) 12:1 :The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you".

The same applies to the story, "Eight eyes"(the reader for the 9th grade, p 112), by the Palestinian writer, Sophie Abdulla. The story which discusses the custom of blood vengeance is followed by the citation from Numbers (BaMidbar) 35: 11-12 "Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you that the manslayer that killeth any person through error may flee thither". By doing so, the editors emphasize the humanistic side of the Jewish Bible.

In the literary texts of the state trend, the value of Judaism is quite constricted: only one chapter by the name of "From the Scriptures", (the reader for the 7th grade), is dedicated to this set of values. However, the humanistic set of values is vaster and includes principles as brotherhood and peace and human rights as justice and dignity.

Yet, the most significant set of values in the literary texts of the state trend is Zionism. It is vastly expressed in the chapters "Hebrew stories", "Hebrew poetry", "Identity" and "Struggle and memory".

Also, in the general state school readers, conflict between values is found in three literary works, each reflects the dominance of humanistic values. This overt clash between values characterizes a secular society that has doubts and debates about how conducting its life. On the other hand, in a religious society the values are characterized by totality and this kind of conflict clash may hardly occur.

There have been made several attempts to bridge those three sets of values since the beginning of the Israeli education system. In 1953, there

was an endeavor to include the three sets of values in the statutory law of education, bringing together the three existing trends of that time: The General trend, the Mizrahi trend and the Workers trend.

The effort to merge the three sets of values is also evident in the work of three immanent public committees in Israel, during the 90s: The committee "Tomorrow, 98" (1992) aimed at strengthening the practical disciplines of science and technology, the committee "Nation and world" (1994) aimed at deepening the Jewish education and the committee "Being citizens" (1996) intended to educate towards citizenship and democracy (Iram & Maslovety, 2002).

The centrality of the three sets of values is also evident in the compulsory booklet titled "Heritage, Zionism & Democracy" (Rapel & Levin, 2003) which bring together, at the same level of importance one hundred representative concepts that derive from the three governing values. In the introduction of this booklet (p. 3), the minister of education states that the "education system must pass on the three sets of values to future generations exactly as it was imparted to us, the educators".

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Learning Environments in Private Elementary Schools: Implementation and Students' Perception of High Achievement Expectancies and Differentiation

Swantje Post

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to describe the conceptualization and realization of the ethnographic field study "BIP in Focus". A specific characteristic of this study, which is conducted within the quantitative longitudinal study PERLE (Personality and Learning Development of Elementary School Children), is the multifaceted integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, data, and results, based on both research methods.

Theoretical Background

Quality criteria of schools are marked by a multilevel character: They rest on the level of school context, schools and classes. Consequently, one key assumption of research in the field of school effectiveness suggests that the terms and conditions of higher organizational levels determine the processes, the context, and the ranges of underlying levels. However, the higher levels are also affected by the underlying levels (Campbell et al., 2004; Creemers & Reezigt, 1996; Ditton & Müller, 2011; Kaplan & Elliot, 1997; Purkey & Smith, 1990; Scheerens, 1990, 1991). International research has shown that effects of schools are primarily conveyed by characteristics of instructional quality and characteristics of classes (Bosker et al., 1990; Bosker & Scheerens, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006, Opdenakker & van Damme, 2000). Some studies found direct effects of school characteristics on the students (Fraser et al., 1987; Opdenakker & van Damme, 2000;

Teddlie & Stringfield, 1993; Wang et al., 1993). Furthermore, international studies on school effectiveness indicate that disparities in the level of scholastic achievements vary between 5% - 14% depending on characteristics of schools (Hattie, 2009; Luyten, 1994).

The main objective of the ethnographic field study, which has been conducted in 3rd and 4th grade of primary education, as presented in this paper is to examine the learning environments of two so called BIP-Creativity-Schools (BIP = giftedness, intelligence, and personality) in Germany. As argued by these private elementary schools, their specific educational and pedagogical concept offers ideal learning conditions, resulting in comparably higher scholastic achievements. Furthermore the BIP-schools claim to pay high attention to the development of their students' personality and creativity.

According to the BIP-conception, the BIP-schools stand out due to: small classes (max. 22 students per class), full-time education, additional pedagogical programs to support creativity development (so called creativity subjects in different areas) and early teaching of foreign languages (English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic from first grade on). In German and mathematics classes, lessons are taught by two teachers (team teaching). BIP-school teachers have to gain an additional qualification in creativity education in order to teach at these schools. Additionally, the class is usually divided into two smaller learning groups. BIP-schools generally demonstrate high performance expectations by assigning grades in first grade already. Both grading and teaching of the foreign languages do usually not started earlier than grade two in German public elementary schools. BIP-schools explicitly encourage the need for individual differentiation to assure an ideal development of achievement for every student.

To gain insight into the effects and quality of the learning environments of BIP-schools, a detailed description and analysis of special advancement measures of these private schools is required. In doing so, two aspects of instructional quality were focused which are considered as important characteristics of effective schools and teaching (Austin & Holowenzak, 1990; Ditton & Müller, 2011; Hattie, 2009; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Reynolds, 1990; Reynolds & Teddlie, 2001; Scheerens, 2000; Scheerens & Bosker, 1997). These aspects can be seen as key characteristics of the schools' pedagogical conception: high achievement expectancies (e.g. rather than grading in 'A' and 'B' marks, performance is mendable) and differentiation (e.g. every child should be encouraged to achieve its best). Case studies were conducted not only on the system (school), but

they also to examine the group (class), as well as the individual level (students) to analyze how these two aspects are (1) implemented in day-to-day work, and (2) perceived by individual students.

The private BIP-schools are officially recognized as private government-dependent schools and are integrated in the education system of the Federal Republic of Germany. The levels of the education system are equal all over Germany. The lowest level is the "Elementarstufe" (pre-school/ early childhood education) for children that have not reached compulsory school age yet. The German Kindergarten presents an example for early childhood education. The "Primarstufe" (primary education) is the next level for school-aged children (school attendance is defined as to start at the age of six), which is completed after four or six compulsive school years spend at an elementary school. The ethnographic field study dealt with in this paper is placed at the "Primarstufe"-level, where all school-aged children are taught together independent of their level of performance, scholastic achievements, gender, nationality or social standing. Students are about 10 or 11 years old after attending the elementary school for usually four years. Depending on their grades, respectively overall achievement the children commonly are assigned to different types of school in the "Sekundarstufe I" (lower secondary education) by the end of 4th grade. The structure of the secondary school system differs between the federal states of Germany. It is characterised by division into the various educational paths with respective leaving certificates and qualifications. In some federal states the different responsible school types go by the name of "Hauptschule", "Realschule" and "Gymnasium". These schools offer a single course of education and are related to a certain leaving certificate. Other federal states have additional or alternative school types, which offer several courses of education by combine two or three courses of education under one roof. Examples for these schools are types of the "Gesamtschule" or the "Mittelschule" in Saxony (Lohmar & Eckhardt, 2011). All in all the recommendations students receive at the end of elementary school regarding the transition to one of these school types is of prospective importance. Graduating from the upper level of secondary education (grade 11 to grade 12) at the gymnasium is the most common and straightest way to receive the general higher education entrance qualification for attending universities (tertiary education).

The analysis of the two selected aspects "high achievement expectancies" and "differentiation" in the last two school years of these private

elementary schools is meaningful, because the schools prepare their students for transition into secondary school. Regarding these transitions to one of the types of secondary schools, one of the aims of the BIP-Schools is that as many of their students as possible attend the Gymnasium (the highest kind of secondary school) after having completed elementary school. Differentiation can be considered as one way or method of the schools to implement their high expectancies successfully.

Methodology, Research Questions, and Planned Steps of Analysis

The qualitative study presented in this paper is conducted within the quantitative longitudinal study PERLE (Personality and Learning Development of Elementary School Children) which aims at describing and explaining the development of elementary school children's personality and learning from the first grade to the fourth grade (elementary school time frame as explained above). Furthermore, the PERLE study considers instructional quality and the students' individual family background as a underlying factors influencing the children's development.

The main objective of the study presented in this paper is to identify possible indicators of school type-specific features to describe the learning environments of the BIP-creativity-schools. Since a quantitative research approach provides only limited insights into possible effects of school type specific features, a qualitative case study was chosen to analyze the implementation and effectiveness of the BIP-specific pedagogical concept, which is the topic of this study.

- How is the day-to-day school life designed at these schools?
- How are different aspects of the BIP-concept realized in class of the specific schools?
- Are different aspects detectable in interactions between teachers and students?
- Are there advises, if the aspects get through to and noticed by the students?
- How is the interaction between teachers and low achieving and high achieving students designed?

A specific characteristic of the qualitative study (3rd and 4th grade) is the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, data, and results, based

on both research methods (see figure 1).

This approach is consistent with the comprehensive objective of combining methods, data and results of qualitative and quantitative research methods (mixed methods – integration of quantitative and qualitative methods). It aims at expanding and deepening knowledge through combination, complementation, mutual assistance thereby benefitting from each method's strength (Sale, Lohfeld, & Brazil, 2002; Bryman, 2006).

The results of quantitative surveys of PERLE1, which has been conducted in 1st and 2nd grade, were used to generate the research questions for the qualitative study and to select classes and students for fieldwork. Some of the impressions and findings observed during the fieldwork of the qualitative study were used to develop further instruments for the ongoing longitudinal study (4th grade). For instance, students were asked about their perceptions of achievement pressure in a questionnaire. Additionally, specific data from the quantitative surveys of PERLE 2, which has been conducted in 3rd and 4th grade, will be used as outcome variables to link the students' development with their perception of achievement expectancies and differentiation. The respective data contains for example achievement measures and information about motivation, self-concept and other affective characteristics of the students.

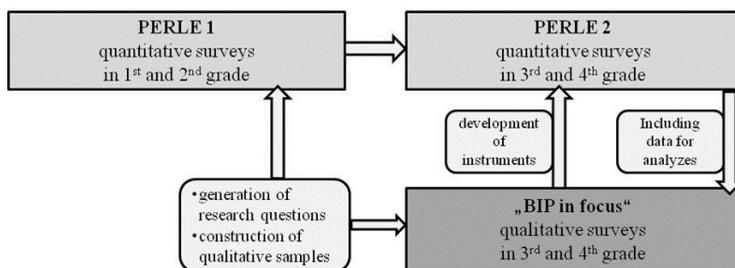


Fig. 1: Integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, data and results in PERLE and BIP in focus

Two BIP-schools were selected for fieldwork. This allows a direct comparison of both schools that should actually follow the same conception. However, the particular schools were chosen because we assumed them to differ in the realization of the BIP-conception. One of the schools is the first established BIP-institution in 1997/ 1998 and can be considered

as a "BIP-Prototype". Supposably this school by tradition tries to stick as close as possible by the BIP-conception. The second school is supposed to be less committed to the original BIP-conception since they received their license to use the BIP-conception in 2003 and additionally, they have another school agency then the official BIP-creativity-center.

Within these schools, two classes were selected for detailed observation. The selection of classes was based on results of the prior conducted quantitative surveys of PERLE 1 – both classes are characterized by a certain development of achievement and heterogeneity. In addition to a comparable high improvement in performance the heterogeneity between the performances of students decreased from 1st to 2nd grade.

To analyze, whether the implementation of the BIP conception actually leads to different treatment of students with different abilities and needs, four students within a class (two well and two poor performing students per class) were selected and observed in the later fieldwork. The students were chosen based on their level of performance at the end of first and second grade. For both points of measurement they belonged either to the upper third or lower third of their class' achievement level.

By observing those students I am able to describe how and to what extent they are exposed to the BIP-specific aspects of instructional quality and whether the teachers treated them differently from what was anticipated by BIP-specific aspects of instructional quality: individualization and achievement expectations. The following figure 2 gives an overview on the design of the study.

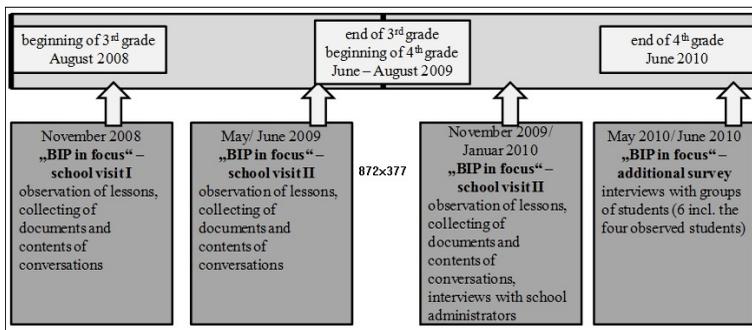


Fig. 2: Design of the study

The school visits took place between November 2008, May/June 2009 and November 2009/January 2010 and lasted one week each. Subjects attended included math and German lessons as well as creativity subjects. In doing so, the teacher's interactions with the class and with certain students were observed.

While being in the class, I openly behaved like a researcher: teachers and students knew the intention of the researcher's [attendance](#) although they did not know the precise objective of the observation. During the observation, I sat in the back of the class – my primary role was that of an observer.

I observed 3-4 lessons per day, took notes and wrote down [the minutes](#) (report) to receive [a detailed description of](#) every observed lesson afterwards. Written descriptions were carried out in the most objective way to make observations comparable for the planned analyses. Furthermore, I noted my own subjective impressions and emotions in an additional journal. Beyond that, [relevant documentation](#) from [observed](#) lessons about the school's organization and about conversations with teachers during the school research visits, have been recorded. In addition interviews with the school administrators and with groups of six students are available for further analysis.

In the guideline-based interviews, school administrators were questioned on general organizational aspects of teaching and instruction within the BIP-schools. Such aspects could include guidelines for grading achievement, the amount of homework given, and individual [differentiation](#) of achievement. Furthermore, they were asked about their assessment of BIP-conception's impact on teaching and learning and whether they see possibilities or necessities for improvement with regard to aspects of individual [differentiation](#) of achievement, for example.

After the last school research visit, a group of six selected BIP-students per class, including the four high and low achieving students that had been selected for classroom observations already, were asked in a guideline-based interview about their opinion on the school and learning in these schools. The main objective of these interviews was to find out how BIP-students respond to and use the offered additional learning opportunities.

This data pool presents the [basis](#) for the overall analysis of the above posed research questions on implementation and possible effects of the BIP-specific measures of instructional quality in the two relevant schools.

The following research questions, focusing the two selected aspects "high achievement expectancies" and "differentiation", were analyzed so far:

(1) Description, analysis, and interpretation from selected aspects of the BIP-conception:

How are the aspects "high achievement expectancies" and "differentiation" realized and actually implemented in the schools and lessons?

(2) Intra-systematic comparison:

Which key features and similarities characterize BIP-Schools in the implementation of the aspects "high achievement expectancies" and "differentiation"? Where are differences between the two schools?

(3) Implementation of BIP-aspects in instruction:

Is it possible to detect indicators which describe the effects of the implementation of these aspects on students' development?

How do the selected students respond to and use the offered additional learning opportunities [initialized](#) by the aspects "high achievement expectancies" and "differentiation"? Which opinions, perceptions and [approaches](#) do students offer to the selected aspects?

The method for analyzing the data set, especially with regard to the minutes (research questions 1 und 2), can be found in qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2000; 2008). The main idea of inductive category development, which is applied in the study, is to "formulate a criterion of definition, derived from theoretical background and research question, which determines the aspects of the textual material taken into account" (Mayring, 2000, p.4).

First results and perspectives

Qualitative content analysis, as a tool for examining observation records, produces [scores](#) of categories with subcategories for the two focused aspects "high achievement expectancies" and "differentiation". These categories showed how selected aspects are realized and implemented in practice at the BIP-schools.

For example, categories with respect to the aspect "high achievement expectancies" include notions such as "promotion of social comparisons",

"[efficiency control](#) and examination" and "motivation and request for effort". Figure 3 exemplifies corresponding subcategories of the "motivation and request for effort" category.

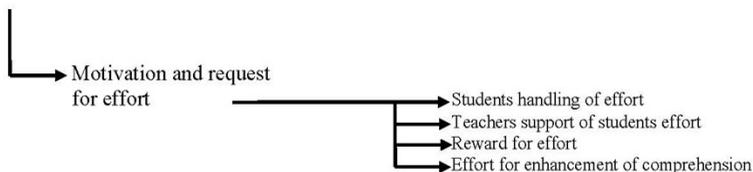


Fig. 3: Detail from the category tree of the aspect "high achievement expectancies"

The following sequence of an observation minute (math lesson) would be assigned to the subcategory "reward for effort":

Mrs. Roland enters the classroom and commends her study group on their learning habits. Mrs. Schneider joins the commendation and points out to be very satisfied with today's lesson. However, both consider to grade the Children's solved worksheets.

In this sequence the teachers wanted to reward the students for their work habits shown in the past lesson. As a reward for their positive work habits and their commitment they announced them to grade the students solved worksheets. That way the teachers might have tried to show the students that effort (in this case positive work habits) pays off and is rewarded.

The analysis of the guideline-based interviews with the students shows, that the students offer diverse opinions, beliefs, perceptions and [approaches](#) to the features of the selected aspects. Differences in the statements do not only appear between the two schools but also between high and low achieving students within of the same classes.

With regard to specifics of their schools, the students for example discussed [evaluation standards](#) which are implemented in the schools (part of the aspect "high achievement expectancies"). Students of the first school thereby declared that evaluation at their school was not as strict as at other

(normal, public) schools as they have the chance to improve by correctly answering additional exercises in achievement tests. Performance in the additional exercises compensates mistakes and poor scores in the regular exercises of achievement tests. However, evaluation gets stricter in the last school year: For example, they are already graded with a grade “2” (in the German grading system grade 1 is the best, grade 6 the worst) when they make two mistakes in an [achievement test](#) on orthography. On the contrary, students of the second school, though arguing similarly, assessed evaluation at their private school stricter than at public schools as they get the grade 2 for half a mistake in an [achievement test](#) on orthography. As explained by a student, students at other schools get grade 2 with two mistakes while at their school no mistake at all is allowed to receive the best grade. However, students do see that they have the possibility to improve by correctly answering additional exercises in achievement tests.

The first analysis of the observation records and the guideline-based interviews with the students and the school administrators illustrated that the two focused aspects “high achievement expectancies” and “differentiation” are implemented in different ways in the organizational frame conditions of the two BIP-schools on the one hand and in the classroom experience on the other hand. Further analyses will follow.

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The Information and the Educational Character Given by the Content of Educational Programs of Geography in Secondary School

Helena Maria Sabo

Abstract

The present study aims to outline more clearly the nature of the educational process and the educational information in the core curriculum in Romania, especially in high schools (common core).

The modern teaching ideas are based on some central ideas, which we may call "guidelines" under the aspect of "newness". They focus on information and educational aspects of learning, the cultivation of creativity, and the combination of teaching and applied research. Thus, a binomial teacher-student education is placed in new situations in a practical way.

In this paper, we analyzed the features of the formative-educational contents in the school curriculum for class levels 9-12. We present the contents of the Geography high school curricula that we restructured and partially modified starting from present curricula. Since the school curricula do not explain what tasks students should perform in order to achieve competencies for Geography, we suggested how to complement the curricula. As students could achieve competencies while studying Geography, by getting involved into learning situations based on exercises and case studies, we presented applications for each learning unit.

Introduction

The present study aims to outline more clearly the nature of the educational process and the educational information in the core curriculum in Romania, especially in high school (common core).

The modern teaching ideas are based on some central ideas, which we may call "guidelines" under the aspect of "newness" (Bolscho et al., 2008). They focus on information and educational aspects of learning, the cultivation of creativity, and on combining teaching and applied research. Thus, a binomial teacher-student education is placed in new situations in a practical way.

