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# CHILDHOOD REMIXED JOURNAL CONFERENCE EDITION

Papers drawn from the International  
Children and Childhoods Conference  
held at University of Suffolk—July 2017



# WELCOME



**Professor Emma Bond Director of Research and Professor of  
Socio-Technical Research, UOS**

As Director of research at the University of Suffolk and a childhood studies graduate myself, it is a great honour to welcome you to the sixth edition of Childhood Remixed. This online journal has been pioneering in promoting the interdisciplinary study of children and childhoods since 2012. In that time, it has published international, interdisciplinary examples of research excellence in the field of Childhood Studies from academics, professionals, childhood scholars and students.

The ten articles in this edition are no exception. Drawn from last year's Children and Childhoods Conference 2017 when speakers, delegates and students from all over the world congregated at the University of Suffolk, this latest edition of Childhood Remixed offers theoretical perspectives, methodological insights and empirical evidence to both inform and challenge contemporary debates on childhood and children's lives.

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The articles which follow span children's geographies and histories to critically examine the social, cultural and virtual contexts of childhood. They include: histories of Basque refugee children in Britain; migration and movement of asylum seeking children in the UK; young people's identities in virtual worlds; children's agency on school; young children's virtual interest in science; music and young children in Kenya; inclusion and progress; reflections on rigour and trustworthiness in a qualitative study; the ethics of involving young people in research and punitive heterotopia in Ann Turner's *Celia* (1988).

This sixth edition of *Childhood Remixed* exemplifies the academic excellence and rigour, and the collaboration and vibrancy of *Childhood Studies* of which childhood scholars are so rightly proud.

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# NAVIGATION

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**Dr Edward Packard**  
**University of Suffolk**

## **THE MANY HISTORIES OF THE BASQUE REFUGEE CHILDREN IN BRITAIN**

### **Abstract**

The history of four thousand refugee children who came to Britain from the Basque Country during the Spanish Civil War only began to receive sustained attention during the 1980s, nearly fifty years after the event. This development is connected to the controversial movement to recover historical memory in Spain and the gathering of testimony from the former child refugees as they have passed from middle to old age. In Britain, historical studies of popular responses to the Spanish Civil War have revealed national and local aspects of the ways in which the children were perceived and treated by their hosts. This article reviews how the history of the Basque children, or *niños vascos*, who came to Britain has been forgotten and recovered across a variety of academic and public discourses. It concludes with suggestions for future research directions and some reflections on the nature of commemorative activity and the use of historical examples to inform debate in the present.

**Key Words:** *refugee children, history, historiography, memory, identity, war, trauma, exile, separation, Spain, Britain, Basque Country, Spanish Civil War*

On 21 May 1937 four thousand children, aged between five and fifteen years old, embarked on the steamship *Habana* at the port of Santurce near Bilbao. Their parents remained in the Basque Country, then a major theatre of the Spanish Civil War. After a two-day voyage the *Habana* docked at Southampton. In the following weeks the children, or *niños vascos*, were distributed in groups to 'colonies' across England, Scotland, and Wales, along with the 118 *auxiliars* (young women helpers) and 96 *maestras* (female teachers) who had accompanied them from Spain. Although Helvecia Hidalgo, then aged fourteen, recalled her mother calling *sólo por tres*



meses (only for three months) to her as she boarded the ship, by July 1938 over half of the young refugees were still in Britain (Bell, 2007, pp. 14, 133). Helvecia was one of approximately 250 of the *Habana's* child passengers who did not return home after the Civil War ended in 1939, owing to the establishment of a right-wing dictatorship in Spain under the victorious General Francisco Franco.

Bell (2007, p. 9) describes the *Habana's* arrival as 'the largest single influx of refugees into this country and the only one to consist almost entirely of children'. They formed part of a wider evacuation of over twenty thousand Basque children, with France admitting the greatest number. Although the British government reluctantly permitted entry for four thousand *niños vascos*, it refused to provide them with financial support and insisted upon their repatriation 'as soon as conditions permitted' (Buchanan, 1997, p. 110). The children were therefore dependent on the generosity of private individuals, businesses, and other organisations, including religious and political groups. Reflecting on the scale of the popular response, which ultimately involved the establishment of approximately one hundred 'colonies' across the country, Fyrth (1986, p. 242) labelled the story of the Basque refugees 'an epic of the British people's history'. Yet, for many years, 'this episode was neither incorporated into mainstream history nor dealt with at an official level, which amongst the *Niños Vascos* led to a feeling of being *los olvidados* (the forgotten)' (Sabín-Fernández, 2011, p. 22). This roughly correlates with how the popular memory of the Kindertransport of mainly Jewish children from Nazi Europe in the late 1930s has developed over time, as this also involved 'intense contemporary engagement, followed by a period of amnesia, and then the present abundance of memory' (Kushner, 2006, p. 145).

Interest in the *niños* has expanded significantly since the 1980s, partly because a number of them have 'only recently begun to talk openly and publicly about their experiences, with an aim to preserve, disseminate and transmit their life stories to younger generations' (Pozo-Gutiérrez and Broomfield, 2012, p. 10). Franco's death in 1975 did not suddenly make it easier for those who had experienced the Civil War and subsequent dictatorship to share their memories. As Spain transitioned to democracy, 'a collective decision was made, for political purposes, to place a particular

construction on that past, to suppress or de-emphasize those memories felt to be likely to endanger stability and consensus, and to foreground those likely to promote “reconciliation” (Davis, 2005, p. 867).

The voices of the *niños vascos* were among those marginalised by the unspoken *pacto del olvido* (pact of forgetting), yet along with separation and exile, they had endured various traumatic experiences before, during, and after their evacuation. These included food shortages in wartime Bilbao and bombing raids carried out by aircraft and pilots supplied by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in support of Franco. Some children suffered the loss of family members, while relatives who were considered politically undesirable by the Francoists risked imprisonment or worse. Familial correspondence during exile was unpredictable, and parents sometimes became refugees themselves. Children who were repatriated to Spain often faced an uncertain future, while those who remained in Britain endured the ongoing pain of estrangement.

Fifty years after the outbreak of the Civil War, Spain’s entry into the European Community in 1986 symbolised its post-Franco rehabilitation and encouraged attempts to engage with marginalised discourses. In the Basque Country, this prompted the formation of the *Asociación de Niños Evacuados el 37* (Association of the Child Evacuees of ‘37) to facilitate commemorative activity, including annual reunions of a festive and public character (Alonso Carballés, 2011). A ‘major reunion’ of *niños* in 1987 marked ‘their entrance as a collective into the public arena’ and formed ‘a milestone in the history of the collective memory of the Basque child exile’ (Sabín-Fernández, 2011, p. 22). Gregorio Arrien, the Association’s president, has collated documentary materials and has authored various historical works on the *niños vascos* (Arrien, 1988; 1991; 2014). More broadly, Spain continues to grapple with the contested legacy of the Civil War and dictatorship: the 2007 *Ley de la memoria histórica* (Law on historical memory), which seeks to acknowledge those who had suffered, has been criticised both for going too far and not far enough (Pozo-Gutiérrez and Bloomfield, 2012, pp. 10-11).

Given the sensitive conditions in post-Franco Spain, it is perhaps unsurprising that the first major work on the *niños* originated from the

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Basque diaspora. *The Guernica Generation* was written by Dorothy Legarreta (1984), whose Basque father had emigrated to the United States in 1917. The title refers to the notorious German bombing raid on Guernica on 26 April 1937, which catalysed the international campaign to evacuate children from the Basque Country. Legarreta assessed the experience of the *niños* who went to various countries, including France, Belgium and the Soviet Union. Most significantly, she recovered and foregrounded the voices of over one hundred of the children, including twenty-six who were sent to Britain. She interviewed them as middle-aged adults between 1979-80:

Without exception, all of those questioned commented that no one had ever interviewed them before about their exile. Many felt somewhat resentful that their sacrifice during the Spanish Civil War had been so totally ignored for more than forty years (Legarreta, 1984, pp. 332-333).

Some remarked it was 'only with their adulthood and parenting that they realized the true significance of their sojourn abroad' (Legarreta, 1984, p. 325). This included resentment about the neglect of their education while in exile, and the lack of careers advice. Many wept as they recalled painful or poignant moments. Those who stayed in Britain articulated a sense of permanent estrangement from those who had returned, which sometimes included family members, and mentioned their guilt at not having shared life under the dictatorship. Legarreta suggested that the children's specific experiences offered a general model for reducing the trauma of childhood separation and exile. However, she also hypothesised that specific Basque cultural traditions, including early admission to adulthood and a long tradition of 'lending' children, contributed to the fortitude of the *niños* during and after their exile.

*The Guernica Generation's* narrative vividly illustrates childhood life in wartime Bilbao, followed by an account of the hastily-convened arrangements that brought the *Habana* to Southampton. Legarreta highlights some of the agencies who supported the children in Britain, notably the non-governmental and cross-party National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief (NJC) and its offshoot, the Basque Children's Committee

(BCC). Propaganda efforts emphasised the historic amicability of Basque-British relations but a 'wide mental gulf between children and organizers' quickly emerged at the reception camp at North Stoneham near Southampton (Legarreta, 1984, p. 112), where the British adults were unexpectedly confronted by children with strong political views. Unrest at the camp generated negative publicity, with right-wing newspapers focusing on the behaviour of the older boys, although one *niño* suggested to Legarreta (1984, p.125) that the alleged 'delinquency' merely consisted of 'normal boyish pranks'. It proved increasingly difficult to sustain popular support for the children, which declined during 1938-39 amid divisive debates over the question of their repatriation.

Adrian Bell's *Only for Three Months* first appeared in 1996 with a second edition published in 2007. It is the standard book-length account on this subject and builds substantially upon Legarreta's chapter on the *niños* in Britain. Bell shares Legarreta's focus on recovering the children's voices and conducted his own interviews with several *niños*, together with research into contemporary government records, personal papers, press reports, and the archives of organisations such as the BCC. The first half of the book is a detailed account of the evacuation and subsequent life in the reception camp and colonies, while the second part predominantly focuses on the life experiences of the children who did not return to Spain. Bell also provided the narrative spine for *The Guernica Children* (2005), a documentary film combining archive footage, dramatic reconstructions, and interviews with the now-elderly *niños*.