Usually the teacher is the organizer of the educational process. S/He is the one who initiates the dialogue, selects, and structures the material work, creating learning situations both educational and formative. S/He coordinates the teaching-learning-process by activities conducted together with the students to develop critical thinking, creativity, ability and networking operationalization (Ionescu, 1995).

The student must be actively involved to build new procurement mechanisms that will allow them to further process the information. A special role is to develop their own prowess by solving problems, exercises, projects, and practical applications.

Materials and Methods

The teaching-learning-assessment is based on a modern teaching approach, based on the innovations of science education and current developments in the social and educational system that influences this process. This approach assumes:

- a) To give up to the traditional training elements, unjustifiable in an innovative educational context: information glut, miniaturization of some chapters apparently academic, obsolete character of the information, excess of defeated names;
- b) Abolishing the teaching-learning organization predominantly characterized by "teaching" on the one hand, and "listening" on the other, which is ineffective and cannot be justified rationally;
- c) Giving up the basic design type units "lesson" after models difficult to justify;
- d) Moving to the generalization of the annual projects and projects learning units in accordance with the standards of developed countries in education and current innovation efforts;
- e) Waiver of overheating "principles of teaching" very difficult to sustain itself today;

- f) Introducing some model units of learning projects that are close to what we call a "*holistic project*" (Apple, 1979);
- g) Showing the school geography in the social and educational environment, conducting proper training of the students in national examinations in the context of studying local geography and more active presence in the media information sources - media;
- h) Undertaking negotiated innovation projects;
- i) Connecting Geography stronger to the system of competencies demanded by the European Commission.

Suggestions

For the classes IX-XII, I propose the following structure of curricula content and examples of appropriate applications:

Class IX

EARTH-entity of the universe

- New notions. The Solar System and universe evolution and characteristics
- Terra - geographical characteristics and consequences
- Applications

Terrestrial and space MEASURING REPRESENTATION

- New notions. Geographical coordinates and mapping
- Applications

Terrestrial RELIEF

- New notions. Earth's crust: composition, structure, dynamics
- Agents, modular processes, types and landforms resulted
- Analysis, interpretation of relief for environment and society
- Practical applications in the local horizon

Earth's ATMOSPHERE

- New notions. The composition and structure of the atmosphere
- Weather, climate and climate trends
- Earth's Climate
- Weather forecast, analyzes and interprets of data, and synoptic weather maps
- Practical applications in the local horizon

HYDROSPHERE

- New notions. Continental and oceanic waters-specific features of their importance

- Hydrological forecast, analyze and interpretation of data

- Practical applications in the local horizon

BIOSPHERE and PEDOSPHERE

- New notions. Specific characteristics and importance

- Latitude and elevation-area

- Practical applications in the local horizon

THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE HUMAN SOCIETY

- New notions. The human impact on natural environments

- Man-made environments, characteristics, role of environment and development, social development

- Practical applications in the local horizon

Examples of practical applications:

- setting exercises of time on Earth, with map, time zone,

- setting exercises to determine the geographical coordinates for some localities,

- setting exercise for measurement, calculation of distance, altitude, areas on the map and the local horizon,

-draft analysis of geomorphologic processes in the local horizon,

- climate-study projects of the surrounding settlements,

- draft environmental analysis of the local horizon.

Class X

POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

- New notions. Countries, fundamental elements, typologies

- Applications

POPULATION GEOGRAPHY

- Getting in November. Demographic indicators, local balance, balance of migration, infant mortality, fertility, density, life expectancy, regional differences.

- Mobility of population and geographical spread: causes, consequences.

- Demographic structures: religion, race, language, socio-economic backgrounds...

- Population and the environment, sustainable development.

- Practical applications.

GEOGRAPHY OF SETTLEMENTS

- New notions. Human Habitat

-
- Features and functional structure of human settlements
 - Forms of human agglomeration, urbanization, urban explosion, differences by region
 - Problems of spatial organization of urban and rural space
 - Applications

ECONOMICAL GEOGRAPHY

- New notions.
- Lithosphere-resources,
- Hydrosphere and biosphere resources
- Regions and agricultural landscapes
- Industry, evolution, electricity
- Transport - components, characteristics, importance
- Trade-features, importance
- Tourism-features, importance
- Financial-services features, importance
- Applications

GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES OF THE CURRENT WORLD

- New notions -the big geopolitical and economical ensembles
- European Union

Sample applications:

- Comparative analysis of political maps from different periods
- Exercises and problems for the calculation of demographic indices
- Graphics, essays,
- Development projects for the urban and rural space
- Tables interpretation, graphs, charts, economic and geographical analysis of the states.

Class XI

THE ENVIRONMENT AND FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD

- New notions. General environment issues
- Geo-ecological factors
- Types of different geographical environments
- Types of geographical landscapes
- Natural and anthropogenic hazards
- Protection and preservation
- Applications

GLOBALIZATION AND REGIONALIZATION OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

- New notions
- Report of the settlements and their development trends in human evolution
- The impact of resource exploitation and environmental exploitation
- Sustainable development: present and perspectives
- Applications

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

- Significant social and cultural aspects
- Applications

ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL SYSTEM

- New notions. His analysis at the global level
- The role of some countries worldwide. U.S., Russia, Japan, China, India, Brazil
- Applications

Sample applications:

- Hazard Analysis reports: location, causes, effects, measures taken
- Draft environmental impact of resource exploitation at local, regional, district
- Socio-cultural projects
- Essay: Europe in the contemporary world, Romania in Europe, financial crisis and the effect on the population.

Class XII

EUROPE AND ROMANIA – BASIC ELEMENTS AND DIFFERENTIATION

- Romanian and European geographical space
- Major relief: types and units
- Climate
- Hydro-geography. Danube and Black Sea - general characterization
- Applications

ELEMENTS OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL OF EUROPE AND ROMANIA

- Europe and Romania on world map
- Population and settlement
- Natural resources, agriculture, industry
- Transport, trade, social and financial services, tourism
- Environmental Issues

- Applications

THE NEIGHBOR COUNTRIES OF ROMANIA

- General characterization

ROMANIA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

- Formation of European Union and evolution of European integration

- Characteristics: geographical, political, economic, European Union

- State members of the European Union

- Romania and the European Countries

- Applications

Europe, Romania and EU in the contemporary world

- Contemporary world and the European - comparison

- Europe, European Union, Romania

- Applications

Sample applications:

- Draft economic analysis, geographical, environmental at county level, city of residence

- Essay, "The Future of the European Union" etc...

Comments

The proposed approach allows teachers to familiarize the students with theoretical aspects, especially training and exercise such powers and practical instrument needed in everyday life.

It should be noted that the level of the study of the list of contents is at the discretion of the teacher, who will have to take into account the degree of responsiveness and class level to avoid downtime and failure in teaching learning process (Dewey, 1971).

This curriculum aims to raise students' interest, not by too much theoretical and hard information, but by the practicality of the proposed themes.

The general and specific skills that are formed through the educational process focused on the study of geography, based on values and attitudes, promote the following:

- Positive attitude towards education, knowledge, society, culture and civilization;
- Curiosity to explore the geographical environment;

- Respect for diversity and human nature than other peoples and cultures,
- Cultivation of a spirit of tolerance and cooperation among peoples, to overcome the racial and nationalistic sentiments;
- Responsibility to nature and to the socio-cultural structures of humanity;
- The ability to achieve active involvement in own or group geographical projects, conservation and protection of the living environment;
- Motivation to learn about the world we live in, as a step in self-knowledge.

Methodological Suggestions:

1. The emphasis in the training of specific skills.
2. Geography teaching in school must integrate from methodological point of view three main aspects of geography:
 - a) Physical geography;
 - b) Social, administrative and economic geography;
 - c) The geography of development, progress on a global scale.
3. Summary of methods is based on:
 - a) Study the big picture into parts that are interacting.
 - b) Content in the known universe that go into new areas and then to return to the contents and known areas.
4. Frequently used methods are actively participating:
 - Detection method
 - Case Study
 - Role play
 - Comparative method
 - Observations, measurements, direct analysis
 - Tours, visits.
5. One of the fundamental aspects of aesthetic and artistic education is the exposure - the descriptions of nature must be not only scientifically accurate but also imbued with imagination.
6. Browse content units can be made in an order determined by each teacher.

In addition, this curriculum allows the education process in terms of students, leading to:

- To build some clear skills, assessed;
- Increased interest in participatory individual instruction,
- To encourage interest in information, investigative reporting, and overall correct the problems of modern life;
- Carrying out independent activities (portfolios, projects, research activities);
- Assume responsibilities and attitudes through the internalization of an objective system of values (Luhmann, 1978).

Conclusions

Based on the high school curricula analysis and the proposed content in this article, we reached at the following conclusions:

- a) In the existing school programs are not explicitly presented in various applications what students should make to acquire skills in Geography. This is why we suggest the need to supplement it.

Whenever these elements are not correctly applied, we cannot pretend to ask something undefined and unexplained.

- b) The students can acquire skills during the study of geography in a simple manner, namely by involving them in learning situations based on exercises, case studies, development projects, essays (Sabo, 2010).

Moreover, these suggestions show how important it is to combine theory with practice in teaching and learning Geography.

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The Geography Teacher in Romania between Tradition and Modernity

Helena Maria Sabo

Abstract

The decrease of the quality of pre-university education is an uncontested reality. It is multiple and complex causes require intelligent, congruent, timely solutions. One of them would be building educational projects based on a real analysis of the educational systems beneficiary's needs.

The study presents such an analysis, carried out on the school population of the town of Cluj-Napoca, Romania, between the VIIIth and XIth grades. The coveted theme was the teaching component for the didactic act. The students were required to describe, through predefined variables, those lessons, which they appreciated as efficient. By another item they were advised to specify, without restrictions, how they would prefer they are new information be taught.

The results of the study show that the students expect from their teachers especially good explanations to aid them in understanding new information. Other also appreciated aspects were interesting, diverse, didactic tasks, and the use of modern didactic means. Our students have little attraction towards interactive, teamwork type of learning. It is probable that this type of organizing the learning activity was implemented unprofessionally and without the necessary conditions for maximum efficiency.

The reform of the educational system is a necessity but its success depends on many variables. Well trained teachers, with perfected communication abilities, capable to professionally manage the didactic act, represents one of the most important variables.

The Effective Teacher – Theoretical Considerations

The effective teaching is a complex reality that circumscribes a set of knowledge, skills, abilities, attributes, etc... The list, no matter how comprehensive, does not exhaust the full repertoire of what is necessary and useful. The teacher is supposed to have so many qualities that it is no wonder that they can coexist in one and the same individual. In fact, effective activity is objectified by student learning outcomes and experiences a variety of concrete forms of manifestation. And the "happy" combination of knowledge, skills, and personality traits is given not only by their quantitative presence, but also the harmonization, compensation, flexible components in a model person for success. It is estimated that good practice can be provided in accordance with standards approved at the interface of three key dimensions: cognitive, instrumental, and affective-motivational-operational. Cognitive dimension represent the knowledge's, absolutely those acquired necessary that those purchasing teachings, which are not limited to those strictly professional, but include completing and integrating them into a multidimensional system (Voiculescu, 2004).

The size-operational instrument involves a set of skills that generate best practices in teaching, organization and stewardship group, flexible design and redesign activities. Affective-emotional dimension includes the ability to create a stimulating learning environment through convergent and open attitudes and relationships developed through total involvement. Interest as detailed description of the model of effective teacher comes from the need to act on those components that are susceptible of training, starting from the premise that, as in other domains, professionalization and is possible education, too. Professionalization in teaching should not only mean the systematic assimilation of powers fixed by some standards, but also the ability to use heuristic and creative skills formed in concrete educational contexts and relatively unpredictable. Professionalization could therefore be addressed as a radical redefinition of the powers under which can be run effective educational practices.

The professional model of a teacher should structure a set of conceptual knowledge and specific skills that can be systematically and scientifically assimilated. Most authors assimilate this model the idea of professional standards. They are, in essence, quality and quantity criteria for the benefit of those working in education, designed to certify the level of teaching efficiency. Professional standards in any field have strictly legal normative which give them a certain rigidity and coercive power at the

expense of lack of creativity, manifestation of heuristics. The problem in education is to develop standards to "flexible rules" in activities so that benefits valued as nonconformist, to be certainly considered as effective educational practices (Păun, 2002).

Student Perception of Teaching Effectiveness

A query of the beneficiaries of education regarding educational act, the actions they consider or reject them, the effectiveness of the department responsible, is not only necessary but also constructive, in view of optimizing the initial and continuous training of teachers. Opinions of today's students, more accustomed to the exercise of democracy, they are able to outline their expectations towards the didactic activity, towards teachers, towards the way in which tasks are required in school. Certainly such a move is not without risk, that students of a system whose efficiency has been demonstrated falling, it may not produce the most reliable and relevant answers.

The information was collected through a questionnaire, more complex, from which we selected only items referring explicitly to the point of view on the lessons, judged as good and how they prefer to acquire new knowledge. Students interviewed were selected by cluster sampling and represent the school population of eighth grade and XIth grade from Cluj-Napoca. Subjects, in number of 247 – from the eighth grade and 403 from XIth class, different social backgrounds, were selected from all parts of the city schools. Defining criteria in the selection of schools were: the location and area of attraction for the secondary school population, location and profile classes for high school level. In addition, one sample was balanced in terms of representation of both sexes, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Structure of the samples by gender

Gender	Subjects in grades VIII		Subjects in grades XI	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Boys	129	52.22%	200	49.62%
Girls	118	47.77%	203	50.37%
Total	247	100%	403	100%

The need for identifying the main features of an appreciated lesson by the students establishes the basis for item whose results are presented in Figure 1. The item allowed more choices to better cover the diversity of lessons, but also various specific disciplines. The percentage is the ratio of response rate and the number of subjects. At the same time be acknowledged that such an instrument as the questionnaire cannot collect detailed information and be as relevant to target groups about the investigation. Through the proposed statements, I tried to capture the most common methods of conducting lessons, presented in a language accessible to subjects.

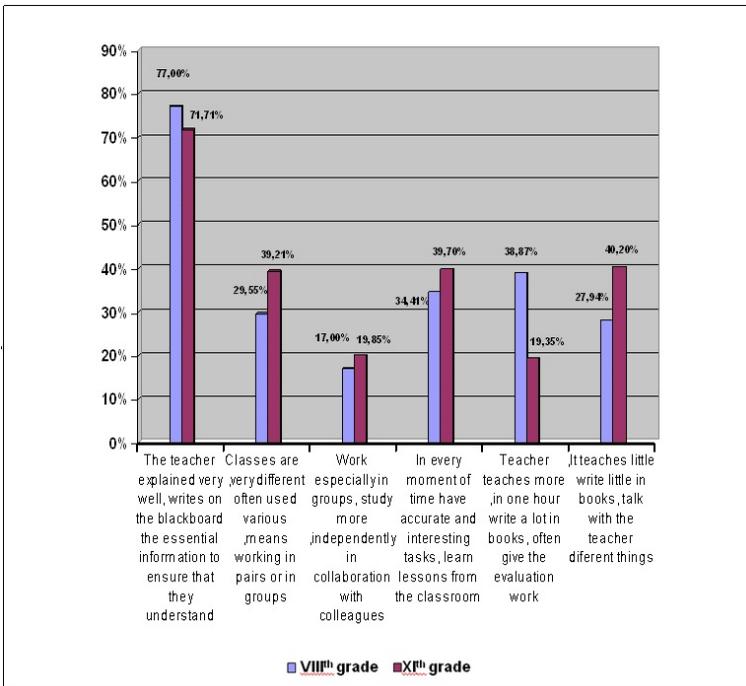


Figure 1: How do the classes like to work

It is obvious that students appreciate the most of the lessons from which they benefit for the best understanding the content and explanations so that learning can continued alone. Percentages are not negligible either

for those who are attracted to certain subjects because of the variety of interesting classes or tasks that have to do. After years of reform in education, teaching approaches to promote the student to be the main actor, it seems that what the recipients want is not fully consistent with measures adopted by factors makers. At the risk of attracting criticism I dare to say that today's most effective teachers are more traditional acts, the role of the teacher well represented and "refreshed" by means of varied teaching methods, different ways of organizing and accurate and interesting tasks for each point of lesson. Despite the persistent promotion of cooperative learning, it meets the fewest options in the context of preferred shares, although students do not reject it entirely. The key seems to be the efficiency of teacher from whom students expect good explanations, interesting tasks, different lessons that would facilitate the learning activity. The last two variables must be considered in the context of the whole item and somewhat related to the other ones. Surprisingly, quite a number of subjects from the eighth grade (38.87%) stated that they preferred classes where they are taught more; write more in copy-books, they are often given evaluation tests. I think this is a situational position linked to the fact that they are in eighth grade and must prepare for theses unique. It is found mostly in the same subjects indicated as preferred materials at least one of those to which the thesis. Or sustained training throughout the semester involves resumption of themes forgotten or misunderstood, systematization, repetition, practice, etc and prevents excessive effort on the eve of the event. Teachers are responsible for requiring students an optimal learning rhythm, to explain all exam topics, to practice and to evaluate sufficiently frequently to be sure of success. But that almost 20% of high school students appreciate such classes is more difficult to understand and explain.

In contrast, the percentage of 27.94% of the subjects of class VIII and 40% of the class XI who prefer easy classes, which are minimal efforts and discusses more or less formalized with the teacher may seem relatively small compared to what adults might think. Students like less formalized relationships, teacher openness to addressing and other issues than instructional, school tasks reduced, but not the estimated proportion by adults. However, most students, at least in appearance, do not reject the effort of school involvement, even if not fully aware of its role in his training and development. Most likely, they want, rather, moments of relaxation of tension interspersed among the intellectual, simple educational relations, the opportunity to share experiences or seek advice from an adult

they trust. However, all this in the context of proper accomplishment of the tasks incumbent on both players act and not as a permanent substitute. Those of another item in which subjects were asked to indicate how they would prefer to learn new knowledge confirm observations made on the item presented.

Explicitly aiming to capture the needs of students, item relates directly to the sequences of lessons focused on the acquisition of new knowledge, skills, abilities, etc. what is normally called "teaching". Figure 2 shows the frequency of choice of proposed alternatives that were able to choose unrestricted. Some subjects took a single response option; others have chosen two or three cases.

Replies of subject believe it reflects very clearly that prospecting requirements of beneficiaries was necessary in relation to the benefits they expect from teachers. Education reform and all subsequent interventions were made based on theoretical models, the assumptions, more or less grounded, which could induce systemic changes. Only in recent years to spread the serious need to grant educational system with the requirements of beneficiaries for whom it should be, but analysis of needs in this regard has remained a goal. Investigation of training needs of teachers (Iucu and Pânișoară, 2002) was a useful approach for design improvement and training activities, and they reflected, implicitly, and some students' needs. Faced with generations of students who grew up and were formed under conditions with a certain fluidity conceptual and pragmatic process, teachers have expressed through their answers, the need to a better control of components substantially affected by the reforms, and this was also in favor of students.

After at least 10 years of reform experiments it appears that students want to hear good explanations, take notes and enhance their knowledge at home, which is close to traditional learning paradigm. That does not think that means a return simply to the past, but an adaptation of tradition to the present. This learning model is centered on the teacher from whom the students expect good explanations and guidance to complete when one is required to extract new knowledge from different sources. We must be aware that the needs expressed by students can not be more than a reflection of models with which they themselves have experienced in school experience and they perceived to be more effective or less effective. Smaller percentages of students in both samples want to learn through cooperation, learn from textbooks alone or to extract new knowledge from different sources, under the guidance of the teacher. For the last option listed, the

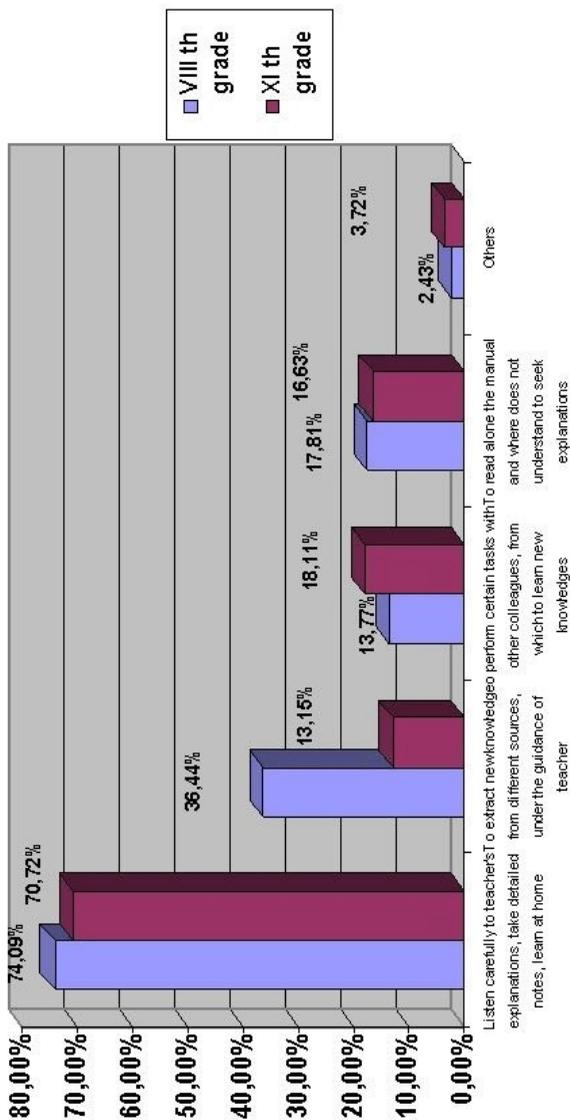


Figure 2: How would students prefer to learn new knowledge

difference between the two samples is higher than the other, and high school students want to a lesser extent than the eighth grade to do in such a way. Although they had the opportunity to indicate other ways of teaching, and very few have done so and indicated actions actually represented overlapping of already proposed variants.

The option predominantly reduced for interactive teaching methods may be the expression level of successful teaching experience they had. Formative and motivational value of active and interactive methods is undeniable and it is surprising that so few followers were among the students. It is therefore legitimate to ask what happens in educational reality:

- How much, and especially how these methods were used by teachers?
- How much from content to be taught supports suitable an active-interactive approach?
- How curriculum components are correlated, especially content-methods for a maximum efficiency?
- What teaching resources are available to schools and to what extent are really exploited and existing?
- How are objectives, learning outcomes and evidence of current and national assessment interrelated?

Apart from serious analysis to answer these questions and others possible is difficult to understand the major preference of students for the traditional style even provided by parameters of maximum efficiency (Chis, 2002).

Conclusions

The teaching profession has a considerable history, but its essence has always been to form new generations, to help them to develop biological and psychological potential to integrate into society. What has changed and is changing now is the "history", the society itself and accordingly, needs, requirements, demands from the educational system that it sponsors. Ultimately, pedagogical competence is what they need, not essentially, but in detail the current generations and those in the foreseeable future and not global, but the context relative to a particular society. In this context,

investigating the views of students, as beneficiaries of teaching act can be a useful experience. You might appreciate this way, issues such as:

- Correspondence between the models defined by adults and agreed by students;
- The need for addition or alterations to the general profile of competence;
- Hierarchy of characteristics according to importance for proper dosage formative intervention;
- Specific skills, differences in reporting the curriculum.

Needs analysis is a tool that can optimally plan services training, in our case, the most appropriate decisions can be taken. Clearly defined requirements describe the needs of beneficiaries, which can be variable from one context to another and from one age to another or from one curriculum area to another. Involved in identifying needs an observer to judge the requirements of beneficiaries in relation to a particular system of values confers them legitimacy or not. Description of target group, the students at various stages of education is especially important in the context of the present generation who has suffered significant psychosocial changes that mark the educational process on several of its coordinates.

Focusing the learning on students, is a modern approach, is rather a theoretical principal of textbook-only as long as it means more measures that are active in lesson. Focusing on student would be a much more comprehensive concept, including the possibility for students to formulate their own training needs, their interests and aspirations, to enable him to assess realistically the school and teachers but also responsible. I would say that the needs of students, as expressed in this study, take rather part from the perimeter of a functional and efficient education process where the teacher exercises professional, but also involved teaching tasks.

Pedagogical competence is a range of qualities, skills, abilities, traits, ensuring efficiency of teaching, not as a dramatic presence of either component, and especially by mainstreaming their resultant. The actual teaching triggers most traits and skills that are a measure of efficiency.

Pedagogical competence is so complex that only research can clarify matters very punctual and even those not entirely. Subtleties of "profession" can not be converted into measurable variables and are borne by establishing their own independent learning and self development of each educator. Teaching expertise is the result of experience, and career

motivation. Teachers are an essential resource in an efficient educational system, which aims to prepare future generations for the knowledge society and the transformation of education in socio-economic promoter.

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The Challenge of Diverse Pedagogical Practices

The study of *Amos Fleischmann* on "**Hitting Back: Should the Retaliator Be Punished or Commended? A Grounded Theory Study**" deals with conflicting practices with far reaching consequences. "Hitting back escalates a sequence of events that culminates in harsh outcomes." Access to teachers' and parents' attitudes toward hitting back was acquired by in-depth, semi-structured interviews. "Although the respondents claimed that hitting back increases violence, they favored its use in self-defense." ... "Effective or not, however, a policy that prescribes indiscriminate punishment for hitting back may be amoral because it may disregard the right to self-defense. The findings also indicate a contradiction between parents' attitudes and teachers' attitudes when the discussion concerns retaliation by a parent's own child. Such a contradiction may aggravate friction between parents and teachers and impair their cooperation..." The findings "show that the combination of cost considerations and information, as is customary in game theory, may also play a significant role in resolving school violence. Therefore, a teacher as a regulator of conflicts among schoolchildren may propose to harm even a pupil who hits back to deter an attacker. The conclusions harvested from this study may also have implications for similar situations in the education system or in judicial and economic domains in which supervisory players regulate conflicts between players who have clashing interests by punishing them."

The study of *Michael Horn and Karin Schweizer* on "**Mental Maps in Geography Teaching: Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice**" is built on the observation that on the one hand educational standards in Geography (DGF, 2007) recommend to use "Mental Maps to scaffold systematic spatial orientation, to monitor how pupils perceive their spatial surroundings or gain other spatial competences." On the other hand, "because of the lack of further didactic instructions for teaching with Mental Maps" the authors have to "try to bridge the existent gap between theory and practice when handling of Mental Maps in Geographic teaching. Therefore" the authors "link teachers' beliefs and Mental Maps as an instance of previous knowledge". The findings give hints for references using Mental Maps in the classroom since the use of Mental Maps gives opportunity to build constructivist views.

Melodie Rosenfeld describes in her paper on "**Preparing Freshmen Teacher Candidates for Academia, Self-Regulation and Teaching: Effects of an Intervention Program**" that "entering college freshmen are often unprepared for the rigors of academia because they commonly lack basic strategies of studying and managing themselves (self-regulation). Much can be done to enhance both students' study strategies, such as note-taking and organization, as well as self-regulation, such as metacognitive learning strategies, time management, motivation and academic self-efficacy." Her study investigated the results of five semester-long intervention workshops called Pla'ot (Hebrew acronym for Developing Academic Learning and Self-Regulation) for freshmen teacher candidates in various majors at an Israeli college of education". The results support "the claim that, of the four

factors needed to succeed in college"(Conley, 2007: cognitive strategies, discipline knowledge, learning strategies/self-regulation, and "college knowledge") the intervention contributed to the "two factors of learning strategies/self-regulation and 'College Knowledge'." The author believes in addition that it contributed as a first step in developing more effective teachers who likewise will support and help their future learners in the same fashion.

Hitting Back: Should the Retaliator Be Punished or Commended? A Grounded Theory Study

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Abstract

Hitting back escalates a sequence of events that culminates in harsh outcomes. Research on teachers' and parents' attitudes toward hitting back is still limited. I used in-depth, semi-structured interviews for qualitative research into teachers' (39) and parents' (14) attitudes toward hitting back in school and analyzed the results by applying a grounded theory method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Although the respondents claimed that hitting back increases violence, they favored its use in self-defense. A large proportion of them prescribed punishment for those who hit back in school but upheld the same conduct when applied by their own children. In their opinion, the general good is served when retaliators are punished because, absent punishment, both belligerents can claim that they were only hitting back in self-defense. Consequently, although most respondents believed in the right to self-defense, they favored punishment for hitting back. Game theory exposes ways in which *strategic interactions between "players" generate conditions* leading to outcomes that none of the players may have intended.

Introduction

When schoolchildren invoke violence that is manifested in hitting, they may encounter several kinds of reactions, including retaliation in kind, i.e., hitting back. Hitting back is a principal factor in the escalation of violence in school. The attitude of adults toward the practice regulates this conduct (Davis, 2006), and their attitude may stem from their role. Teachers may

oppose this kind of retaliation and punish those who invoke it due to concern that hitting back will raise the level of violence in class. Parents who stand up for their children, in turn, may favor their violent retaliation as a way of defending their interests. If parents and teachers find themselves conflicted on the topic of hitting back, their cooperation may be impaired. In this study, I examined the rationales offered by respondents who were parents of schoolchildren -- and most of whom were also educators -- for or against hitting back. I examined how the pro and con rationales were associated with the respondents' view of their role as parents and educators. To the best of my knowledge, parents' intentions in recommending hitting back or prescribing punishment for it, as well as the factors behind such intentions, have not yet been researched.

Hitting back in school is only one of several cases in which an attacked party responds by counterattacking. The attitudes of participants in brawls have been thoroughly discussed in contexts of biology, economics, policy, and social science (Axelrod, 2006). Still, there is room to examine of logic behind the attitudes of those whose job is to regulate disputes toward retaliatory behavior on the part of those attacked. By understanding the stance of teachers and parents toward hitting back, we may not only enhance our understanding of how to regulate violence in school but also improve our comprehension of the attitude of others who regulate disputes in many domains, such as economics, international policy, and the judicial system, toward retribution.

Hitting Back, Self Defense and the Issue of the Prisoner's Dilemma

When we speak of "hitting back" by children, we mean physical retribution for a physical provocation (Astor, 1994). Hitting back, however, transcends retribution because it also includes elements of self-defense. The iterated prisoner's dilemma explains the reasons for self defense. In the opinion of researchers who have dealt with the iterated prisoner's dilemma, a policy of getting even is a strategy that creates a peace-seeking society (Axelrod, 2006). The prisoner's dilemma describes an interaction between two rivals. Each is liable to lose if attacked by the other, each may gain from cooperating, but each gains even more when attacked at the rival's initiative. Both players may incur a major loss when the injury is reciprocal, i.e., when they attack each other simultaneously. When the prisoner's dilemma is non-iterated, each rival lacks information about the other's future behavior. Accordingly, each may assume that the rival will attack him. Both rivals conjecture that they will be badly hurt on this account and, to avert this harm, rush to attack each other and sustain losses. However, if the two rivals were to refrain from attacking each other, both would gain due to the

possibility that they would cooperate. The non-iterated prisoner's dilemma is a relatively uncommon situation in social relations; a much more common one resembling the iterated prisoner's dilemma. Here, in iterated interactions that resemble the prisoner's dilemma, the protagonists have information about the rival's behavior and, accordingly, may adjust to it. In this situation, it is found that the most effective strategy is "tit for tat." One who embraces this strategy does not assault the rival; instead, he retaliates when attacked and appeases the rival when the latter calls off the attack (Axelrod, 2006). By behaving this way, he reaps the benefits of cooperation and does not mire himself in a harmful perpetual struggle.

Children's Attitudes towards Hitting Back

Violent interactions among children may be iterated. By applying the example of the iterated prisoner's dilemma, one discovers that children behave logically. Children usually take a positive view toward hitting back but not toward instigated violence (Dodge, 1980; Smetana, Campione-Barr & Yell, 2003; Smetana et al., 2001). Bradshaw, O'Brenna, and Sawyer (2008) examined attitudes toward violence among junior-high and senior-high students and found that most favored hitting back. In a study among 119 primary schoolchildren in Canada (Frisén, Jonsson & Persson, 2007), it was found that those not involved in actual violence also typically favor retaliation as a good way to deter aggression and bullying. There may be grounds for this belief. In an early experiment, Paterson, Littman, and Bricke (1967) allowed boys who had been victims of repeated bullying to defend themselves. The boys seized the opportunity and the attackers, in two thirds of the cases, were persuaded not to attack again. Other studies indicate that victims of bullying who do not defend themselves find their social status badly compromised (Nabuzoka, 2003). Hitting back was also found to sustain young people's social status (Barter, Renold & Berridge, 2004; Phillips, 2003). The belief that hitting back deters a bully from striking again (Frisén, Jonsson, Persson, 2007) may induce pupils and their parents to favor the practice.

Parents' Attitudes towards Violence and Hitting Back

Children's attitudes toward violence (Bickett, Milich & Brown, 1996; Halligan, Cooper, Healy & Murray, 2007; Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985) and toward being attacked and hitting back (Walters, 1957; Berkowitz, 1993; Davis, 2006; Solomon, Bradshaw, Wright & Cheng, 2008) are influenced by their parents' attitude. Children who think their parents favor belligerence as a way of defending their rights are more involved in belli-

gerence (Orpinas, Murray & Kelder, 1999). In a study among 567 American seventh-graders, it was found that children who thought their parents expected them to respond physically to provocation went ahead and did so (Malek, Chang & Davis, 1998).

Parents appear to favor hitting back when the attacked children are their own (Bandura & Walters, 1957; Berkowitz, 1993; Davis, 2006). Parents' support of retaliation by their children does not indicate support of instigated aggression. For example, even though they favor a violent response to provocation, parents of violent children oppose their children's provoking their friends (Astor & Behere, 1997). Perhaps, then, the parents' attitude, like the children's, is reminiscent of the "tit for tat" strategy. Previous studies did not ask whether parents support hitting back only by their own children or whether they favor such action in principle.

Educators' Perceptions of and Approaches to Coping with Violence and Hitting Back

Previous studies indicate that teachers rule out the use of violence in school (Borg, 1998; Fields, 2004; Nesdale & Pickering, 2006). If so, their attitude toward hitting back may be a corollary of their categorical rejection of violence. In a recent study that examined the views of 1,547 teachers on violence, including retaliation by their pupils against other pupils, a majority of teachers opposed hitting back. Just the same, 19.4 percent of teachers at the high-school level, 10 percent of those in junior high, and 4.6 percent of those at the primary level favored this behavior (Bradshaw, Sawyer & O'Brenna, 2007).

Few studies examine how teachers punish perpetrators of actual violence. Practically speaking, teachers punish only some pupils who are involved in violence (Marshall, Varjas, Meyers, Graybill, & Skoczylas, 2009; Yoon, 2004). Many believe that the increase in school violence should be countered by a crackdown and zero tolerance policies toward student violence have become accepted (Kendrick et al., 2005; Martinez, 2009; Nesdale & Pickering, 2006; Nickerson & Spears, 2007; Mayer, & Leone, 2007; Solomon & Down, 2006). Studies that examine explicit policies on violence, however, do not check specifically the implications of such policies for punishing those who hit back.

Do the Roles of Parent and Teacher Conflict on Hitting Back?

According to the role theory in sociology, people derive their expectations from the different roles that they play (Biddle, 1986; Hindin, 2007). Role-driven expectations may clash due to difficulty in satisfying them and one

sometimes encounters role-based conflicts among groups. A parent, for example, is subjective, her expectations derived from concern for the welfare of her own child; these expectations may collide with the expectations of a teacher who looks out for the welfare of an entire class as against interests of a specific pupil (Katz, 1984). Occasionally, a person tumbles into an inter-role conflict – a conflict between different roles played by the same person. The attitudes of parents who have other roles, e.g., occupational roles, are liable to collide with their attitude as derived from their primary roles (Biddle, 1986). If so, parents who are also teachers may find themselves in an inter-role conflict due to their concurrent commitments to their children and to their work (Cinamon & Rich, 2005). Therefore, the attitudes of educators who are also parents toward hitting back may be a corollary of the interaction between the different and, sometimes, clashing commitments and interests of their different roles.

It may be one thing to urge a pupil to hit back and another thing to counsel one's own child to do so. Studies on parents' and teachers' attitudes toward hitting back are much in their infancy; they neither compare these attitudes nor explain the respective approaches toward hitting back and the differences in this regard between parents who are educators and parents who are not. In the current study, I inquired about the significance of the addressee of the recommendation for the different attitudes of teachers and parents and examined how teachers resolve several possible contradictions between their attitudes toward their own children and those toward their pupils.

The prisoner's dilemma teaches us that when two people fight, their decisions are influenced by the information they possess about their rivals' behavior. When an adult is asked to decide whether to punish a pupil who claims that he hit back, s/he may not know if the claimant truly retaliated or had "started it." Therefore, information may be a valuable commodity for h/her decision. Consequently, this study asks how the perception of knowing the retaliator's identity affects teachers' attitudes toward hitting back.

Method

Research Rationale

Qualitative research may be the most suitable way to reveal the attitudes of educators (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). The naturalistic nature of such a method facilitates the decoding of personal perspectives among members of the school community. Indeed, in this study, qualitative

research aptly uncovered the motives behind respondents' different perspectives on hitting back from their subjective point of view.

The Sample

I selected as interviewers research assistants who had had personal experience with violence in school, either as teachers (5) or as kindergarten teachers (2). These primary informants were able to track down interviewees who were familiar with school or kindergarten violence.

Role Confrontation: Teacher vs. Parent

The educators had two clashing roles. Some were teachers who, as parents, looked out for their children, who might become victims if they failed to hit back, and as educators had to concern themselves with the school atmosphere and, therefore, the general interest. For this reason, they felt constrained to prevent retaliation. My research shows that people may tailor their approach to their role and live in harmony with clashing attitudes. Furthermore, as Berkowitz (1993) proposes, teachers and parents adjust their attitudes toward violence to their interests; their opposition to violence does not impede them from favoring retaliation when their children are at stake. Some disregard the right to self-defense when they discuss the teacher's role but remember this entitlement in their role as parents.

To increase diversity and, thus, to increase credibility (Patton, 1990), the research assistants selected respondents from different neighborhoods and schools. As mentioned above, I chose to interview and compare the perceptions of individuals from two subgroups, educators and non-educators, in the belief that the sampling and comparison of two different subgroups may increase qualitative research credibility (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

The teacher-respondents worked in kindergartens (9), elementary schools (17), junior high schools (7), and high schools (6). The interviewers picked up interviewees who might provide them with significant and extensive (high intensity) data on violence at school. Most of the respondents (39) were educators. Nine of these teachers were men; thirty were women. The teachers' mean age was 40 and they had, on average, 14.6 years of teaching experience. They had 2.6 children on average. Five teachers also served as educational counselors, two were school principals, and one was an assistant principal. Fourteen of the respondents were parents who were not educators (seven mothers and seven fathers). They

had children in school and/or kindergarten; their mean age was 38 and they had 2.5 children on average.

Procedure and Tools

The interviewers were instructed to arrange semi-structured interviews as a tool for the study. This kind of interview requires the interviewer to address certain topics and allow the respondent to introduce new ones. After the respondents filled in a consent form, the interviewers asked them about their demographic characteristics. They were instructed to assemble the interview around the following topics: parents' and teachers' perceptions of violence in school; their attitude toward hitting back and their perception of the meaning and importance of hitting back; their intention to advise their own child and their student to hit back; and their intention to punish those who commit violence in general and those who hit back in particular. The examiners were also instructed to clarify the sources of the discrepancies, if any, between respondents' attitudes as parents and as teachers.