Beyond the accounts provided by Legarreta and Bell, other historians have explored British reactions to the *niños* in more depth. Initially, this formed part of wider analyses of what Alpert (1984, p. 423) has called the 'edifice of humanitarian aid' that emerged in Britain during the Spanish Civil War. In contrast to the government's non-intervention policy in Spain, members of the public and a range of organisations contributed to numerous relief causes. The historiography of this phenomenon has shed light on the ways in which the *niños* were perceived by 'ordinary' Britons; the administration of their stay at the national and local level; and, ultimately, how they became the object of political controversy. Observing the relative lack of outrage at previous humanitarian tragedies in the Civil War, including

refugee crises, Alpert (1984, pp. 431-32) argued that the initial broad sympathy for the *niños* primarily reflected a belief in a specifically Basque (rather than Spanish) alignment with British values. To sustain public support, the BCC made a 'sincere attempt at apoliticism' in its activities (Alpert, 1984, p. 434). Nonetheless, and perhaps inevitably, the children's continued presence became a divisive political issue, especially over the question of their repatriation to Spain.

Drawing upon the historical context of the 'cult of childhood' that developed from the late nineteenth century, Anderson (2017) frames the repatriation controversy as a transnational battle for nothing less than the minds and souls of the young refugees. The Republic and its supporters in Spain and Britain used the evacuated children as a powerful symbol of Francoist violence against civilians 'behind the lines'. For counter-propaganda purposes, the Francoists therefore sought the prompt return of the *niños* to the Basque Country (which had fallen to Franco in summer 1937). They found allies among Britons who, having expected pious young Catholics, disliked the reality of the refugees' political and atheistic identities, and feared that many of the children's guardians in Britain were causing further damage to their impressionable souls. Conversely, the BCC worried that the children would face Francoist 're-education' upon their return to Spain.

The motives of Britons who supported the *niños* more generally has polarised historiographical debate. Fyrth (1986) suggested that the various grassroots Spanish relief efforts – including for the Basques – reflected political solidarity with the Republic and represented an anti-fascist 'Aid Spain' movement, comprising otherwise heterogeneous elements of British society. Buchanan (1991, p. 70) countered that such a movement 'did not exist'. Instead he explained the children's popularity primarily in terms of their humanitarian appeal, albeit this could prove 'brittle', when faced with negative publicity or complaints that the Basques received more aid than poverty-stricken British youths (Buchanan, 1988). Buchanan (1988, p. 156) also sought to recover the 'central, but understated, role' of the British labour movement (such as the Trades Union Congress) in the BCC, in contrast to Fyrth's emphasis on grassroots action and Legarreta's tendency to equate the BCC with the 'essentially middle-class' NJC.

Local studies on the Basque children have alluded to the Fyrth-Buchanan debate. Watson (2005) suggests humanitarian considerations and political motives coexisted in productive ways in Cumbria and the North East. Jump's (2007) study of the Oxfordshire Basque colonies concluded that the plight of the *niños* could not be depoliticised, and the campaign to support them represented the humanitarian veneer of pro-Republic opinion. More generally, Mason (2017) has analysed support for the Spanish Republic within Britain's expanding interwar civil society and advances a more nuanced interpretation of the relationship between political and humanitarian motives, as these did not exist as a dichotomy. The *niños* are not Mason's primary focus, although she highlights the contributions to Spanish relief efforts provided by groups that have been neglected by historians, including pacifists, the Co-operative movement, and Christians of various denominations.

Contemporary 1930s constructions of childhood and national identity also shaped popular responses to the Basque children. Myers (2000) suggests that British refugee policy was influenced by the predominant *tabula rasa* view of childhood, which considered children to be more adaptable and malleable than adults, and therefore more suited for evacuation to Britain. Newspapers reinforced the characterisation of Catholic Basque identity as passive and pious, and sentimentalised the children as 'stricken waifs', ignoring the diverse cultural capital that the *niños* brought with them as well as disconnecting them from the political controversies of the Civil War (Myers, 2009). The plight of the *niños*, according to Myers (1999a), provided a 'discursive space' for the demonstration of supposedly 'English' virtues, including kindness. Conversely, a specifically Anglican construction of English national identity generated some misgivings about the 'suitability' of Protestant England for what were believed to be predominantly Roman Catholic refugees (Myers, 1999b). Ironically, when the presence of left-wing and atheist views among the children exposed the weakness of these representations, popular sympathy diminished, although Myers (1999b, p. 277) further suggests that the refugees' 'cultural capital' facilitated the development of 'flexible identities' that helped the *niños* 'come to terms' with their exile. Using the case study of Birmingham,

Myers (2009) demonstrated that people who *continued* to support the children were those who understood their plight outside of mainstream discourses of English identity, and tended to belong to groups within civil society that provided educational opportunities and discursive spaces for the critical assessment of wider European events. Similarly, the adults who ran the Cambridge colony employed a child-centred pedagogy, which not only helped to solve behavioural issues, but also demonstrated a transnational connection between progressive education ideals and methods in both England and the Spanish Republic (Myers, 1999a; Hawkins, 1999, pp. 102-108).

On the theme of national identity, Davies (2011) has suggested that Welsh responses to the children were shaped not only by the analogous historical experiences of the Basque Country and Wales, but also by a genuine sense of kinship as well as economic links. This generated widespread goodwill and solidarity towards the *niños* who stayed at Welsh colonies, although this was not universal, especially after a well-publicised incident of disorderly behaviour at Brechfa in July 1937. Gray (2008) has explored Scottish connections to the Spanish Republican cause, including a short overview of the only Basque colony in Scotland at Montrose (pp. 113-115) and brief references to BCC activity in Edinburgh and Glasgow (pp. 109, 111).

It is clear that the children, as a highly visible symbol of the Civil War, provided a major vehicle for popular engagement with Spain, across the spectrum of British interwar opinion. In 1999, as part of a study of twentieth-century refugee movements to Britain, Kushner and Knox reflected on the distorting effect of the Basque children's legacy. They suggested '[n]o other refugee group has received so much attention locally either at the time or in subsequent popular and official memory' and '[a] process of selective memory has operated enabling the Basques to be remembered partly at the expense of other refugee groups' (Kushner and Knox, 1999, p. 125). Yet at roughly the same time, Natalia Benjamin, the daughter of a Spanish refugee who had taught *niños* at the Langham colony in Essex, was worried that the children's story remained 'virtually unknown in Britain' and 'valuable archival material was being lost' (Benjamin, 2007, p. 6). Consequently, in 2002 she co-founded the Basque Children of '37



Association UK. The Association (now called BCA'37 UK: The Association for the UK Basque Children) provides a network for *niños* and their families and is a mainspring of public history activity. Its research and education agenda incorporates commemorative work, often in collaboration with community groups, such as exhibitions and the installation of plaques, usually at the sites of former colonies. The Association's website ([www.basquechildren.org](http://www.basquechildren.org)) is an online repository of articles and research guidance, and provides information on recent news and events, which sadly includes a growing number of obituaries of *niños*.

Alonso Carballés (2011) suggests that associations, in both the Basque Country and Britain, have facilitated consciousness among the *niños* of belonging to a historical group, and have encouraged a sociability of memory, in which scattered individual memories are forged into a collective imagined community. Sabín-Fernández (2011) has also explored how the group identity of the *niños vascos* has been constructed via commemorative practices, and the various agendas involved. For example, she contends public events in Britain are often supported by institutions and the media, and tend to have a celebratory nature, i.e. emphasising the generosity of those who supported the *niños* in the 1930s, which depoliticises and neutralises the historical context. Some of the *niños*, including those who do not engage with public events, told Sabín-Fernández how they felt about the ways in which their story has been told. Some expressed disillusionment with the role of external agendas, including academia and the associations. Others complained about the selective editing of their testimony. Sabín-Fernández (2011, pp. 190, 192) nonetheless concludes that the *niños* and their descendants represent powerful 'historical monuments' with the ability to challenge dominant discourses, and they should seek to mould their own identities, free from 'imposed categorisations and dichotomies dictated by agendas external to them.'

Memory forms a problematic element in the testimony of the Basque children. In adulthood, one of the 'boys' suggested '[t]here are some things we have forgotten [...] and some things we have deliberately forgotten' (Bell, 2007, p. vi). Ramón Santamaría mentioned during an interview that 'the memories that one has as a child have to be considered with caution,



because I am no longer a child. I am 83 years old' (Pozo-Gutiérrez and Broomfield, 2012, p. 49). Meanwhile, the construction of collective memory among the *niños* has led to the 'creation of a mythology particular to the group', which has leached into individual stories (Sabín-Fernández, 2011, p. 146). For instance, the widely-repeated idea that the children were leaving their parents 'only for three months' appears to be 'a construct which has been developed as a strategy to cope with the distress of the separation' (Sabín-Fernández, 2011, p. 146).

The intersection of individual and collective memories underpins various edited volumes of testimony that have appeared since 2007. Benjamin (2007; 2012) has compiled memories solicited from the *niños* seven decades after their arrival in Britain, along with some reminiscences of those who encountered them. They are organised alphabetically to provide a 'patchwork of collective experience' rather than a formal narrative (Benjamin, 2007, p. 5). Pozo-Gutiérrez and Broomfield (2012) have produced a thematically-organised oral history based on '30 in-depth life story interviews' of Basque children who came to Britain, including fascinating material on pre-war childhood memories. Their volume demonstrates that, despite being known as 'Basque children', the young refugees possessed a 'very diverse range of regional and cultural roots' from across Spain (Pozo-Gutiérrez and Broomfield, 2012, p. 13). In reconstructing their pasts, however, the *niños* consider the 'Basque children' label an important part of their collective identity and a source of pride (Pozo-Gutiérrez and Broomfield, 2012, p. 180).