At an advanced stage of the research, when it became clear that the respondents were taking a tough line on hitting back due to lack of knowledge about the retaliator's identity, the interviewers were also asked to determine whether knowing the retaliator's identity changed the respondents' stance on punishing the retaliator.

Data Analysis

All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. They were then explored using ground theory as described by Strauss & Corbin (1990) for the formulation of theories from findings. The interviews were analyzed using three levels of coding: open, axial, and selective and theoretical. In the first stage, the interviews were analyzed phrase-by-phrase using the open coding method: Subject headings were created and assigned to phrases that exposed the subjects' perceptions of hitting back as parents and as teachers; attitudes toward pupils who hit back, and expectations to the outcomes of the quarrel; and the respondents' feelings about various treatment methods and their attitudes toward punishment.

In the second stage (axial coding), constant comparative coding was applied to each topic that arose in the course of all the interviews. The themes were then clustered into categories. The axial coding allowed identification by key categories and comparison of separate perspectives to establish similarities and dissimilarities among the respondents. Each respondent's perspectives on the implications of hitting back and adminis-

tering punishment for hitting back were examined and compared. At this stage, differences were found between the respondents' views as teachers and those as parents. Processes that, in the teachers' opinion, produced costs and benefits as a result of hitting back came into clear view. Four categories emerged: (1) content that addressed the perceptions of cost-benefit values of hitting back; (2) respondents' attitudes as parents and teachers toward hitting back; (3) content that addressed the attitude toward violence and toward violent students; and (4) content addressing attitudes toward punishment.

In the third stage (selective coding), the perception of the "cost/benefit of hitting back" for the respondents' different roles emerged as the leading category. This category is linked to the other categories and explains the difference in attitude between the respondents as teachers and as parents. This category elicited a theory: the respondents' considerations in their roles as teachers and parents appear to have been in conflict, as Katz' model (1984) suggests. Parents' attitudes toward hitting back by their own children were affected mostly by their children's well-being and the need to prevent losses in the future. As teachers, in contrast, their attitudes were affected mostly by the well-being of the general community and the need to consider the high cost of determining "who started it" and "who hit back."

According to game theory, lack of information about the rival's intentions prompts the player to take an approach that will spare him from damage. In the final stage of the research, it became clear that the teachers' fear of false allegations by pupils prompted them to take a hard line on hitting back (see Results and Discussion).

Validity

Two research paradigms may be used to test the validity of the research analysis (Patton, 2001). I compared the content of the analysis with the results of a quantitative research and the main results seemed to be similar. The results of the quantitative study will be published separately.

Being aware that using more than one researcher for data analysis may improve research validity (Patton, 2001), I asked each research assistant to analyze the interviews in which s/he had been involved. As the principal researcher, I also analyzed each interview and compared my analysis with that of the research assistants. I found a good fit in most cases. Occasional disagreements about given analyses were settled in mutual discussion. I then used the assistants' insights to evaluate the meaning of each interview and the meaning of each analysis in its three stages.

Ethical Issues

I undertook the study only after obtaining confirmation from my college's research committee that the study had been approved and that classes could be approached for the administering of questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires had a preface advising the respondents that they were allowed to refrain from answering items, that the questionnaires would be used for research purposes only, and that the respondents' confidentiality would be scrupulously maintained. These points were explained to the respondents orally as well.

All subjects interviewed were aware of the purpose of the interviews and gave their permission to publish the interview contents. Nevertheless, it was decided not to reveal the real names of the participants and to use pseudonyms for the people and places involved.

Results

Cost-Benefit Considerations of Hitting Back

Wellbeing of the school community. Most respondents (32 educators, 7 non-educators) claimed that hitting back intensifies the cycle of violence and therefore taints the school atmosphere, making it necessary to expend more energy to restore peace and harming the entire school community. The following paraphrases explain the damage caused by hitting back:

- "Instead of an incident being over and done with, it escalates into a major brawl."
- "Violence breeds violence breeds violence."
- "Any violent response merely results in more violence."
- "Hitting back widens the cycle of violence."
- "When there's hitting back, the system has to intervene more firmly."
- "For the teacher, hitting back creates many problems – tension, frustration, and waste of time, to name only a few."

Only three respondents (one educator and two non-educators) believed that hitting back might benefit the community by deterring bullies and, in turn, lowering the level of violence. An example follows:

- "On the spot basis among the children, it could be that by getting hit back, a kid who hits will learn not to hit."

The other respondents had no clear or conclusive opinion on this subject.

Most educators (21) suggested that hitting back improves the retaliator's social status and helps h/her emotionally. Some respondents also suggested that hitting back prevents further attacks. A student who does not hit back, they said, becomes a victim and may suffer social and emotional harm as a result. Two examples follow:

- "Hitting back improves the student's status in class. It shows the other children that he's strong enough to stand up for himself and that starting up with him isn't worth the trouble. But if a child doesn't hit back – for example, if he runs to the teacher for help – he loses status. Children laugh at him and call him names such as baby, crybaby, tattletale, and so on, making further harassment more likely."
- "The child may become a victim. Children are really bad; they might gang up on a certain kid and harass him both at school and elsewhere. I get worried about things like that, so you have to tell children to be tough [to hit back]."

Most non-educators, too (9), believed that hitting back is useful for the individual who does it. They said, for example, that it protects the retaliator from further attacks and develops h/her personality. Here are three examples: "Other kids will know that it's not worth messing with him"; "I'd like [my son] to know how to hit back and stand up for himself"; "Sure, I'd tell [my son] to hit back. It's important for him to know to hit back and be a man."

Only a minority of educators (6) and of non-educators (1) believed that hitting back harms the student who hits back. (The other respondents had no clear or conclusive opinion on this subject.) One of the mothers explained her objection to hitting back:

"In my opinion, a violent child is looking for stimulation. When he's not given a stage, he'll stop it. Not only does [hitting back] perpetuate the conflict -- yes, definitely, I'm against hitting back -- I believe hitting back causes the state of violence to become permanent, a vicious cycle that cannot be escaped." In other words, this mother believed that her son might suffer from further harassment for having hit back.

Punishing the Retaliator – Cost vs. Benefit

Punishing the Retaliator – a Necessity for the General Welfare. In the respondents' opinion, there is rarely enough information about the

confrontation. Attempting to figure out "who started it" places a severe drain on educators' resources. If we limit the punishment to the culprit only and absolve the child who hits back, the culprit will claim that all he did was hit back. This will make it very hard, if not impossible, to punish anyone involved in the incident.

Most educators (34) and all non-educators interviewed were in favor of punishing the child who hits back.

- "As I said, it's not simple. I can't spend the whole day dealing with who started it and who hit back. There's no end to it. If it's that way, I think I'll be spending the whole day at it. When will I teach? And also, my message, which we as educators have to make very clear, is: no violence allowed!"
- "As for whether it's possible to punish only the bully [the one who started it], in our school there's no such thing as a bully. What's a bully, after all? If we see one child provoking another and other doesn't hit back physically or verbally, then obviously only the former will be suspended. But usually it's very hard to know [who's the instigator] so you have to punish both of them. Otherwise each of them will say that the other started it."
- "Often you don't know who's guilty, and even if you know who's more guilty than the other, the other had to do with it, too. You can't set up a big investigative committee to figure out who started it and who's guilty. In our opinion, it's better to punish both of them. That sends a message to all the students: "We don't put up with violence, and anyone who's involved in it, no matter how, will be punished!"

Kobi, the father of a boy in primary school, offered a similar explanation: "I'd punish both kids. In my opinion, if you don't respond you're asking for trouble. When children fight, each of them always says the other started it and it's impossible to tell who's right. Both were involved, and that's that."

A small minority of teachers (3) proposed to spare the retaliator from punishment. One teacher opined that hitting back is an effective deterrent to the bully and therefore should not be punished; the other two teachers opposed hitting back but thought disputes should be settled peaceably, by way of mediation and exchange of words. In their opinion, any punishment would worsen the atmosphere at school and, therefore, harm the collective. One teacher's view on punishing the retaliator was vague.

But what if one does know who "started it" and who hit back? Should the retaliator be punished less severely in such a case? Even though the

respondents ostensibly favored equal punishment of the retaliator, most believed that if the teacher has additional knowledge that confirms one party's culpability – making the cost of the inquiry low – extenuating considerations such as self-defense may be taken into account, resulting in a lighter punishment. The following examples show that when the instigator's identity is plainly known, the respondent changes his/her mind and now favors hitting back.

Example 1:

Interviewer: Why would you punish someone who retaliates even if he or she says it's in self-defense?

Teacher: We don't have a judicial system to determine who started it. Both students are suspended; it doesn't matter who started it and who got drawn in.

Interviewer: But what would you do if it's clear that one of the parties merely hit back?

Teacher: Let me continue. Obviously, both children are treated the same only at the beginning of the inquiry and the suspension. Afterwards, if we manage to figure out who's the bully and who's the victim, of course they won't receive the same kind of treatment. The bully should be punished more severely; the victim is in a totally different situation.

Example 2:

Interviewer: What would you do if a student claims that she tried to defend herself and that's why she hit back?

Teacher: I don't have the strength to figure out every last thing; the child who retaliates should be punished severely.

Interviewer: But what if you find out clearly that the student hit back because she was defending herself?

Teacher: In a case where a child is attacked and defends himself, he won't be punished; the matter will be dealt with by reporting to the parents and having a talk together with the aggressive child only.

The Retaliator's Prior Record

The retaliator's prior record may also convey knowledge. Some respondents determined a disputant's guilt on the basis of her "past." That is, in these respondents' opinion, a youngster who had not been involved in

previous violent incidents is less guilty than one who had been involved. One of the educators explained:

"You take it more seriously when there's a history of violent incidents. This [history of violence] really tends to appear more among students who instigate violence, meaning aggressors -- and then the child's problem may in fact receive attention at the system level: holding talks with the parents, sometimes with the intervention of the counselor and sometimes with that of the principal. When it's a matter of hitting back, it's mostly more spot events and they should be treated in a limited way, in proportion with their scope."

Ze'ev, the assistant principal, explained, "You can definitely punish only the bully [the instigator] and there's good reason to punish only a pupil who uses violence as a norm [has a history of violence]. Of course, it depends on how often each child was involved in violence. Sometimes the kid who says she was just hitting back should also be punished."

Explaining the Mismatch between Parents' Views and Teachers' Views in Terms of a Conflict between Personal Utility and Collective Utility

Twelve educators claimed that they had advised their children to retaliate but also favored punishment for retaliators. Three teachers were uncertain, as parents, about the possibility that their son or daughter would hit back but favored punishment for a student who hits back.

- "Professionally [as a teacher], I see the problems that violence may cause. Personally [as a parent], I understand that if my children don't hit back, they'll become other children's victims."
- "When it's my kid, I'm not responsible for the other party. As a teacher, I'm responsible for both parties."
- "As a father, I'm concerned only for my son's safety; as a teacher, I have to look out for everyone."
- "As a mother, it's important for me to protect my daughter and spare her from frustration. The teacher has to see the broad angle of what should and shouldn't be done at school and what things would be harmful to all students."

All non-educator parents favored punishment for children who hit back. Most of them (10 of 14) supported retaliation when their own child was the retaliator.

One non-educator mother did not oppose her daughter's hitting back. Only three non-educator parents opposed their children's hitting back. The respondents admitted that when discussing their children, they were influenced by the personal benefit that the retaliator would gain but when discussing punishment they took account of considerations related to the teacher's role:

- "As a parent, I'm pleased when my kid knows how to defend himself. As a teacher, you can't acquiesce in violence of any kind."
- "If I were his mother, okay [I would favor retaliation] -- as a teacher, no -- I'd try to treat the boy who administers the beating and not the one on the receiving end. As a mother, it's important for me to protect my daughter and keep her from suffering. A teacher has to see the broad angle of what can and can't be done in school, and hitting back is on the 'can't' side."
- "As a teacher [the respondent was asked what she would do if she were a teacher], I certainly shouldn't agree to hitting back – I also have to look out for the one who's doing the hitting. Not to tell the victim to hit back – what sort of business is that? As a teacher, I must never encourage such a thing. You're in a totally different position. As a parent, I have only one concern: that my child shouldn't suffer."
- "As a parent, I am motivated by concern for my children. When they're little, it's probably worth telling them to hit back because that'll keep them from getting hit [...]. As a teacher, you also have to consider what hitting back will do to the whole class, the angle of how the other children will look at the response, the punishment that each child got."
- "A parent might be more emotionally involved but a teacher has to be aware of every detail of what she's doing because she has an influence on a large group of children. What I mean is that a parent's responsible for his kid while the teacher has a commitment to all the pupils in her class."

Clearly, then, non-teacher parents limited their support for retaliation to the kind committed by their own children. Their attitude toward hitting back by an anonymous child was no different from that of the educators.

Discussion

The Parental Take on Hitting Back

Some educator-teachers and most non-educator teachers found retaliation more favorable when asked about their attitude as parents than when asked to say what teachers should do or what they would do as teachers. Researchers who explored into parents' attitudes toward violence on the part of their children (Berkowitz, 1993; Davis, 2006) believe that many parents favor retaliation because they put their children's interests before others'. The findings in this study showed that many interviewees favor retaliation by their children for the principal reason that the children gain by doing it. The logic flowing from Axelrod's (2006) paradigm justifies retaliation on the grounds of the necessity of safeguarding the retaliator's interests. Axelrod's approach explains why a parent who looks out for his/her children's interests will regard hitting back as a preferred strategy. Indeed, my qualitative research demonstrates the respondents' conviction that a child who fails to retaliate will be exposed to recurrent molestation and, in turn, recurrent loss of social status; the respondents, however, do not agree that their children should instigate violence proactively. According to previous studies, these parents' concern is by no means groundless: a child once victimized is susceptible to social, psychological, and physical harm (Aluede, Adeleke, Omoike & Afen-Akpaida, 2008; Lumsden, 2002).

The Teachers' Take on Hitting Back

When asked to stand in the teacher's shoes, almost all respondents frowned on hitting back despite their support of self-defense. Considerations drawn from game theory and computer simulations show that retaliation in self-defense may create a peace-seeking society by depriving aggressive strategies of their utility (Axelrod, 2006). In our findings, only a few respondents embraced this kind of rationale when asked to adopt the teacher's role. Most educator and non-educator respondents believed that hitting back would amplify violence and harm the class. Researchers who looked into the matter also accept this reasoning: Retaliation may exacerbate violence and cause it to escalate (Davis, 2006); it creates recurrent, long-lasting confrontations among children and, accordingly, intensifies the violence and prolongs the clashes (Davis, 2006; Geiger & Fischer, 2006; Lockwood, 1997). Revenge may cause violence to balloon into brawls during recess (Warren & Anderson-Butcher, 2005); violence has a "contagion" effect (Anderson, 1999; Bandura, 1983; Baron & Richardson,

1994; Warren & Anderson-Butcher, 2005). If so, hitting back may heighten pupils' exposure to violence and cause the predisposition to violence to spread.

Teacher and Parent: Clashing Roles

The findings show that some respondents found it quite easy to represent views that they derived from clashing roles and even suggested that their opinions vary depending on the role that they are playing. Our research shows that people may tailor their views to their roles and harbor clashing attitudes when they wear more than one hat. Seemingly, as Berkowitz proposed, parents tailor their attitude toward violence to their interests. It is on this basis that their principled opposition to the use of violence in school did not deter them from favoring retaliation when their children were at stake. Despite upholding their children's right to self-defense, some disregarded this entitlement when discussing the teacher's role but re-invoked it in their role as parents (Berkowitz, 1993).

Attitudes toward Punishing the Retaliator

Most educator and non-educator respondents spoke in favor of punishing retaliators. Their remarks make it evident that the considerations behind their views on punishing retaliators were different when expressed from the teacher's point of view than those underlying their position as parents in regard to retaliation by their children. When asked as parents about retaliation by their own child, many respondents emphasized the motive of self-defense, but when asked as teachers about retaliation by their pupils, they disregarded the personal utility that self-defense offers and, therefore, vehemently opposed hitting back and favored punishment of the retaliator. The question is why the respondents overlooked the self-defense motive when discussing retaliation by pupils. Previous studies show that judicial systems often apply considerations of profit and loss in their decisions (Shavell, 2004). Such systems consider how the imposition of penalties on both sides in a dispute may enhance the general welfare. Sometimes judicial systems also penalize less-guilty parties, especially when such parties can be held responsible for the dispute due to failure to take necessary precautions (*ibid.*). The participants in our study, when placed in the shoes of a "judge" who is responsible for a whole class of children, held the retaliator at least partly liable for the dispute even if s/he acted in self-defense.

This outcome resembles that in game theory, which reveals ways in which strategic interactions between "players" generate conditions leading to outcomes that none of the "players" may have intended (Osborn, 2004).

Even though the respondents affirmed the right to self-defense, it was inevitable that they should hold the retaliator liable. If only the instigator of the dispute could be found culpable, the deterrence of violent pupils would be compromised. Insofar as the identity of "who started it" is not clear, the aggressor may claim that she was in fact the retaliator. Any attempt to sort the matter out may be complicated if not hopeless. The alternative – punishing everyone involved – is easier to accomplish; what is more, it prevents the instigator from claiming falsely that she was just hitting back. Some respondents admitted that despite their principled opposition to violence, the retaliator should be given a lighter punishment, if any, when no expensive inquiry is needed, i.e., when the instigator's and the retaliator's identities are clear. Evidently, then, the declared policy of punishing both sides equally, which typified most respondents when they discussed an anonymous pupil, is meant more to crimp the instigator's steps than to deter the retaliator. If the teacher's role entails the performance of tasks that are too difficult, s/he may be overburdened and enter into a role conflict that will induce his/her to avoid the burden altogether. Hall (1972) shows that individuals whose roles place them under strain may mitigate the strain by adjusting their expectations. Our findings show that the structuring of the respondents' views in accordance with their roles takes into account the burden associated with the task at hand. Seemingly, then, at least some respondents found it difficult if not impossible to carry out the tasks derived from the teacher's role if the teacher were faced with the need to punish the instigator only.

Conclusions of the Study

Our findings indicate that respondents who were asked to reply as teachers preferred to punish retaliators mainly due to the low cost of such a policy. In the opinion of most respondents, those involved in violence in school must be punished to keep the school functioning and a policy to this effect is of immense utility. A policy that favors punishment of both the attacker and the retaliator has low cost because it obviates the need for complex inquiries. Therefore, according to the approach that evaluates this kind of intervention in cost-benefit terms, this policy is effective (Tevfik, 1996). Effective or not, however, a policy that prescribes indiscriminate punishment for hitting back may be amoral because it may disregard the right to self-defense. The findings also indicate a contradiction between parents' attitudes and teachers' attitudes when the discussion concerns retaliation by a parent's own child. Such a contradiction may aggravate friction between parents and teachers and impair their cooperation – a cooperation that is

essential in restraining school violence. The findings in this study indicate that measures enhancing teachers' information about disputes in school may allow teachers to lighten the punishment that they administer to the retaliator. Such alleviation may ease friction with parents and allow for greater cooperation with them. Improved cooperation between educators and parents may give teachers more information because, under parents' influence, pupils may yield more information about goings-on in school so that the punishment they would receive for hitting back, which may seem unfair, would be alleviated, etc. A far-reaching discussion of ways to enhance information about developments in school, and the legitimacy of these methods, oversteps the bounds of this study. Still, one can probably think of methods that would step up information about happenings at school, e.g., a surveillance system including automated cameras. Such measures have become part of many urban landscapes and the idea of using them in schools cannot be dismissed out of hand.