The story of the Basque children has also prompted a range of creative interpretations, including drama (Murray, 1990), illustration (Phelps, 2017-), and fiction (Simmons, 2017). These provide further evidence of the diverse ways in which the history of the *niños* in Britain has been recovered since the 1980s. Many other unexplored avenues remain. Although a number of geographically-specific studies have appeared since the start of the century, including Buckinghamshire (Gulland, 2014), Cumbria and the North East (Watson, 2005) Leicestershire (Graves, 2016; 2017), Oxfordshire (Jump, 2007), and Wales (Davies, 2011), significant gaps remain in the history of the *niños* at the local and regional level. Painstaking research in local archives is required, both to reconstruct local charitable networks and to reveal the

ways in which communities represented and responded to the children. More comparative work across time and space is also needed, particularly comparisons of the *niños* to other large-scale movements of child refugees. Investigations into the role of kindness and compassion could reinvigorate the debate over the motives of ordinary Britons in supporting the children, as well as providing insights into the ways in which the young refugees experienced charity beyond simplified constructions of 'gratitude'.

Given that so much British involvement in the Spanish Civil War was non-governmental, the future perhaps lies in studies of the transnational networks that developed as a result of the children's evacuation and exile, such as the links between British and Spanish supporters of progressive education. Finally, there has been little analysis of the interactions between the *niños* and British children. A move away from the dominant paradigm of viewing the refugee children's experience almost exclusively through the prism of their relationship with the adult world could reveal hitherto unknown elements of their lives in exile.

The history of the *niños vascos* continues to be told via commemorative events. Such activity often has a celebratory character, but these occasions should not remove or oversimplify the difficult and problematic elements of the children's stories and memories, and should avoid romanticising what the *niños* experienced. More broadly, there is also danger in invoking so-called 'lessons from history' by drawing facile comparisons between the four thousand Basque refugee children of 1937 and the vast numbers of people across the world who have been forcibly displaced from their homes in the present. As Reinisch (2015) has warned, historical parallels that are removed from their specific contexts can be misleading if not counter-productive in seeking to alleviate modern refugee crises. An acceptance of the complexity and diversity of historical experience is a prerequisite if case studies from the past are to inform the treatment of child refugees in the twenty-first century.

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## **CROSSING BORDERS: MIGRATION AND MOVEMENT OF ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN TO THE UNITED KINGDOM**

### **Abstract**

The phenomenon of people (including children) migrating and moving between countries, crossing borders and travelling vast distances without their parents has been a topical issue and gripped many countries in the most recent years. Managing and securing borders has, thus, become one of the contentious debating points and at times a potential source of conflict between nation states and regional blocks. Building barriers and changing laws governing movement of people between and across borders has been mooted as one of the remedies suggested in many debates. Children on the move have attracted a lot of interest and questions have been asked about the way they are treated on the perilous journeys that they undertake from their countries of origin to Europe. This paper draws from the experiences of the authors working with asylum-seeking young people who arrived in the United Kingdom via the 'Jungle Camp', Calais in France (a transit camp to enter the United Kingdom by any means) between May 2016 and September 2016. Children are conceptualised as vulnerable, lacking agency and therefore in need of protection. The paper also draws from semi-structured interviews with young people at the Jungle Camp carried out by one of the authors in September 2016. The authors highlight the important role and power of the agent (a link between the country of origin and the destination) in the process of migration and movement of young people across many countries. Finally, the authors further explore how individuals cope with the new environment where they learn a new language, culture and adapt to their new social and economic environment.

**Keywords: borders, migration, agent, coping**

### Introduction

Millions of children worldwide are on the move both within and between countries, on their own or with their parents (Reale, 2008). In the process they cross borders and boundaries in search for a better future and protection from the ills and deprivation suffered in their countries of origin. Hopkins and Hill (2008) state that unaccompanied minors experience a range of traumatic situations in their countries of origin including death or persecution of family members, war and personal persecution. Moving between borders has many implications for children on the move which include a culture of disbelief of their claims when they arrive in a new country, barriers around communication and what rights they may have (Anderson et al, 2015). Lamont and Molnar (2002) point out that 'boundaries' and its twin concept, 'borders' have featured in scholarly journals and conferences'. Belcher et al (2015:1) state that 'Borders require layers of discipline, repetition, representation, enforcement and disruption. Whether a border is a line struck in the desert, a buoy careering on the open seas, a barricaded cement checkpoint, a biometric device, borders guard's skeptical gaze, borders are a struggle to erect, maintain, cross, and transgress.' In some cases, borders can be secured by a 'wall'.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Mhlanga (2013:4) argue that 'borders have always existed in visible and non-visible forms but remained as creations of human imagination and agency.' They further state that borders demarcate human populations ideologically, culturally, politically, linguistically, religiously among other things. An interesting debate in the United Kingdom is about 'taking control of our borders' which appear to denote barring or limiting access to entry into the United Kingdom. The main entry point for many asylum-seeking children coming through Europe is Calais in France before crossing the English Channel. Despite close monitoring, a sizeable number of young people slip through by hiding in haulage trucks.

According to Save The Children (2018) more than 1.2 million people reached Europe through irregular means since 2015 which is considered as the continent's biggest wave of migration since the Second World War. The reasons for migration are due to conflict, poverty, flight from persecution, human rights abuse in countries of origin and a search for better life



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elsewhere. Many migrants from Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Pakistan, Sudan, Somalia, Albania and other countries have undertaken the treacherous journey to reach Europe by sea or land and many have not made it as they have either drowned or gone missing on the way. The image of a grim-faced policeman carrying the body of a drowned Syrian three-year-old in September 2015 on the shores of Turkish coast (The Guardian, Wednesday, 2 September 2015) shocked the world. He was but one too many children and families who face dangers (including death) in search of safety and a better life.

A cursory look at migration trends in 2005 suggest that nearly 191 million people migrated to another country an increase of 161 million since 1960 (Reale, 2008). In 2006 an estimated 18.1 million children were living with effects of displacement including 5.8 million refugees of whom 8.8 million were internally displaced. The other phenomenon of migration is that by 2008 at least 3.3 billion (half the world's population lived in urban areas and there was a trend of majority movements taking place in Africa and Asia. To sum it up, Reale (2008) suggests that by 2030 nearly 5 billion people will live in the cities. It is a strong argument to say large scale population movements are driven by economic developments, violent conflict, state decline, environmental and resource pressures.

It is imperative that unaccompanied child refugees have become one of the most pressing matters in the overall migrant crisis that hit Europe in full force in 2015. It is important to explore what goes on for children on the migration trail and how Europe has dealt with child migrants who have been part of an unprecedented wave of migrants flocking into Europe's developed countries. According to IOM and UNICEF in 2015, 25% (age 2-17) deaths in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea were children and 30% of recorded deaths in the Aegean Sea in 2015 were children. In 2016 there were an estimated 26 000 unaccompanied minors who entered Europe and a total of 214 355 child asylum applicants in the European Union between January and September 2015 (IMO/UNCHR, 2015). Helena (2016) suggests that 10 000 children have gone missing after registering with authorities within the European Union.

### **The nature of child migration**

There are a number of terms used to describe children on the move such as ‘trafficked, unaccompanied children, separated, autonomous, forced asylum seekers’ (Reale,2008). Trafficking and migration are two distinct phenomenon and overlaps exist between the two terms. Trafficking relates to irregular use of status of migrants to control them, while migration refers to movement from one region to another (Reale (2008). The experience of the authors while working with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in 2016 suggest that children rarely move on their own and that they rely on others to facilitate their travel as well as managing their activities at point of destination. Parents or relatives often support and encourage migration with the hope of an opportunity for a better future at their destination. Some children move alone in search of better educational opportunities and others against their parents’ wishes or don’t have parents.

For any young child to leave home or rather ‘abandon’ home to face uncertainty and risk is a bold decision made by adults in their lives in the light of the overall circumstances of the family. This leads to relocation, contesting space and boundaries, and (by extension) borders. Individual journeys are indicative of their ability to move across geographical boundaries, surviving and adapting to new conditions and environments to suit their needs. It also involves a departure from routine in the home environment to life determined by the need to survive straight from the point of departure to destination. The authors established a good understanding and ‘maps’ of the perilous journeys from far afield as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Eritrea, Sudan and Ethiopia.

The authors are of the view that the needs and interests of the children on the move are not necessarily part of the big debates both on child protection and migration. Migration into Europe has raised political tensions and fierce debates and raised the ‘political temperatures with calls for taking control of borders rather than dealing with the symptoms and causes of mass movements ever seen since the Second World War. It remains difficult to establish the magnitude of the problem due to irregular nature of the movement, poor record keeping by immigration officials

(UNICEF, 2009) in many countries in Europe as indicated by the number of children who go missing after registration with officials.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted an interpretive design using semi-structured interviews from five asylum-seeking children at the 'Jungle Camp' in Calais, France carried out by one of the researchers in August 2016 and the observations made by the researchers in 10 age assessments between May 2016 and August 2016. Dele Adedeji visited the Jungle Camp in August 2016 and joined a group of volunteers who were cleaning the camp and in the process was able to meet the young people who were happy to share their stories. The interviews were recorded verbatim. The authors carried out age assessments where they noted trends from the accounts given by young people.

### **Sample size**

As stated above the sample comprises of five young persons and observations from 10 age assessments. Age assessments are conducted when there is 'significant reason' to doubt that the claimant is a child (Busher et al 2015). The ages of the interviewees ranged from 14 to 18 years. It should be noted that these were self-declared ages and there were no documents to support the declarations. Three respondents at the 'Jungle Camp' were from Eritrea, one from Afghanistan and one was from Dufour, Sudan. Four of the age assessments were from Afghanistan, four from Eritrea, one from Pakistan and one from Ethiopia. Only one of the age assessments was a female from Eritrea. They are vulnerable due to being young people in a new environment country on their own. They may have experienced trauma in their own countries and during the journey to the receiving country. Busher et al (2015) argue that they may be overly compliant and answer questions in the affirmative or to avoid painful or distressing memories.

### **Life experiences of children on the move**

The extracts from individual interviews provide narratives of the experiences of children who were living at the 'Jungle Camp' in Calais in August 2016. All the children interviewed at the Jungle Camp and during age assessments stated that their journeys were facilitated by 'agents' and all involved money exchanging hands throughout the journey. The 'agent' is an important person throughout the journey on whom the child's life is entrusted to. The agent holds the key and hope to the destination. The descriptions given by the interviewees at Calais were like the observations noted in age assessments. The agent controls resources through a complex network of 'agents' in various countries which include safe houses as well as transport. The decision for a child to leave their home country is often taken by adults or those who have parental responsibility. Those from Eritrea stated that the agents charged about US\$3000 and in some cases, money is paid by relatives abroad. One Eritrean interpreter stated that payment is in cash all the time to avoid tracing the agents.