There was a time when game theory focused on the need to understand conflicts among rivals. In recent years, considerations drawn from game theory have been put to use for the additional purpose of understanding the rationales of those responsible for mediating or resolving conflicts (Shavell, 2004). Our findings show that the combination of cost considerations and information, as is customary in game theory, may also play a significant role in resolving school violence. Therefore, a teacher as a regulator of conflicts among schoolchildren may propose to harm even a pupil who hits back to deter an attacker. The conclusions harvested from this study may also have implications for similar situations in the education system or in judicial and economic domains in which supervisory players regulate conflicts between players who have clashing interests by punishing them. Thus, the stances that arbitrators in various fields adopt toward retaliators may originate in the difficulty of determining "who started it." But that's a topic for further research.

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Mental Maps in Geography Teaching: Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice

Michael Horn and Karin Schweizer¹

Abstract

Mental or Cognitive Maps are well known constructs in the field of spatial cognition. Since the pioneer work on this topic (e.g. Lynch, 1960, Tolman, 1948), Mental Maps are understood as mental or cognitive representations of a certain spatial layout. They enable us to act and move in time and space as well as to coordinate and plan our spatial actions. Mental Maps are part of our previous knowledge and therefore guiding our actions and cognitions.

When teaching Geography, Mental Maps can be used to scaffold systematic spatial orientation, to monitor how pupils perceive their spatial surroundings or gain other spatial competences outlined for example in the educational standards in Geography (DGF, 2007). Because of the lack of further didactic instructions for teaching with Mental Maps, we try to bridge the existent gap between theory and practice when handling of Mental Maps in Geographic teaching. Therefore we link teachers' beliefs and Mental Maps as an instance of previous knowledge.

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In two empirical studies with Geography teachers of different schools in Rhineland-Palatina, Germany, we tried to answer three research questions concerning the handling of Mental Maps in the classroom.

1. With the first question it is examined how teachers use Mental Maps during classroom practice.
2. With the second question it is investigated how teachers' beliefs (or personal factors) correspond with the handling of Mental Maps in the classroom.
3. With the third question possibilities to bridge the gap between theory and practice when handling of Mental Maps in Geographic teaching are outlined.

The samples of the studies consisted of 44 teachers which were interviewed and 70 teachers which received a questionnaire developed of the results of the previous interview study. The studies show that most teachers know the term "Mental Map". Furthermore, half of the persons of both studies (study 1 and 2) report that they use mental maps in classroom instruction. According to research question 2 the results show that teachers who dispose of sophisticated or constructivist epistemic beliefs do see advantages in the use of mental maps. These results give hints for references using Mental Maps in the classroom.

Introduction: Mental Maps and Previous Knowledge

The success of human actions is closely linked to the basic ability to get along in the physical environment and to communicate effectively about spatial arrangements. How do I get to water? Where is the enemy? How do I find home? How can I shorten the way? According to Herrmann and Schweizer (1998) those are the basic questions which show that human actions are almost always related to space, as they are time-related. To plan the standing, walking, reaching, searching or finding places is referred to as 'cognitive acts'. The man thinks to himself or conceptualizes his surroundings largely on site-specific categories. Such categories can be of various kinds.

The term 'space' can be understood and used very differently. Like no one else Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) has formed our notion of space. According to him, space and time are assumptions a priori, i.e. they are

preconditions for the senses, and no empirical terms (Gosztonyi, 1976, Jaspers, 1981). Space and time are essential requirements. This means that all objects are considered as located in space and time. All of our behavior takes place in space and time (Schweizer, 2004).

The view today is subject to Kant's criticism, because, unlike Kant we differentiate between a psychological space that has to be examined and the physical space by objective notions as well as mathematical spaces (Jaspers, 1981). In Geography usually four different conceptualizations of space can be discerned (Rhode-Jüchtern, 2002).

1. The relational concept of space is conceived as objects being behind, beside or above each other. The focus in this concept is on the relative position of objects.
2. The absolute or substantial concept of space is conceived as containing objects. Space in this sense is understood as a interactive system of natural and anthropogenic factors.
3. A third concept refers to space within constructivism. Space is regarded in its social, technical and political constructedness.
4. The fourth concept of space stresses the space as a category of sensory perception. Space in this sense provides a basis for classifying individual perceptions and action.

Since the pioneer work carried out for example by Lynch (1960) or Tolman (1948), mental or cognitive representations of certain spatial layouts are called Mental or Cognitive Maps. Downs and Stea (1977) assume that this type of mental representation can be considered as symbolic, schematic, incomplete, and biased maps or images of our spatial surroundings. However, due to Mental Maps we are able to act and move in time and space and to coordinate and plan our spatial actions.

According to Downs (1981) the term "Mental Map" as a metaphor refers twice to the properties of physical maps. At first, both kinds of maps describe the aggregation of spatial respective geographic knowledge and at second, both are types of geometric figures of geographic circumstances with graphic means.

Although our mental representation of our surrounding is usually biased and schematic, they build our pre-instructional or previous knowledge and therefore the source for our actions and cognitions. To illustrate the distortion and variety of those mental representations, figure 1 shows

two examples of how kids experience their way to school which were recorded by Daum (2011).



Fig. 1: Two examples of biased Mental Maps (a: „My way to school" from a 10 year old girl (4th grade) and b: „My way to school" from a 7 year old boy (2nd grade; Daum, 2011).

Teaching Geography and the Impact of Teachers' Personal Factors

Teaching Geography refers to spatial structures and processes on earth. Competences that are outlined by the DGfG (the German Association for Geography; DGfG, 2007) refer to six areas that reflect the status of Geography between natural and social sciences. Particularly with regard to spatial orientation, main competencies that students must be able to show comprise five categories.

- O1: Possession of basic topographic knowledge,
- O2: Ability to place geographical objects and information in spatial systems,
- O3: Ability to use maps appropriately (map competence),
- O4: Orientation skills in real space,
- O5: Ability to reflect upon spatial perceptions and constructions (DGfG, 2007, pp. 17 et seq.).

Regarding these affordances, the use of Mental Maps can be considered as very helpful to reach those competences. In general, they can be considered as a means to scaffold systematic spatial orientation as well as the handling of topographic, physical and thematic maps. Mental Maps are

explicitly referred to when outlining competence O5, the ability to reflect upon spatial perceptions and constructions. Here it is specified that students should be able to explain with cognitive or Mental Maps... "that space is always perceived selectively and subjectively." (DGFG, 2007, p. 18).

Spatial orientation is also addressed by a plethora of research on intelligence (e.g. Guilford, 1967; Pellegrino & Kail, 1982; Linn & Petersen, 1985; Vernon, 1965). Pellegrino and Kail (1982) connect spatial orientation to other spatial abilities like spatial visualization and spatial relations constituting the spatial dimension of intelligence. This model further develops Vernon's (1965) suggestion adding a further level to Spearman's general factor model (Spearman, 1927) with two factors.

In order to benefit from the power of Mental Maps, it is necessary to instruct students in Mental Mapping techniques. Important related facts are that they become able to outline their internal representation and that the distortions and variety of different spatial maps (see fig. 1) are perhaps discussed and reflected. In contrast to the importance of handling of previous knowledge and the fact that a lot of Geographic teachers use Mental Maps during their lessons further didactic instructions are lacking. Thus, bridging the gap between the practice of teaching with Mental Maps and didactic theory, it seems to be necessary to conduct some research about this topic. One suggestion which is outlined in this article relates teaching with Mental Maps and handling of previous knowledge with teachers' competences and beliefs.

Regarding teachers' competences which go beyond professional knowledge Lipowski (2006) outlines four important components: the professional knowledge, the beliefs, the motivation, and the self-referred cognitions. According to Op't Eynde, De Corte, and Verschaffel (2002) beliefs can be categorized as epistemic beliefs, as subjective theories about learning, as subjective theories about teaching and as self-referred cognitions in a specific context as outlined in table 1.

According to table 1 epistemic beliefs refer to the structure, genesis and validation of knowledge whereas subjective theories about learning can be described as beliefs about learning in a specific subject. In contrast subjective theories about teaching are outlined as beliefs about teaching a specific subject. This concept is also discussed by Wahl (2006), Groeben (1988), Dann (2000), and Duit (1993), to enumerate some authors (see also Horn & Schweizer in press). At last another type of beliefs is discerned, the

self-referred cognitions which concern beliefs like self-efficacy and beliefs about the academic self concept.

Table 1: Type of beliefs according to Op't Eynde, et al. (2002).

Type of Beliefs	Explanation
Epistemic beliefs	Referring to structure, genesis and validation of knowledge
Subjective theories about learning	Beliefs about learning in a specific subject
Subjective theories about teaching	Beliefs about teaching a specific subject
Self-referred cognitions	Beliefs like self-efficacy and beliefs about the academic self concept

In this chapter we focus on the importance of the following types of beliefs and self-referred cognition which we call the teachers' personal factors: epistemic beliefs, self-efficacy, media self-efficacy, and the academic self concept. We outline these personal factors shortly. (For further information see also Horn and Schweizer, 2010; in press).

Epistemic Beliefs describe persons' individual theories including beliefs about knowledge and knowing (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). According to Schraw, Bendixen, and Dunkle (2002) epistemic beliefs can be measured with four scales concerning the source of knowledge, the structure of knowledge, learning abilities, and learning velocity. One example of the questionnaire on epistemic beliefs by Schraw et al. (2002) is given by: "Teachers should rather focus on facts than on abstract ideas."

A further concept that we were interested in when we regard teachers' personal factors was the **academic self concept**. The academic self concept is categorized as a type of self referred cognition (see table 1). According to Dickhäuser, Schöne, Spinath, and Stiensmeier-Pelster (2007) a person's academic self concept is understood as the whole cognitive representations of a learner's own abilities and especially about the level of their own abilities.

The last two concepts which were of interest in this study were the concept of **self-efficacy** and **media self-efficacy**. Self-efficacy according to Bandura (1997) is related to a person's subjective certainty in his own ability to plan and carry out actions and thus can effectively cope with difficult situations. Computer or media self-efficacy refers to the per-

ception of a person's competence to efficiently handle a variety of media tools in order to succeed in a range of different challenges (Cassidy & Eachus, 2002).

Method and Empirical Basis

Two empirical studies with teachers of Geography of different schools in Rhineland-Palatina, Germany, were designed to answer three research questions concerning the handling of Mental Maps in the classroom.

1. How do teachers use Mental Maps during classroom practice?
2. Do teachers' beliefs (or personal factors) correspond with handling of Mental Maps in the classroom?
3. How can we bridge the gap between theory and practice when handling Mental Maps in Geographic teaching?

Samples: In study 1 we interviewed $N=44$ teachers (21 male, 23 female) of Geography teaching in different schools in Rhineland-Palatina, Germany. Their age varied between 21 and 60 years and they disposed of at least on 1 and at most on 36 years of teaching practice. In study 2 again $N=70$ (34 male, 36 female) Geography teacher from schools in Rhineland-Palatina, Germany, were examined this time with a questionnaire. Their age varied between 25 and 62 years and they disposed of at least on 1 and at most on 38 years of teaching practice

Proceeding: During study 1 teachers were asked the questions listed in table 2 and their answers were recorded and transcribed. The answers were categorized using the method of qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2008) and a questionnaire was developed according to the results. In study 2 participants received the developed questionnaire with questions concerning the use and benefit of Mental Maps and several instruments to test teachers' general self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 2002), media self-efficacy (Horn & Schweizer, 2010, adapted from Cassidy & Eachus, 2002), academic self concept (Dickhäuser et al., 2007) and epistemic beliefs (Schraw et al., 2002; German translation according to Pfennich, 2007).

Results

Results for the interview study

Teachers being asked the questions listed in table 2 answered mostly that they knew the term Mental Maps and could explain it. 20 persons said that they have employed Mental Maps in their class. Regarding the way of using Mental Maps in the class, we received the following answers and frequencies: one said during conversation, 10 said that they illustrate the way to school, 3 persons said that they illustrate the neighbourhood, 2 saw facilitating aspects by using them after excursions, 3 teachers said that they would introduce the work with maps and 7 to introduce a new topic like Africa or Asia etc., 1 said to illustrate holiday destinations, 2 for the work with capital cities and 3 teachers would use Mental Maps for working with thematic maps like soil resources or developing countries.

Finally we asked the teachers to list advantages and disadvantages for the work with Mental Maps. 17 teachers regard the development of spatial thinking, orientation, and perception of the environment as an advantage when using Mental Maps. Also memory training, the active work and linking to previous knowledge is regarded as an advantage as well as promoting creativity, own ideas of the pupils, motivation, and the possibility to compare own and scientific maps. Considering the disadvantages when using Mental Maps the interviewed teachers expressed that demands of the use of Mental Maps are excessive, that they do not picture the reality, that students fool around or are incommunicative when they work with Mental Maps, and that those are difficult to check and time extensive.

Table 2: Questions employed during the interview (study 1) and answers (frequencies).

Question	Answers
Do you know the term "Mental Maps"?	yes (34), no (10)
The term is used heterogeneous. How do you interpret the term?	Drawing a map from the mind (8) The individual image of a spatial layout (16) An idea that is based on the students' previous knowledge (7) I'm not able to explain (4)
Wherefrom do you know "Mental Maps"?	School (2), studies (15), voluntary (4), literature (10), vocational training (2), don't remember (4)
Did you have the opportunity to get to know Mental Maps during studying at the University?	yes (16), no (12)
Have you read about Mental Maps in professional journals?	yes (18), no (9), seldom (5), don't remember (3), question was not asked (8)
Do you employ Mental Maps in your class?	yes (20), seldom (8), no (9), not yet (3), question was not asked (4)
Could you explain how you use Mental Maps in your class?	no (1), during conversation (1), way to school (10), neighbourhood (3), after excursions (2), introducing work with maps (3), introducing a new theme like Africa or Asia etc. (7), holiday destination (1), capital cities (2), thematic maps like soil resources or developing countries (3)
Do you see advantages in using Mental Maps?	Spatial thinking, orientation, and perception of the environment (17), memory training (4), active work with maps (3), linking to previous knowledge (6), creativity and own ideas (4), motivation (2), comparing own and scientific maps (2)
Do you see disadvantages in using Mental Maps?	Excessive demands (2), incorrect, does not correspond with reality (9), students fool around (2), or are incommunicative (2), difficult to check (4), time intensive (2)
Do you think you could motivate your students with Mental Maps?	Yes (31), yes as introduction and in the end(1), motivation of younger students succeeds better (5), some students appeal to for others they are to theoretic (3), no (1)

A last question which is addressed here is whether teachers think that they can motivate their students with Mental Maps. Regarding the motivation most teachers agree that they could motivate students, esp. younger

ones and that they could use it as an aid for motivation esp. when they employ them as introduction or in the end. We received also some answers that express the view that some students appeal to Mental Maps and that for others they are to theoretic.

Results for study 2

The results of the second study refer to a questionnaire developed of the results which were illustrated in table 2. The questionnaire consisted of statements that had to be rated from 1 (I agree) to 5 (don't agree). In order to contrast more and less constructivist classroom practices we used statements like: "It is often difficult to check the correctness of Mental Maps.", and "Mental maps are linking to the students' previous knowledge." Other statements developed of the interview study referred to creativity, cognitive abilities and the work with mental maps, e.g. "Students are shrinking from the work with Mental Maps", "Mental Maps promote the creativity of the students", and "Mental Maps promote the cognitive abilities of students."

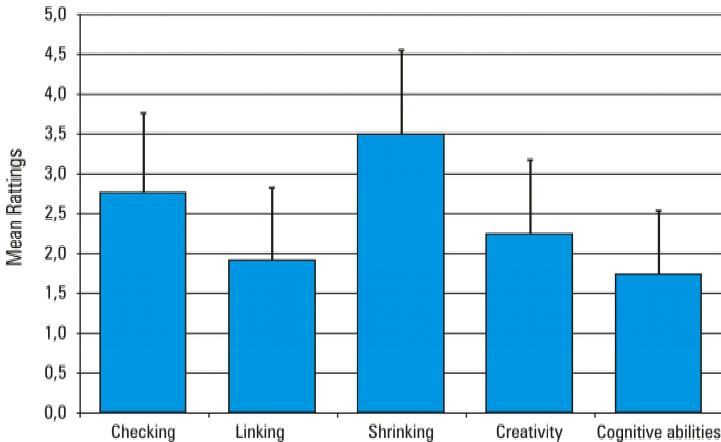


Figure 2: Results of the questionnaire (study 2).

Figure 2 gives an overview over the mean ratings and the standard deviations regarding these statements. Overall the ratings show that teacher mainly do agree that it is often difficult to check the correctness of Mental Maps, that they are linking to the students' previous knowledge, that they promote students' creativity and cognitive abilities. They do not agree that students are shrinking form the work with mental maps. Like in study 1 again half of the teachers said that they have already used Mental Maps in classroom practice, mainly in tutorials for spatial orientation (27), when introducing a new theme (14) or when working with maps (17).

In order to answer research question 2 the ratings on the statements in figure 2 correlations with the ratings of the scales for the personal factors described above (epistemic beliefs, self-efficacy, media self-efficacy, academic self concept) were computed and listed in table 3.

Table 3: Correlations between statements referring to the use of mental maps and the ratings of the personal factors (r indicates the correlation and P the level of significance at the .05-level (*) or the .10-level(+)).

	Epistemic beliefs	Self-efficacy	Mediated self-efficacy	Academic self concept
Checking	$r = -.315^*$, $p < .05$	$r = .028$	$r = -.148$	$r = .056$
Linking	$r = -.250^+$, $p = .094$	$r = .091$	$r = -.053$	$r = .011$
Shrinking	$r = .235$	$r = .404^*$, $p < .05$	$r = .023$	$r = .223$
Creativity	$r = .354^*$, $p < .05$	$r = .082$	$r = -.042$	$r = .189$
Cognitive abilities	$r = -.008$	$r = -.202$	$r = .120$	$r = .054$

Legend: positive correlations mean that high ratings in personal factors correspond with agreement to the statements and negative correlations mean that high ratings in personal factors correspond with disagreement to the statements.

The results indicate that statements that are related to the handling of Mental Maps are especially related to epistemic beliefs. Teachers who dispose of more sophisticated epistemic beliefs do not agree that it is often difficult to check the correctness of Mental Maps and that those are linking to the students' previous knowledge. They do agree with the view that Mental Maps promote students' creativity. A further relation can be identi-

fied between self-efficacy and the statement that student are often shrinking from the work with mental maps.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this chapter we outlined two empirical studies that were designed to examine the handling of Mental Maps in classroom practice and the relations to personal factors concerning teachers' competences. In the first study which was an interview study we asked $N=44$ Geography teachers about their understanding of the term "Mental Map" and their experiences during classroom instruction. We analysed their answers and in study 2, $N=70$ Geography teachers received a questionnaire with more or less constructivist statements developed from the answers of study 1 as well as questions concerning the personal factors in teacher competence (epistemic belief, self-efficacy, media self-efficacy, and academic self concept).

Our findings show that most Geography teachers know the term "Mental Map". Furthermore, half of the persons of both studies (study 1 and 2) report that they use mental maps in classroom instruction. Therefore, we focussed on teachers attitudes on handling of Mental Maps in the classroom and correlated the ratings for those statements with the scale values for personal factors on teacher competence. We could only find weak but significant correlations between epistemic beliefs and attitudes on handling of Mental Maps in the classroom. Teachers who dispose of more sophisticated epistemic beliefs do not agree that it is often difficult to check the correctness of Mental Maps and that those are linking to the students' previous knowledge. They do agree with the view that Mental Maps promote students' creativity. A further relation can be identified between self-efficacy and the statement that student are often shrinking from the work with mental maps.