Children on the move are vulnerable to criminal gangs. Smuggling and trafficking of young migrants is highly lucrative for criminal gangs such as one dubbed 'The General', a prolific people smuggler arrested in Khartoum in June 2016(Telegraph.co.uk,8 June 2016). During age assessments young people from Eritrea referred to someone known as 'Uncle Adam' who was based in Khartoum and was a mastermind of moving young people from Eritrea via Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya and into Europe. Similar structures were described by young people from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria.

It was revealed by some children during age assessments that some agents can change the child's age depending on what would secure them easy passage in various countries. For example, they can present as young (below the age of 18) so that they can be placed in a secure place but easy for them to leave when the agents are ready to move them on. This was said to be common practice when travelling through the Balkans and Italy. There were instances where a young person would have different dates of birth in different countries because of altering age depending on the need to gain passage. One common phrase often heard during age assessments

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is that 'My mother told me my age when I left home' or 'when I was on the way'. The statement was not supported by any documentation.

Most of the asylum-seeking young people from Afghanistan, would claim to have never been to school yet they would be quite sure and certain about their date of birth than most of the details about their journeys and how the decision to leave was made. In most cases the young person had no role in decision-making as this was taken by adults in their lives. Others described physical abuse by agents and detention in some countries like Hungary and Libya. The journey from Afghanistan or Eritrea to the United Kingdom can take from three months to eight months. The journey from Afghanistan spans more than eight countries and those from Eritrea go through Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya, Italy and France to their final entry point in Calais where many come through by hiding in lorries. This may mean months of waiting and many attempts to get on to the trucks at night.

Tesfa (not real name aged 16) from Eritrea was interviewed at the 'Jungle Camp' and said 'in Libya a policeman, who is a businessman, gave the group of travellers a boat and instructed three travellers on how to drive the boat and how to follow directions on a Satnav on a mobile phone. People die on the boat as it is overcrowded and sometimes fights break out between various groups. The phones are thrown into the sea when rescue ships arrive'. Tesfa spent six hours in the sea before reaching Italy. The reason for leaving Eritrea was to escape from repression and running away from mandatory military service. Tesfa's wish is to reach the United Kingdom and get into education as he believes the United Kingdom offers better opportunities than other countries in Europe.

Jamas (15, from Eritrea) said 'In Italy, people are put into trucks by agents with no knowledge where the trucks are going'. One young person landed in Belgium instead of the intended destination (UK) and many do not care where they will end up once they have crossed the Mediterranean Sea.

Amran (16) from Afghanistan stated that:

My uncle and my mother made the decision for me to leave because my life was in danger. I was kidnaped and detained by the Taliban for three months and was trained in using fire arms, before I

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escaped from the Taliban with two other young people. My brother was killed by the Taliban and then my father was also shot one evening.

Amran stated that his uncle handed him over to the agent in Kabul and told him the man will take him to a safe country. He was passed on from one agent to another until he reached the 'Jungle Camp'. He claimed that he was beaten up and threatened by agents on the way. Amran said 'I do not know how much my mother and uncle paid the agent'.

Asylum seeking children experience hardship and trauma while travelling through many countries. Jarro (15) travelled through eight countries from Afghanistan and reached Calais after eight months. He was beaten and detained in Bulgaria where police set dogs on his group. Jarro caught malaria in the jungle where he had spent two months and was determined to try his luck to board trucks daily. Jarro was placed in a UK bound haulage truck by the agent with three others and went through. Once in the United Kingdom he was processed as a young person based on his claim to be 15 years old.

The only female interviewee presented a slightly nuanced account of her journey from Eritrea to the Jungle Camp. There was communication with her brother based in Israel by phone with the agent throughout her journey. There were no reported difficulties throughout the journey. On arrival at Dover Port she claimed to be a minor but changed to say she was married and did not want to be separated from her husband. Upon realising that she would be treated as an adult she strongly argued that she was a child and was accordingly accommodated as a young person. However, on completion of an age assessments it was established that she was in her early 20s and was subsequently referred to the Home Offices to be processed as an adult asylum seeker. She spent almost a year in foster care. The implications for this scenario was that it was a mammoth task to put boundaries while she was accommodated as a young person as more often she was not following what was asked of her.

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In all cases and narratives of the young people, the 'agent' is the authority over life and death. The agent controls what happens to the young person and it is not known whether his role ends when the young person arrives at the destination or extends beyond. Most of the young people seen during age assessments would say they last saw agents in the Jungle Camp when they were put onto lorries. The aim is just to get across the Channel into the United Kingdom and the story becomes what they make out on arrival.