These findings give hints for references using Mental Maps in the classroom since the use of Mental Maps gives opportunity to build constructivist views. This idea is also expressed with the educational standards of the DGFG (2007) when it is outlined that Mental Maps can be used as a means to explain that space is always perceived selectively and subjectively.

However, the correlations between personal factors in teacher competence and attitudes towards teaching are marginal. We have reported

similar finding in Horn and Schweizer (in press; see also Staub & Stern, 2002) where we assumed that beliefs assessed by questionnaires are variables that show a considerable distance to teaching processes.

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Preparing Freshmen Teacher Candidates for Academia, Self-Regulation and Teaching: Effects of an Intervention Program

Melodie Rosenfeld

Abstract

Entering college freshmen are often unprepared for the rigors of academia because they commonly lack basic strategies of studying and managing themselves (self-regulation). Much can be done to enhance both students' study strategies, such as note-taking and organization, as well as self-regulation, such as metacognitive learning strategies, time management, motivation and academic self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is important not only because it is a strong predictor of academic success (Kitsantas, Winsler & Huie, 2008), but because it can be improved (Tuckman, 2003).

This study investigated the results of five semester-long intervention workshops called Pla'ot (Hebrew acronym for Developing Academic Learning and Self-Regulation) for freshmen teacher candidates in various majors at an Israeli college of education. We also wondered if the participants (N=96) would commit to likewise help their future pupils to improve study strategies and self-regulation.

Data collection involved two online pre/post-tests, written reflections, and focus-group and individual interviews. Results indicated that almost all participants reported improving at least some of their academic study strategies and self-regulation, particularly time-management and motivation. Many reported a commitment to help their future pupils with study strategies and self-regulation.

We were surprised that before the workshops began, virtually no participants predicted that they would need a support group in college; after the workshops, 66% said a support group, such as the intervention, is

very important to them. Self-proclaimed "weaker" as well as "stronger" students reported the intervention to be valuable as learners, although at different times in the semester. We conclude that the intervention is beneficial for all freshmen and should be a required course.

Introduction

...when I came to the college, I went into shock because academic learning is so much more demanding and there are so many more expectations than I expected...
(Teacher candidate from the Special Education Department)

I think it is a shame that only few schools teach children how to study. Most teachers give assignments without explaining how to do them. Sometimes this knowledge can make the difference from a frustrating pupil [sic], who cannot handle school's tasks, to a successful one.
(Teacher candidate from the English Teaching Department)

These reflections were expressed by freshman teacher candidates at the end of their first semester at a teachers college. They had participated in semester-long intervention workshops to help them improve their own study strategies and self-regulation as well as commit to helping their future pupils to improve theirs. This study focuses on the effects of the intervention.

Effective study strategies and self-regulation are two of the factors which predict lower drop-out rates of college students (Conley, 2007). The difference between study skills and strategies should be clarified. Study (or learning) skills are the basis of academic competence and linked to academic success for diverse learners across various content areas; these skills can be enhanced with effective study strategies (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002). While sometimes the terms, study skills and strategies, are interchanged, there is a difference. Skills refer more to the product of learning, while strategies refer more to the process of learning. For example, a study skill is *writing a good report*, whereas study strategies are *how I go about writing a good report*. In this paper, we refer to workshops which attempt to enhance study strategies, the process and tools of *how* one studies and learns. Study strategies include such areas as note-taking, reading articles, representing information, organizing material, studying for tests.

Self-regulation refers to the process of managing oneself. How does one manage time, set priorities and accomplish goals? How does one differentiate between important and urgent activities? How does one use study strategies such as organizing and representing knowledge? How does one strengthen inner motivation, self-efficacy and self-monitoring (Zimmerman, 2008)? Self-regulation in academia involves students who are independent, self-initiated learners with the ability to use a variety of learning strategies (e.g., organizing, transforming, note-taking) to accomplish specific learning goals (Kitsantas, Winsler & Huie, 2008; Zimmerman, 2008).

Self-regulation is important because it predicts academic learning success; it has been shown that there is a direct relationship between the level of self-regulation and success in academic studies (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2008). Equally important, self-regulation can be developed with intervention (Tuckman, 2003). This finding means that students, with intervention, can raise their academic success.

We know that effective teachers hold the belief that the teacher is an agent in student success and that learner ability is not a fixed "entity" (Ashton, 1984; Dweck, 1999). Jordan, Lindsay & Stanovich (1997) have shown that teachers with *interventionist beliefs*, i.e. that they can intervene to help learners succeed, are more effective and produce better learner performance. As teacher educators, how can we encourage our teacher candidates that indeed they are an integral part of their future pupils' success? How can we convince them that learning success for most learners depends more on effective study strategies, self-regulation and effective self-beliefs and less on any static "ability" (Dweck, 1999)?

Perhaps a first step is to have them experience such mediated intervention for themselves as learners.

In this paper, we explain the rationale and description of intervention workshops, *Pla'ot* (Hebrew acronym for Developing Academic Learning and Self-Regulation). The qualitative report attempts to determine the effects that *Pla'ot* had, if any, on its participants.

Background of the Intervention

Many Israeli students enter academic teacher colleges unprepared for academic studies. Before attending college, most Israeli students serve for 2-3 years in the army or national service and then commonly take another

year off to travel or work. When they come to college at the ages of 21-24, they often have had a 3-6 year break from formal studies. While they might have a sense of maturity, they have had little experience with the expectations, strategies and self-regulation that academic studies require.

Incoming Israeli freshmen teacher candidates confront serious challenges: they commonly take 15 year-long courses in their first year with exams and projects for each course, are confronted with unfamiliar and difficult writing and learning tasks, regularly hold down outside employment, sometimes are married, and often lack more than basic self-regulation strategies to handle academic requirements and other responsibilities. They are known to rely on their previous high-school habits and expectations which are less than optimal. For example, Israeli high school teachers commonly write summaries on the board for students to copy verbatim; when students enter college, they habitually take lecture notes by writing down every word the lecturer says, using few more effective note-taking or critical listening strategies. Entering freshmen commonly do not know such basic writing skills such as outlining, concept mapping, or the importance of writing drafts (Hauptman, Rosenfeld & Tamir, 2001).

It is therefore no wonder that veteran instructors see many of our college freshmen use hit-miss learning strategies, plagiarize for expediency, submit low-level projects and writing, waste time, experience stress, and sometimes drop out of studies.

Unfortunately there are few elementary, middle or high schools programs in Israel which systematically develop learners' study strategies or self-regulation. Often there are sporadic programs which last for several years until the budget is cut or another program comes into fashion. Commonly, if a child has difficulties in school, parents, at their own expense, hire private tutors. Teachers at all grade levels seem to have neither the time nor belief that helping children gain effective study strategies or self-regulation is their responsibility. Coverage of large amounts of material for national tests and the matriculation exams seems to override the important but time-consuming process of drafts, prewriting and other such study strategies.

We wondered if a college intervention program could contribute to stopping the cycle of low level, sink-or-swim learning and raise the issue of teacher commitment to help their future learners likewise develop effective study strategies and self-regulation. Some colleges in Israel offer study strategy workshops to students with learning difficulties (e.g. the Kibbutz Seminar) or for all freshmen (e.g. Braude College for Engineering).

Nevertheless, few of the other 22 Israeli *teacher colleges* offer such workshops or require all of their freshmen to participate in them. In addition, to our knowledge, no other teacher college programs encourage students to connect between the strategies that they experience and their commitment towards teaching such strategies to their future pupils.

The Intervention

The intervention framework

The intervention workshops were conducted once a week for 1.5 hours (2 academic hours) the first semester. There were 13 sessions with a total of 26 academic hours. The workshops were required, but no credit points were given to students and the grade was on a Pass/Not-pass basis. The college financed the workshops so that participants did not pay. There was weekly, self-chosen, applied homework. Instructors were asked to encourage participants to apply study strategies that they were learning in Pla'ot, when studying in their other courses, and then report results in the following workshop. In order to pass, students needed to actively participate in 80% of the workshops, fill out two online pre/post test questionnaires and submit a final portfolio of applied activities (Appendix B).

The content of the workshops

The workshops included many strategies for studying and self-regulation (see Appendix A). Not all of the topics were addressed in-depth; instructors and students chose which topics were more relevant and when they would be handled in each group. In some workshops, pairs of students were encouraged to choose and prepare topics that they wanted to learn more about and then present power point presentations as the basis of a group discussion and homework.

The workshop groups

Instructors were chosen for their willingness to deal with group dynamics and work informally with students in their department. Instructors were encouraged to "flow" with student needs and requests. Not all of the

instructors were comfortable with this role. To assure "quality control" somewhat, the first workshop meeting was conducted with all of the groups together in a lecture hall and led by the researcher to assure a common mindset among the participants and instructors. The credo was that our success depends on factors within our control; workshop instructors would help participants learn to "work smarter not harder". Participants heard that becoming active learners rather than passive learners would make a big difference in their learning and college success. As much as possible, participants were assigned to workshop groups according to their teaching major. Since there were no grades, the climate in the workshops was relaxed and accepting, with student input and initiative highly encouraged. In some of the workshops, two student representatives reported to their instructor about students' weekly needs, to make the weekly topics more relevant.

During the semester, the instructors were supported by the researcher with materials, sites and encouragement. Activities, experiences and power point presentations were shared among instructors weekly by email and uploaded to a moodle site for all to see.

The Guiding Questions

The organizing question for this study was the following: *What is the effect of Pla'ot on freshman teacher candidates as learners and future teachers?*

We were interested in finding out the following:

- (a) After the intervention, what were the reported changes, if any, to freshmen teacher candidates in the areas of academic study strategies and self-regulation?
- (b) What was candidates' commitment to address future pupils' study strategies and self-regulation?
- (c) What else, if anything, did the intervention contribute to the candidates?
- (d) Can we justify making the intervention obligatory for all our freshmen teacher candidates?

Methods

The Population

The full intervention program was in its third year when the current research was conducted. In the year when data were collected, there were 11 workshops with 10 experienced instructors, all of whom had PhD's in their subject matter and were chosen for their willingness to lead a group.

All 180 incoming freshmen in all of the education departments enrolled in the workshops (Sciences, Special Education, Mathematics and Humanities [Literature, English, Hebrew, Arabic, History, Early Childhood, English]). In the current research study, five of the workshops (N=96) and five instructors were studied more closely; these were chosen for convenience and included the students with majors in teaching Sciences, Special Education, and Humanities (literature, English, History, early childhood).

Over 99% of the candidates were females, with an age range of from 21-25 years old. The workshops were conducted in Hebrew. There were four female and one male instructor. The researcher was the initiator and organizer of the intervention as well as an instructor for a Humanities group.

Collecting Data

Data was collected from three sources: interviews, written reflections in final portfolios and a pre/posttest. In the last week of the semester, candidates in three of the five workshop groups participated in semi-structured, focus group as well as full group interviews (N=45). Notes were taken and in two of these groups, candidates' responses were tape-recorded. The researcher asked the following during interviews:

- (a) *How did you benefit from the Pla'ot workshops, if at all?*
- (b) *What would you change about Pla'ot?*

Participants submitted written portfolios (details in Appendix B), where they applied various strategies from the workshops and responded to the following questions:

As a result of Pla'ot:

- (a) *What did I learn this semester that I didn't know before?*
- (b) *What helped me in the workshops?*
- (c) *How do I learn "smarter" (rather than "harder") this semester?*
- (d) *How have I developed personally (self-regulation)?*

Following grounded-theory as outlined by Charmaz (2003), open-coding was conducted on both participants' responses in interviews and the written reflections. Then focused-coding was conducted in order to find categories of patterns.

In addition, for this report, two questions were analyzed from an online pre/post test that had open and closed questions; for this paper, two of the questions were analyzed. The first related to their commitment to their future pupils.

Question 1. During the workshops, you will deal with [dealt with] strategies and self-regulation to be more successful students at college. In your opinion, how will these help you to be a more effective teacher in the future?

The second pre/posttest question related to the possible need for a support group such as Pla'ot:

Question 2. How much is a support group, like Pla'ot, important to you during your studies?

3 – very important 2 – somewhat important 1 – not at all important

Findings

Guiding Question(a)

After the intervention, what were the reported changes, if any, to freshmen teacher candidates? The first three questions in their reflections in the final portfolio elicited responses which fell into the overriding categories of improved study strategies and self-regulation: *What did I learn as a result of Pla'ot this semester that I didn't know before? What helped me in the workshops? How do I learn "smarter" (rather than "harder") this semester?*

Changes in academic study strategies

Since participants were required to report something that they learned in the Pla'ot workshops, virtually all participants reported making improvements based on some of the content in the syllabus of the workshops (Appendix A). There were variations of responses, perhaps reflecting the topics on the syllabus which were addressed more in the different groups. The quotes below exemplify many of the written responses which fell into the category of improved academic study strategies.

I used to skip over abstracts but now I see the importance of reading them. (Special Education)

After lectures that I don't understand, I go to the internet and look up the subject; I never even thought of doing this before we talked about it in the workshops. (Humanities)

I learned how to write a summary of an article that doesn't have directing questions. (Special Education)

In this course, I learned that it's possible to organize material with maps, cards and outlines. I learned my way around the library, how to find articles and other learning material, how to predict what a lecturer is going to talk about, how to summarize and make order after a lecture. In addition, the course deepened my understanding about academic writing processes with writing correct paragraphs. ... and drafts. In addition, in this course I learned how to prepare a good power point presentation and present it in an organized and interesting way for an audience...(Humanities)

From the interviews and final reflections, many responses fell into the category of improved self-regulation.

Improved self-regulation

Time Management

...I learned how to manage my time, a thing that I didn't used to do and I always waited until the last two days to study for a test or hand in a project. (Humanities)

Self-awareness

I learned that I can't always get a top grade in an assignment and that's o.k. ; it's o.k. to be satisfied with a lower grade, not be disappointed and just move on. (Special Education)

My development as a result of the course was mainly in being aware of my abilities and strengths. (Humanities)

In the past I used to sit and repeat material outloud but in the workshops I learned that it's better for me if I write out the important things and it's not worth fighting this since it's how I learn the best. (Special Education).

Awareness of academic requirements

And the main thing is that I learned how to manage academic studies, because when I came to the college, I went into shock because academic learning is so much more demanding and there are so many more expectation than I expected. (Special Education)

Self-efficacy

Due to the course... I took my studies seriously. . .and realized that it's important to take myself in my hands if I wanted to succeed. (Humanities: Elementary 1st-6th)

This course ... strengthened my self-confidence, lowered my fear of tests, helped me to deal with stress ... (Humanities:Elementary 1st-6th)

Inner motivation (strong tone of ownership for succeeding):

I think that every person can give a lot beyond his abilities and whoever wants to, can get to far places and to these places I want to get. I want to give of myself even more to my studies so that I can be a good and successful teacher. (Humanities: Elementary 1st-6th)

Guiding Question(b)

In what ways did the intervention contribute to the candidates' commitment to address future pupils' study strategies and self-regulation?

Below are examples from participants' responses in interviews and in the final reflection on the topic of helping their future pupils.

Addressing pupils' study strategies

I'll always remember as a future teacher that it's my job to teach my pupils how to learn: how to summarize, how to write a paragraph, how to prepare a concept-map to simplify a difficult subject and to divide it into smaller parts in order to understand it better. (Humanities: Elementary 1st-6th)

What I learned is useful for me as a student and useful for my future pupils. I think it is a shame that only few schools teach children how to study. Most teachers give assignments without explaining how to do them. Sometimes this knowledge can make the difference from a frustrating pupil [sic], who cannot handle school's tasks, to a successful one. (Humanities: English)

Addressing pupils' learning styles

I will offer my pupils a wide variety of learning strategies and let each one choose the most appropriate for him/ her. (Humanities: Early Childhood)

By understanding individual learning differences

It stands to reason that in my classroom there will be different learning styles, multiple intelligences and other differences, so that one pupil will find it easier to make a concept-map, a second will prefer to summarize and a third will want to make note-cards. It doesn't matter which way each one will choose to go ... each one will choose the way that is correct and better for him/ her) (Humanities: Elementary education)

Guiding Question (c)

What else did the intervention contribute to the candidates, if anything? The data was collected from focus group interviews (How did you benefit from the Pla'ot intervention, if at all?) and the three questions in the final reflections (What did I learn as a result of Pla'ot this semester that I didn't know before? What helped me in the workshops? How do I learn "smarter" (rather than "harder") this semester?)

We looked for categories that we did not expect. We were surprised that some of the workshops were strongly seen as support groups, whereas in other workshops, this notion did not emerge at all.

Support group: I am not alone

Beyond the formal tools, the course gave me the stage to talk about what's hard that you experience as a student. This stage made me realize that I'm not alone and everyone's going through the same thing. This created a feeling of friendship (comraderie), support, help and cooperation between the students. (Special Education)

During the workshops I got to meet and get to know the other girls who are going to be with me for the next 4 years, something that wouldn't have happened without the workshop ... (Special Education)

Support group

From the pre/posttest Question 2: How much is a support group, like Pla'ot, important to you during your studies?

3 – very important 2 – somewhat important 1 – not at all important

Interestingly, on the pretest, virtually no participants expressed the importance of a support group. Or perhaps they did not realize the nature of the Pla'ot workshops. In the five workshop groups investigated, only one participant on the pretest marked "3", very important; eight marked "2", somewhat important; 91 marked "1", not at all important. In contrast, on the posttest, 63 marked "3", very important; 27 marked "2", somewhat important; only 6 marked "1", not at all important. This was a highly

significant change of opinion, to say the least. Thus, after the intervention, a very strong majority expressed the importance of the intervention as a support group.

Pla'ot was a place to express myself & ask questions

What I loved about the course was that it gave me a place for expressing myself. The lessons went according to our requests and needs and because of this, I felt that the course was really effective for us and not "just another course". (Special Education)

It really helped me that in Pla'ot I got an answer for all the questions that I had and didn't know where else to go to ask them. (Special Education)

I learned the rules of what's expected at an academic college. (Humanities)

Guiding Question(d)

Can we justify making the intervention obligatory for ALL freshmen teacher candidates, or should it be limited only to those with learning difficulties?

Self-proclaimed "weaker" students (those who reportedly were having an easy time with academic studies and perhaps some difficulties in high-school) expressed a need for the workshops from the first week of the semester. Self-proclaimed, academically "stronger" students expressed appreciation for the intervention only after several or more sessions, when requirements in other courses became more challenging and they saw the need for more effective strategies.

Self-proclaimed "weaker" students valued intervention from the beginning:

I got to the college to study for a B.A after 6 years of not studying ... I came with no academic background and didn't have any skills or knowledge of how to deal with what awaited me in an academic institution. I was happy to see the course on my schedule of courses.

Self-proclaimed "stronger" students valued intervention after some or more workshop sessions

In the beginning of the year, I thought that the course just wastes our time and has no meaning. But after a while I understood the importance of the course and now I admit that it gave me a lot ... For example, predicting the topic of a lecture and summarizing and making order after a lecture.

From Interviews

We should start the sessions only after the 3rd week of classes, since we didn't understand how important it was in the beginning.(Humanities)

We wondered whether the intervention should be for all freshmen or just those with learning difficulties. From interviews during the semester, we found that the workshops allowed participants a close glimpse into how their peers, whom they knew were intelligent, sometimes did not know how to study or organize their time and material effectively, and thus got lower grades in school and during the semester. In other words, their peers' lack of success was not due to a lack of intelligence but to a lack of effective strategies. Teacher beliefs are difficult to change (Pajares, 1992; Rosenfeld & Rosenfeld, 2008). The concept that fixed-intelligence is what determines school success is a particularly difficult belief to change. We believe that the intervention contributed to changing candidates' reported beliefs and encouraged a more effective belief that learning success is more dependent on study strategies and self-regulation and less dependent on fixed-ability. Since we were developing future teachers, and this belief is the foundation of effective teachers (Dweck, 1999), we concluded that the intervention was worth requiring for all students.

During class discussions, instructors were encouraged to reinforce that if college peers did not know how to study and get organized, then perhaps their future young learners likewise might not; helping future pupils was as important as helping freshman teacher candidates. Of course, the participants had another three years before they became teachers and would need systematic programs to teach study skills and self-regulation among their future learners. Our hope was that the intervention gave the candidates a positive experience that they would want to replicate.

Guiding Question (e) from interviews

What would you change about Pla'ot?

In the focus groups, participants overwhelmingly expressed that they would have preferred that Pla'ot begin a few weeks into the first semester since many (self-proclaimed "stronger") did not see the value of the program when they entered the college. They also suggested that Pla'ot continue several weeks into the second semester in order to relate to their midterm exams and papers and share how they had succeeded. During group interviews, participants expressed strong appreciation for the workshops, even though it took some a while to realize their worth.

During interviews, participants would have liked more practice with skills, such as summarizing, "active reading" of academic texts and strategies to read articles in English. Clearly, in one semester, there was not much time for practice except in self-chosen homework. It should be noted that the first two years of the intervention, students complained that the intervention was two semesters and did not earn them any points toward their degrees. The year of the research, the intervention was lowered to one semester and complaints of this nature stopped.

In the year of the research, only some participants presented and led discussions. Since self-regulation involves self-direction and taking initiative, we decided the following year to require that all participants, in pairs, choose a topic from the list on the syllabus (Appendix A) that they wanted to learn more about, prepare a power-point presentation and lead a discussion. This helped with self-initiated learning and power point presentation skills; the downside was that participants seemed to spend more time worrying about their power point presentations and less time applying a wide span of study strategies.

Participants expressed appreciation that the course was required but pass/not pass; this encouraged them to relax and in theory, since they were "sitting there anyway", they would use the workshops to develop what they personally needed. It also encouraged instructors to "flow" with the group's needs. Basically, participants were highly motivated to learn more effectively ("Learn smarter, not harder"). Nevertheless, during the research year, since "homework" of applying new strategies was optional, only some of the participants reported what they had applied, if anything. In the year after the research, instructors were directed to strongly encourage participants to apply new strategies and report about the results the following

week. Instructors gave "credit" to those who handed in concept maps, shared their more effective lecture notes and so on. Student work was uploaded to our moodle sites. This seemed to increase the amount of participants who applied and shared new strategies. Pass/not pass is not a perfect system, but participants and instructors recommended that it continue.

Summary and Concluding Remarks

What did the intervention contribute to the teacher candidates?

1. After participating in Pla'ot, candidates reportedly improved their (a) academic study strategies, and (b) self-regulation, particularly time management and self-efficacy.
2. Participants candidates significantly valued the workshops as a support group.
3. Self-proclaimed "weaker" participants valued the workshops in the beginning & "stronger" ones later in the semester.
4. "Stronger" as well as "weaker" students expressed a commitment to helping future pupils with similar strategies.

What is needed to succeed and stay in college? Conley (2007) isolated four factors which predict lower drop-out rates of college students: (1) cognitive strategies, such as critical thinking, elaborating, interpreting; (2) discipline knowledge, such as English, math and so on; (3) learning strategies and self-regulation; (4) "college knowledge", such as how to get support, whom to ask, how to manage course load and so on.

The above study supports the claim that, of the four factors needed to succeed in college, the intervention contributed to Conley's two factors of learning strategies/self-regulation and "College Knowledge". In addition, we believe that it contributed as a first step in developing more effective teachers who likewise will support and help their future learners in the same fashion. We conclude that the intervention is beneficial for all teacher candidate freshmen and should be a required workshop. Perhaps in this way, Israeli freshmen teacher candidates will eventually contribute to the Israeli school system by preparing their own students for more effective studying and self-regulation.

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Appendix A

The Topics of Study Strategies and Self-regulation in the Workshops

<i>Academic study strategies (how to learn more effectively)</i>	
Academic requirements	connecting between syllabi, lectures & sources
Lectures	note-taking, strategies before/during/after lectures
Finding sources	library, internet, data bases
Knowledge representation	concept maps/outlines/summaries/Venn diagrams
Academic reading	"active reading" strategies (KWL; SQ3R..); making personal connections; representing text knowledge verbally & visually; rationale for reading research
Academic writing	paragraphing;drafts, knowledge transforming;plagiarism; APA; integrating source knowledge; rationale for parts of research articles; types of college writing (pedagogical journals, reports, summaries, reflections)
Slide presentations	designing & presenting
Test-taking	organization; predicting questions; "cracking" types of questions; relaxation; mind-set; lowering anxiety
Memory	organization, strategies according to preferred learning style, mnemonic devices

<i>Self-regulation (managing myself)</i>	
Time management	setting priorities, "urgent vs. important" rubric, tools, e.g. google calendar, post-it notes, cellphones...
Self-knowledge	individual learning differences & styles: Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic modalities; Right-Left hemisphere preferences
Issues of self-efficacy	positive self-talk; "success depends on factors in my control"; "work smarter, not harder"
Organization	material, surroundings, self

Appendix D

Final Portfolio Guidelines

Active participation and attendance

This is a pass/not-pass course. In order to pass, you must attend 80% of the meetings, fill out the two online questionnaires and submit a final Portfolio.

Final Portfolio guidelines

1. **Time-management:** submit a time organizer in a format relevant to you (e.g., google calendar, a cellphone application, pocket calendar, post-it notes on a board and so on).
2. **Personal initiative:** explain and apply at least two learning strategies from the list of 33 topics concerning study strategies and self-regulation ideas. Choose ideas that are new and interesting for you.
3. **Active Reading:** Submit an academic article that you needed to read in one of your other courses. Show that you were an "active reader" by choosing one of the following:
 - a. **graphic representation** with a concept map, a chart, a graph, a sketch
 - b. **show the main ideas** with colored markers, a summary, marking the margins, index cards ...
4. Write one **correct paragraph** on a subject that is relevant to you. You may use a paragraph that you have written in another course.
5. **Apply one idea** from the list of five recommended sites (see below) for study strategies and self-regulation.
6. **Reflection:**
 - (a) *What did I learn this semester that I didn't know before?*
 - (b) *What helped me in the workshops?*
 - (c) *How do I learn "smarter" (rather than "harder") this semester?*
 - (d) *How have I developed personally (self-regulation)?*

Five Recommended study strategy and self-regulation sites:

1. Study Guides and Strategies (English, Hebrew, Arabic)
<http://www.studygs.net/index.htm>
2. How to study by topics (English)
<http://www.howtostudy.org/resources.php>
3. Dartmouth College skills (English):
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success>
4. Kaye College sites (Hebrew): <http://kaye7.school.org.il/writing2.htm>
5. Learning Strategies (Hebrew): <http://kabayim.com/key2.htm>

The Challenge of Diverse Methodological Approaches

Günter L. Huber and *Leo Gürtler* outline in their paper on "**Reconstructing the Structure of Meaning by Sequence Analysis**" a methodological approach for analyzing qualitative data that does "not start from an overview of the material and then search those data segments, which promise to answer the research question, and finally condense the meaning of these segments into a specific code. Rather, a sequence analysis starts with one critical data segment, often the first segment at all of a text, and tries to generate hypotheses of all reasonable kinds about the meaning of this one segment: 'In which ways can we read this segment? What story does it tell?'" Thus, the researchers interpret "one data segment after the other without knowledge of the following data. Working in this order allows to follow strict scientific principles: hypothesis formulation and hypothesis testing." ... "The method is widely distributed in sociology and in some parts of educational sciences. Psychology, however, has not yet discovered this scientific tool of qualitative data analysis." The software package AQUAD Seven contains a modul for sequence analysis, so the method can be applied and documented with computer assistance. An example taken from educational research illustrates the application of the method.

Reconstructing the Structure of Meaning by Sequence Analysis

Günter L. Huber and Leo Gürtler

Abstract

Sequence analysis starts with one critical data segment and tries to generate hypotheses of all reasonable kinds about the meaning of this one segment: "In which ways can we read this segment? What story does it tell?" The same is done step by step with the following segments until redundancy is observed. Generating hypotheses is understood as a strictly sequential process, interpreting one data segment after the other without knowledge of the following data. Working in this order the researcher follows strict scientific principles: hypothesis formulation and hypothesis testing. The general meaning of a text cannot be deduced by fathoming out the motives, intentions, norms, etc. of the people involved, but by trying to reconstruct the text's objective structure of meaning. This structure exists independently of the states, points of view, and intentions of the actors determined by the system of social rules and norms – or concluded from transgressions of these rules.

This article gives an example of sequentially generating hypotheses, outlines the theoretical background of this approach to qualitative data analysis, and describes how sequence analysis is realized with support of computer software.

Introduction

Owing to the principal procedures of data processing we can differentiate between two general approaches to the analysis of qualitative data: the well known methods of content analysis ("code paradigm") and the less known method of sequence analysis, "the most demanding" method (Reichertz, 1995, p. 225) of the approach of "objective hermeneutics" or "structural hermeneutics" (Oevermann et al., 1979). The method is widely distributed in sociology and in some parts of educational sciences. Psychology, however, has not yet discovered this scientific tool of qualitative data analysis.

Content analysis is performed since the beginnings of a broader reception of text analysis in the social sciences either as qualitative or as quantitative analysis. In the same year, 1952, two trendsetting articles were published by Berelson and by Kracauer. While qualitative content analysis according to Kracauer tries to reveal the categories of meaning hidden or *latent* in the data, quantitative text analysis served for Berelson to assess systematically, objectively, and quantitatively the *manifest* contents of communication. Both authors relate their controversial positions to a debate, which Thomas & Znaniecki (1918) had initiated 35 years earlier with a meanwhile classical analysis of letters of Polish immigrants to the United States. However, the procedure to reveal hidden and latent meaning is not as systematic as it can be. Very important, content analysis following the code paradigm allows to reduce the various possibilities of meaning, but does not reveal necessarily the hidden meaning. What we need is an instrument that helps us to reconstruct the meaning stepwise by following the natural order of the text. Here, sequential analysis enters the game.

Sequence analysis does not start the analysis of qualitative data from an overview of the material and then search those data segments, which promise to answer the research question, and finally condense the meaning of these segments into a specific code. Rather, a sequence analysis starts with one critical data segment, often the first segment at all of a text, and tries to generate hypotheses of all reasonable kinds about the meaning of this one segment: "In which ways can we read this segment? What story does it tell?". Segments can be complete sentences, parts of sentences or each time a particular number of words. We can also analyze genograms to identify family problems or analyze even pictures and videos. Generating hypotheses is understood as a strictly sequential process, inter-

preting one data segment after the other without knowledge of the following data. Working in this order allows to follow strict scientific principles: hypothesis formulation and hypothesis testing. Once the researcher is convinced by redundant findings that no new relevant aspects will appear, the remaining data are used to confirm or to falsify the hypotheses. During this phase of confirmation of hypotheses, the text is handled non-sequentially to find justifications for keeping or rejecting the hypotheses developed during the previous phase of research.

Let us look at an example. The data are taken from a study by van der Linden, Erkens and Nieuwenhuysen (1995) from educational sciences. In this study two partners got one letter each, which was sent independently by one of two children from a summer camp to their parents. The partners were 11-12 year old students of primary schools in the Netherlands. The students were seated at opposite sites of a table and should answer cooperatively a series of questions, which were based on information from both letters. However, the partners were not allowed to read personally the letter of the other subject. The following excerpt shows the actual transcription of the social interaction. Under each sentence spoken, hypotheses are formulated that later can be tested. Hypotheses were stated in a sequential order, i.e. we read only the next sentence AFTER expressing thoughts and ideas about the previous one and wrote them down. Before formulating hypotheses, it is important that a researcher has decided which research question should be addressed. In our case we are interested in "what really happens in this social interaction of the two partners:"

Paul:- *Is in yours to which group Piet belongs?*

- Behind this question is Paul's hypothesis that information about Piet is relevant for the solution.
- A very specific, narrow question.
- The question demands a precise answer.
- The partner is not addressed personally, one-sided communication, more or less an imperative.

Jan:- *No.*

- Narrow answer to a narrow question – consistency!
- No question regarding the background (content of the other letter) of the partner's question.
- No reciprocal initiative (counterquestion, deepening the issue, etc.)

- Paul:- *No, uh.*
- Astonishment about the answer.
 - Annoyance that the hypothesis is not confirmed.
 - Mere repetition; no progress in their communication.
 - "uh" as expression of frustration and indicator of self-centeredness, no change of perspectives.
 - Covering up the frustration (as if "insignificance"): I try something, but it does not work.
- Jan:- *Is in yours, which sport ...?*
- Specific, narrow question, but missing subject (only object).
 - Question is based on the hypothesis that a type of sports is relevant for the solution.
 - "is in yours": Just repetition of former situation, no progress, for instance mentioning reasons for the question
 - Low motivation of Jan.
 - The question demands a precise answer.
 - The partner is not addressed personally, one-sided communication, more or less an imperative.
- Paul:- *Yes, that's here in mine.*
- Narrow answer to a narrow question – consistency!
 - However not just "yes" as precise answer, but "that's here in mine" -> beginning of a conversation?
 - Repetition II: "that's here" – no progress.
- It says "group 7."*
- The answer does not refer to the actual question, but to the previous question.
 - Sort of echo - slow mode of thinking or re-orientation of the conversation.
 - "It says:" unspecific, very general formulation.
- Jan:- *Kees, he?*
- Narrow, specific question. ("Kees" is a male first name)
 - Making sure, whether Kees is member of group 7.
 - Indirect complementation of the previous question.
 - Complete omission of a verb – just exchange of absolutely necessary facts.
- Paul:- *No, Piet.*
- Narrow answer to a narrow question – consistency!
 - Is this an answer at all (to a not expressed question)?
- Jan:- *Who of them does gymnastics?*

- Narrow, but unspecific question – Paul has to guess what is meant by "them."
 - The questioner seems to follow a strategy, but does not try to meta-communicate and explain his question.
 - The partner is treated as a source of information, not as a partner.
 - Jan elaborates his hypothesis, but cares only about efficiency and neglects the social dimension of their work.
- Paul:- *How long are we working already?*
- No answer to the previous question.
 - Direct question about the process of their work.
 - Paul seems not to feel like solving this task -> "How long will this go on?"
- Five minutes.*
- Paul answers his own question.
 - Paul does not expect a promising communication with his partner.
 - Absurd communication – question and answer by the same person.
 - No meta-communication, just indirect expression of frustration.
- Jan:- *Who of them does gymnastics?*
- Repetition: Insisting on previous question.
 - Jan tries to keep the dialogue concentrated on the task.
 - Repetition: Paul has to guess who is meant by "them."
 - Narrow-minded approach: The information is what counts, everything else (social relation) is secondary.
- Paul:- *Well, in this way we do not get very far.*
- No answer to the previous question.
 - Criticism of the process of their work.
 - Attempt to initiate meta-communication regarding interaction and cooperation.

The distribution of roles and the structure of interaction seems to be obvious now. We also observe that the case structure repeats itself. This is seen as an indicator to stop formulating further hypotheses but to proceed with hypothesis testing as well as explicit search for counter-evidence of promising hypotheses. Therefore, we follow a clearly Popperian procedure of falsification. So we switch to the phase of confirmation/falsification of hypotheses. Here is the rest of the protocol:

- Jan:- *(Impatient) Ok, who does gymnastics?*
- Paul:- *Who the hell knows!*
But we do not get very far, if we ask in this way.
- Jan:- *Well, which type of sport does Piet?*
- Paul:- *Yes, good morning!*
We have said this at least 80 times, but you still don't know it.
- Jan:- *Yes, in mine too.*
Do you have anything about Kees?
- Paul:- *Well, now our theme is Jan.*
Jan is in the same group as Joke, but until now we don't have anything about Joke, so let's continue.
- Jan:- *I think, the group is ...*
- Paul:- *And Joke swims, but Joe's partner plays volleyball.*
And about volleyball we don't have anything yet.
Ah, Piet does the same sport as Els.
Well, and we do not have Els yet.
Now, Else could play volleyball.
- Jan:- *Volleyball?*
- Paul:- *Maybe. Not completely.*
Let's look for Els.
- Jan:- *I have nothing about Els.*
That is, in mine...
- Paul:- *You must have something.*
I cannot have everything about Els.
- Jan:- *Honestly, I have nothing at all about Els.*
No, really, I have nothing.
- Paul:- *(unclear murmuring)*
- Jan:- *Hee!*
- Paul:- *Well, we could just write down everything.*

Theoretical Background of the Sequence Analysis

If we mention here the term "texts," we understand according to Overmann et al. (1979, p. 78) "protocols of real, symbolically mediated social actions or interactions, whether they may be written, acoustic, visual, in various media combined recordings or specifications that can be otherwise put into the archives." In short, a "text" as defined by Overmann and colleagues can be everything: a written text, audio/speech, video, pictures.

A text is a protocol of something that really happened and which can be investigated with care. Principally, the analytic procedures of qualitative social research can be differentiated by which of two levels of the text's reality the analysis is focused. Oevermann et al. (1979, p. 367) compare "the reality of a text's latent structures of meaning" with the "reality of subjectively and intentionally represented meanings of a text." Thus, Oevermann differentiates between people's subjective intentions and their objective motivations. The latter can be reconstructed by making use of inter-subjective methods of analysis, the former is unknown to us and will ever be as we cannot perceive people's mind and its content directly.

The latent structure of meaning can be deduced from the rules guiding any interaction. Oevermann et al. (1979, p. 370) mention "syntactic rules, pragmatic rules, rules of interaction sequences, rules of turn taking in conversations, etc.". The people involved in the production of the text, i.e. the interacting persons must not be subjectively aware of this latent structure, nevertheless these relationships are valid and can be deduced from the text. In contrast to this approach an analysis on the level of subjective meanings has to exploit what the actors subjectively are aware of, that is above all their motives, intentions and emotional experiences within the situation represented by the text.

The sequence-analytic process of interpretation follows step by step the sequence of events or interactions exactly as grasped in the text. Wernet (2009, p. 27) underlines the importance of a "basic attitude of interpretation" that "takes the text seriously as text" and does not use it "as a quarry of information or a fair offering a range of meanings" or even "cannibalizes" it. This is due to the goal of the method of sequence analysis to detect within the texts, that is within "protocols of real, symbolically mediated social actions and interactions" (Oevermann et al., 1979, p. 378) the latent structures of meaning and to contrast them with the manifest content: "Texts of interactions constitute objective structures of meaning based on rules that can be reconstructed; these *objective structures of meaning* represent the *latent structures of sense* themselves" [italics in the original]. They are the analytical (although not empirical) reality (and are long-lasting) independent of the concrete intentional representation of the meanings of interaction on the part of the individuals involved" (Oevermann et al., 1979, p. 379). that is, we do not know anything about the intentions of these people, but we are able to reconstruct their motives by analyzing the text protocols. This was mentioned already above; we do not know anything about the intentions of these people, but we are able to recon-

struct their motives by analyzing the text protocols. As a consequence the procedure is realized in a group setting, so that individual and subjective interpretations are ruled out. We aim at inter-subjective valid interpretations and not on subjective images without any empirical base. In a group setting it is much easier to exclude personal ignorance, because we assume that every individual's personal ignorance is different. Other colleagues are less ignorant on topics where we are rather blind, and vice versa.

In accordance with this position, the general meaning of a text cannot be deduced by fathoming out the motives, intentions, norms, etc. of the people involved or "the intra-psychic reality of the acting subjects" (Oevermann et al., 1979, p. 379), but by trying to reconstruct the text's objective structure of meaning. This structure exists independently of the states, points of view, and intentions of the actors as a "social reality" or a "reality of possibilities" (Oevermann et al., 1979, p. 368) given by the system of social rules and norms – or concluded from transgressions of these rules. The objective structure of meaning or latent structure of sense has to be studied independently of subjective meanings and before these subjective meanings are taken into consideration. Meaning is for Oevermann et al. (1979, p. 380) an objective social structure that appears within interactions – and which "for its part has to be taken as precondition for any intentions." This, on the other hand, implies that the way the actors see themselves, their intentions and motives *do* play a role in the process of interpretation, but only against the background of the latent structure of meaning of an interaction – that is, after the sequential analysis.

Oevermann et al. (1979, p. 354) understand this approach as "a rather simple perspective argumenting with really trivial assumptions." However, from these assumptions follow strict methodological consequences. Above all we have to observe "that no information and no observation from later interactive episodes is used to interpret a previous interactive episode" (Oevermann et al., 1979, p. 414). Or in Wernet's (2009, p. 28) words: "You are not wandering through the text looking for useful passages, but you follow the protocol step by step." And in addition: "It is absolutely important for a sequence analysis *not to pay attention* to the text that follows a passage that is interpreted at the moment" [*italics in the original*]. This does not mean that we have to interpret a text beginning with the first sentence or not to omit any passages, but those passages selected as relevant for the research question must be interpreted sequentially. This

ensures a serious scientific work in which we work stepwise: hypothesis formulation – hypothesis testing. We express thoughts about reality and then check (proof) these against what actually happened (in the text).

We already know now that the latent structure of meaning is reconstructed by following the process of interaction step by step. At each point of this sequence the actors have various possibilities to continue in accordance with the underlying rules. However, from this broad field of possibilities only one option can be selected and realized at a time. The sequence of those selections yields the structure of the interaction event (Oevermann, 1991). The sequence analysis is a method that takes seriously the dynamics of interaction and the selective nature of each single step realized in this process. That is why it does not start from an overview of the text as a whole and does not look only for those text segments that are relevant for answering the research question. Instead, the research concentrates on one text segment each and tries to interpret it. Let us take a text as an example that begins with two words:

Speaker 1: *"Hello, bello!"*

The task of the analyst during the first phase of generating hypotheses consists in noting all imaginable meanings of this text segment. Wernet (2009, p. 39 ff.) describes the whole procedure as a sequence of "telling stories" (stories in which the text segment could occur), "forming versions" (that is, to sort the stories by comparing them according to similarities and differences) and "confronting these versions with the real context." Our example could concern

- a speaker, who tries to cause the attention of an acquaintance, who is walking in some distance;
- or the speaker draws the attention of somebody, who does not notice that s/he has just lost something;
- or the speaker opens the door and greets somebody;
- or the speaker meets an acquaintance, but has no time and hushes away (in the sense of "Hello, hello - we'll talk later" or "I do not want to talk now - maybe later").
- or the speaker is indignant about something (in the sense of "Hey, hello – what's that about!");
- or the speaker tries to cause in an unspecific way the attention of a group of people.

Here we have three versions of the exclamation "hello, hello" (causing attention; greeting; expressing indignation). Additional meanings may be possible. The next text segment or the next segments will show, which version matches the context. But: If we read the next segment before we make notes about our possible versions, the scientific procedure would be broken, because we would use knowledge about parts of the text we want to investigate. This just leads to endless loops of self-fulfilling prophecies.

In this way we try to detect the objective meaning of the recorded actions or "expression gestalten", not only the subjectively meant sense of (inter-)actions and their consequences, which a person is aware of and which s/he is able to reflect. An "expression gestalt" is the real manifestation of a person's subjective dispositions. They are manifested in the practice of life. The methodological consequence is – as Oevermann (1996, p. 2) underlines – "that every subjective disposition, i.e. every psychic motive, every expectation, every opinion, attitude, value orientation, every imagination, hope, fantasy and every wish cannot be directly assessed, but only an expression gestalt or a trace, in which it manifests itself or which it leaves behind." This reflects the general conviction in social sciences that the relevant processes and conditions (motives, emotions, thinking) cannot be observed directly, but have to be deduced from observable indicators. What we actually do is to reconstruct and investigate tracks of life along their natural order.

The stance of deduction of non-observable personal constructs from indicators covers almost the complete field of test-theoretical applications in the social sciences. Whenever there are conclusions about persons based on their reactive behavior (mostly marking answers on scales with specific questions, for instance, "Do you like parties?"), methods of the so-called methodological behaviorism are applied (Groeben, 1977).

Consequently the objective meaning encompasses the area, in which the subjective meaning ("I want/think...") is expressed and leaves its traces. These traces correspond with the actual interactions and actions in the real world. In the approach of "objective hermeneutics" the concept of objectivity claims that by applying methodological operations a clear proof of the reality can be established and the interpretation of the traces can be called "objective." However once more, only the traces of the practice of life can be analyzed, not this practice itself in its continuous manifestations. Anyway, the approach claims a level of reality of its analyses that otherwise is claimed only in the natural sciences.

The goal of searching the latent structures of meaning relates the adjective "latent" to the fact that the reconstructed structures must not be conscious and that the people involved must not be able to reflect them. But, once the objective structures are reconstructed, we can deal with the subjective meaning of actions much more precisely. And we can confront people and their world view with ours – which is of practical advantage in real life settings (e.g. counseling, therapy, education, working contexts). The reconstruction is based on the assumption that people have in common (in their language, in their social norms) a set of inter-subjectively shared rules and meanings. These can be perceived intuitively. Thus, on a logical-analytical level of reconstructing the latent structures of meaning, i.e. the structures to be reconstructed, are independent of an actual (manifest) realization of these supposed structures within the actors' consciousness. The latent reality is abstract, cannot be perceived directly, but becomes evident as an experience by means of methodological rules.

Referring to generic and generally valid rules of language Oevermann evaluates the reconstructed structures as objective. In contrast to this position he rejects any formulation or assumption regarding the world of subjective experiences, because they cannot be reconstructed by the researcher. In this sense, the approach of "objective hermeneutics" is close to George Herbert Mead's social behaviorism. Applied in the research program of subjective theories, it does not follow the line of traditional psychological thinking (Groeben, 1986). However, these differences are mostly due to methodological procedures and probably can be solved in future.

The Module "Sequence Analysis" in AQUAD Seven

The module "*Sequence Analysis*" organizes the work with a text into three phases:

- (1) As a prerequisite for sequential analysis the texts have to be subdivided into segments.
- (2) Subsequently hypotheses are generated in turn about all meanings of these segments the researcher can think of; these hypotheses are grouped into "versions" of reading the text.
- (3) Finally, these hypotheses are critically checked using the remaining

parts of the text.

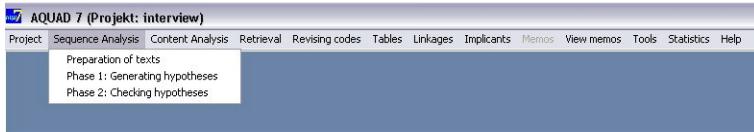


Fig. 1: *The phases of sequence analysis*

(1) Preparation of texts

The first step of a sequence analysis consists in subdividing a text into sequence units: The following possibilities are offered in AQUAD Seven:

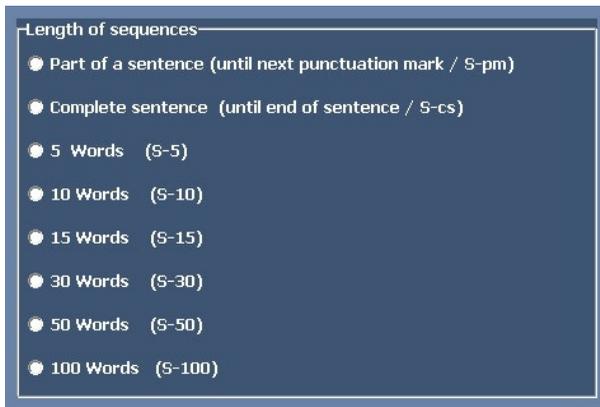


Fig. 2: *Subdividing a text into segments*

AQUAD allows to subdivide the text according to syntactic rules, that is to dismantle a text by parts of sentences (criterion is always the following punctuation mark) or to take it to pieces in form of complete sentences. In addition there are six mechanical operations, which determine a new segment always after a particular number of words. The example, which we have always seen in the beginning the text was subdivided into complete

sentences. To the name of the text "*Kooperationsprotokoll.txt*" a preceding part "{s-k.S}" was added to identify the new, sequentially structured text.

(2) Generation of hypotheses

Oevermann (2002, p. 33) explains that "in a sequence analysis like in real life principally a decision has to be made among the still open options for an open future." The sequence analysis "follows the sequential nature, which constitutes human actions" (p. 6). However, the sequential course of analysis does not mean just to work from the beginning to the end. Rather the task is to open new possibilities or "versions" strictly following the flow of the text – and to close them again, if they do not stand up to a closer examination in the light of later text segments. Thus, sequence analysis is a process of alternating between possibilities or "open options for an open future" (cf. above) and reality, that is to find these options again within the text.

Principles of generating hypotheses

As already mentioned, Wernet (2009, p. 39) gives a simple "answer to the question: What do I have to do, if I want to realize an operation of reconstructing meanings according to given rules, which can be verified methodologically?" The answer consists in a methodological triple jump. In the case of generating hypotheses, the first two of these steps are important: "I have (1) to *tell stories*, (2) to *form versions*" The third step, that is confronting the versions with the real context, will become important during the phase of checking the hypotheses applying the principle of falsification.

Before we start to interpret our text segments we have to clarify, *what the case is* and in which context it is embedded. This encloses according to Wernet (2009) to reveal and to clarify on the one hand the research interest, on the other hand to clarify what is recorded in the text protocol, which social reality it records or – as a concrete example – what an interview can contribute to answer the research question. We start with objective data (dates of birth, milieu, vocations, dates of death, etc.) and only afterwards the text itself (classroom discussions, therapeutic conversations, biographic interviews, etc.) is analyzed. These objective data are analyzed in the same way as the actual text.

The interpretation is guided by the five rules of (1) independence of context, (2) literal account, (3) sequential order, (4) extensivity or totality and (5) austerity (see Wernet, 2009, p. 21-38):

Independence of context:

Of course the interpretation of a text has to take into consideration the context in which the protocol was recorded – but only after exploiting possible meanings of a text segment independent of this context. That is for the time being one invents stories, in which the critical text passage could make sense. Wernet talks about designing "contexts as thought experiments" to generate in a first access to the text possible meanings of the text segment. Wernet also reminds the researcher to put aside any pre-existing knowledge, as otherwise the interpretation would depend on the interpreter's everyday knowledge or from his/her non-scientifically constructed knowledge. Thus, a circular process of interpretation would be started.

Literal account:

The interpretation is oriented exactly, word for word and exclusively at the actual and provable content of the text – not at something that the text maybe would have liked to express. The text per se is part of the reality and has to be handled like that. Two important conditions follow from this principle:

- (1) The text protocol has to be given – really quite natural – in the original version, for instance as a literal transcription of a social interaction, not in form of a paraphrase that is modified by everyday knowledge and social conventions, at least reduced in its possible meanings. Paraphrases, on which sometimes qualitative content analysis is based on, are absolutely inadequate for a sequence analysis.
- (2) The interpretation has to treat the text really finicky. We must not overlook clumsy or apparently inappropriate details, as we would do under everyday circumstances. Wernet demands, "to *weigh the words* in a way ... that would appear petty-minded" in everyday life.

This approach would be inappropriate, maybe even impudently critical in everyday conversations, but it makes the latent meaning behind the manifest formulation accessible. If we must conclude finally that there is more than one possible interpretation, the literal interpretation at least has revealed divergences between what was said and what was meant and thus

also revealed the ambiguity of the text and discrepancies in the life of its speaker.

Another important aspect of literal account is mirrored in the fact that researches should not hold back promising hypotheses because of moral considerations or other personal reasons. There should not be any taboo while formulating hypotheses. Therefore, research subjects themselves should never be part of the analysis team. They could perceive some hypotheses as insulting.

Sequential order:

This principle defines the core element of the analysis, because the procedure is strictly logical and follows a step-by-step orientation. Thus the method gains scientific quality. We do not look unsystematically for evidence for possible interpretations across the text (looking for confirmation). Rather we alternate in a strict sequence between generating hypotheses, condensing them in versions of understanding and checking them within the same text.

Where exactly the interpretation starts, which text segment opens the sequence of interpretation has to be justified based on the content. That is, we have not necessarily to start with the first sentence or the first part of this sentence. Then, however, we follow strictly step by step the order of the protocol. What comes after the actual segment must not be taken into consideration – for the time being. Of course, every text segment is embedded in the "internal context" of the meaning constructed up to now. Not taking into consideration each time the following segment is most important from methodological and practical points of view: "The continuing thought experiment makes clear that the concrete case has to come to the 'decision' to be what it is" In this cryptic words Wernet underlines that he refers to "... the reconstruction of a practice of life that has 'become like this and not otherwise'."

The principle of sequential order does not prohibit to skip over text segments and to select relevant text passages depending on the research question and the progress of reconstructing the meaning structure of the text. However, each new start has to be justified again and the interpretation must again follow strictly the rules of sequence analysis from this point on. Orientation for the selection of later passages is given by the fact that these segments confront or support the versions of interpretation.

Sequential order means also that no pre-existing knowledge about later developments in the text must influence the interpretation, but just the

step-by-step development. It is important not to search only confirmation of hypotheses, but rather explicitly evidence that may refute them. This corresponds with the procedure of falsification in the approach of critical rationalism (Popper, 1934). The reconstruction of meaning has to hold exactly on to the text and has to be checked there. However, we also find approaches to stabilize empirically one's own ideas instead of putting them on trial. Thus, a fair checking of competing hypotheses is doubtful.

Extensivity:

Extensivity or totality is a balancing principle preventing that we follow our subjective or arbitrary intentions when we interpret the text. It demands that apparently unimportant details are overlooked and on the other hand not to concentrate only on apparently important passages. Considering a passage as "important" or "unimportant" are consequences of subjective prejudices. Here again we are reminded to analyze the text stepwise without preferring or discriminating particular parts. All parts of the text must be treated equally. Above all, "... the types of contexts of the thought experiment have to be clarified completely... ."

Austerity:

This principle demands that we suppose normalcy, that is everyday life and its routines, while we construct possible interpretations of life practices. We must "... allow only those versions that can be checked based on the text." Thus the "story telling" is limited to versions that are compatible with the text as a whole. The principle of austerity excludes science-fiction stories, esoteric excursions and above all not justified attributions of pathological deviations from normal behavior in interpretations of life practice.

Deviations from norms, often taken as pathological, attract the attention in protocols, because the variance of possible interpretations is drastically limited. Routines or practicable problem solutions are less prominent, because the open a broad spectrum of possibilities. That is why normalcy is harder to reconstruct than deviations from norms. That is why we should understand "austerity" in a double sense: On the one hand we should always consider normalcy as given and we have to justify any assumption of deviations. We want to detect really important deviations from the normalcy of human actions. On the other hand is the space of possibilities limited by the fact that we interpret only the available text and have to base all conclusions on this text, not on everyday experiences.

We may summarize as guideline: What we interpret must be substantiated in the text – and what is substantiated must be included in the interpretation. Above all – we assume normalcy. The text must prove that this assumption is false.

Grouping the hypotheses into text versions

The rules for generating meaning, which produce at any point in the text sequence always again various options, consists of a set of algorithmic-typologic rules. As examples Oevermann (1996b, S. 7) lists the syntax of language, pragmatic rules of speaking and acting and logic rules of formal and content-oriented conclusions (induction, abduction, deduction; cf. Reichertz, 2000). Oevermann refers to interpretations developed from these options or possibilities as "well-formed expressions," that is grammatically correct expressions or completely normal sentences.

These sentences (or stories according to Wernet, 2009; cf. above) are grouped or sorted. The groups determine types of stories or versions of the text. In AQUAD Seven¹ grouping is facilitated by the operations behind the button "Subsuming hyp." (see fig. 3).

Once this step is finished and *only after* this step these versions are confronted with the reality of the complete text. In this way the interrelation of the general or abstract structure (independent of the particular case) and the concrete, particular practice of life becomes clear and outlined more exactly.

¹AQUAD Seven can be downloaded as free, open-source software according to the conditions of the GNU GP License (v. 3) from the website

<http://www.aquad.de>

An English version is available on <http://www.aquad.de/en>

A Spanish version is available on <http://www.aquad.de/es>

Text: Sequence analysis - Phase 1: Generating hypotheses

Nr.	Hierarchie	Hypothesen	Anfang	Ende	Sta.	Verw.	Typ
1		Behind this question is Paul's hypothesis that information about Piet is relevant for the solution.	1	1			
2		A very specific, narrow question.	1	1			
3		The question demands a precise answer.	1	1			
4		The partner is not addressed personally, one-sided communication, more or less an imperative.	1	1			

1. Paul: Is it yours to which group Piet belongs?

Schreiben Sie hier eine Hypothese:

Status: confirmed falsified

Reference:

Type:

Reoccurrences:

Buttons: Save hypothesis, Subsume hypothesis, Add next segment

Buttons: Retrieve MEMOS: For actual file, For another file, For hypothesis no.

Buttons: Write MEMO, Print TEXT

Arrange the hypotheses: Segment, Status, Typ, Validity, Serial number

Buttons: Close, Help

Address: C:\K3\communication.ppt

Fig. 3: The main window of sequence analysis in AQUAD Seven

(3) Checking the hypotheses/versions

After reconstructing the elementary structure of the text we enter the phase of checking the hypotheses. Technically spoken we follow the principle of falsification (Popper, 1934). That is, we do not keep a hypotheses because we could verify it, but because we could not prove the contrary, namely that it cannot be applied in the given case. There is no forever valid truth, but there are hypotheses for which we could not yet establish proof that they are invalid. Checking a hypothesis comes down to try to prove and substantiate that this hypothesis and the text are incompatible.

In this phase we do not have to proceed stepwise or sequentially. When we search for instances supporting the stories or the versions of text, which we have produced during the phase of generation of hypotheses, it is necessary to "wander" around in the text – and this in a very specific way exactly to find counter-evidence.

Difficulties in checking the hypotheses are mostly due to previous infringements of the rules of text interpretation. Maybe we have not written down and pursued risky assumptions, although precisely the possibility of failure contributes to the explanatory power of an assumption. A hypothesis is strong and has a larger realm of validity, if it takes the risk to fail even because of tiny discrepancies. A hypothesis that cannot be refuted principally is worthless from the scientific point of view.

We want to recourse here to the recommendations for the generation of hypotheses and complete them by giving the hint that any possibility – as small it may be – to understand a text in a particular way should be studied. Of course, thus the procedure becomes rather costly, however then a very small sample is sufficient to cover a whole field of research. Oevermann personally goes as far as to claim that it is able to formulate general conclusions from a single, well analyzed case. Hildenbrand (2006) takes about eight or ten cases as a starting point necessary to reach a theoretical saturation in the sense of Glaser's (1998) strategy of grounded theory; more cases do not promise additional insights.

When may we end the sequential analysis? Oevermann (1996) advises to analyze until we reach the point at which the case structure is completely repeated. The internal logic is reproduced anew in every passage, therefore it is sufficient to study a few text passages very precisely and nevertheless gain a general view of the case. This stability justifies to analyze (only) until the (first) repetition of the case structure – and then search for counter-

evidence. As a result of this analysis we learn about the manifest and obvious as well as about the latent meaning structures of daily routines in standard situations (Oevermann, 1996, p. 76 f.).

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