The authors are aware of young persons and adults who present themselves to the authorities as of younger age to give them advantage of receiving services from Local Authorities as a child, such as being placed in foster care where they can attend school and have immigration advantage of being on discretionary leave to remain for more years than would have as a 16 or 17-year-old person. The issue of establishing the exact age is, therefore, a complex one and attempts to do so can only be made through age assessments which rely on the analysis of information and descriptions of the individual's life experiences and personal circumstances before leaving home. The authors observed that the life stories are complex and at times seemed to be constructs made to answer questions posed and possibly with prior coaching by the agents and various individuals after arrival in the United Kingdom. Most of the interpreters were former asylum-seekers and could be part of the young person's wider community.

It was the experience of the authors that asylum claimants who claimed to be younger tend to find it difficult to adhere to routines and boundaries set by foster carers in accordance to declared age. For example, some would struggle to attend school with younger children. There was a typical case of a young person who claimed to be younger than what he appeared to be and yet when placed with a Year 7 classes he found himself out of place and laughed upon by the class and withdrew from school. Those still in the transit Jungle Camp dreamed of the 'Promised Land' and make attempts to cross daily. It is not an issue for them that the intended country of chosen destination may not welcome arrivals.

### **What leaving home may mean for the children**

For any young child or young person to leave home or rather 'abandon' home to face uncertainty and risk is a bold decision that is not taken likely by whoever has responsibility over the young person or the young person themselves. As indicated in the narratives about the journeys that young people embark on from their countries of origin, their individual journeys are indicative of their ability to move across geographical boundaries, surviving and adapting to new conditions and environments to suit their needs. There is a departure from routines in the home environment to life determined by the need to survive from the point of departure and the struggle to learn a new language and culture. The movement of any young person comes at a cost as there are no free rides.

### **Implications for crossing borders**

There are multiple dangers including death e.g., falling off an overloaded truck in the desert in Libya and overcrowding in the boats. Young people described horror incidents travelling through the Libyan desert in overloaded lorries or four-wheel drive pick-up trucks. Anyone who falls off the truck is left behind. For example, a small boat may have up to 400 people, men, women and children. Crossing borders is fraught with many dangers, exposure to sickness, injury, exploitation and threats to life are constant everyday experience of many children on the move.

It can be argued that the European approach to child migration crisis has been chaotic and vulnerable children have been ignored and failed by politicians, border agencies and the public who have stood by watching the crisis unfold. Migration has occupied centre stage in recent political debates in Europe and far afield as the United States. Overall, there is lack of will for a comprehensive approach to child migration. Nothing happens in most countries when a child from Syria, Afghanistan or Eritrea goes missing and a few border agencies file a missing person report. It has often been argued that some countries in Europe adopted a 'wave through' approach along the transit route to Northern Europe and tend to encourage them to keep going.



A study by Anderson et al (2005) concluded that in the asylum-seeking process very little attention addresses children on their own right regardless of whether they arrive on their own or with family members. There is a culture of disbelief about young people's reasons for migrating to the co receiving country. There has been communication problems and lack of information about the children's rights and future conditions. Some of the children migrating are known to have experienced trauma and war. The outcome of this research bears similarity to Anderson et al 's study. The age assessment tool was developed to deal with the disbelief of the claimant's age and as a guide to provision of services for those deemed to be young people (under the age of 18).

### **Conclusion**

It is reasonable to argue that crossing borders is driven by the 'force -field' of two opposing forces of hope for a better life elsewhere or family life under difficult circumstances at the country of origin. The accounts of those interviewed at the Jungle Camp suggest a picture of the destination built on the success of those who managed to get into the United Kingdom and other countries in Europe. Most of the young people on the move have experienced trauma and hardship on the way to the United Kingdom. In the world of easy access to social media and mobile phones some children on the move have maintained contact with relatives back home while others lose contact while crossing borders. The wave of migrants arriving on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and Aegina Sea have caused panic and alarm. Migration has dominated political and social debate with little or no recognition of the plight on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Asylum-seeking children need to be protected from abuse on the journey and all the vulnerabilities associated with migration.

Social protection of young persons on the move should be rights based agenda which should include them at national, regional and international level to ensure that they are safe and safeguarded by effective child protection protocols while their cases are being assessed. Perhaps one fundamental way to address the child migration phenomenon is to strengthen the family unit (in some cases) as a step towards addressing issues of poverty and engendering social protection. Information should be

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made available to families and children at source about the risks related to movement.

The authors draw several points from this piece of work with a small number of asylum seeking children. Crossing borders is a complex and danger laden exercise with multiple players who include the 'agent' who plays a significant role as a facilitator and enabler. The agent wields a lot of power and possess the knowledge about the journey. The children arrive at the destination with a good understanding of expectations about what life would be like. Beamer (not his real name) stated that he was disappointed about the treatment that he got in Italy which he considered very poor compared to the United Kingdom. His bone of contention was that he could not access education in Italy. Surprisingly, he did feel the same about his experience in Ethiopia, Sudan and Libya where he was not offered access to education and essential services.

There are a lot of things that asylum-seeking children do not understand such as placement issues, immigration processes and status. It is acknowledged that some of the children endure extra stress and worry than other young people. Some of them do not understand what is going on and feel they are on their own. Reale (2008) states that as new arrivals they face barriers when trying to access services such as education and healthcare.

The evidence from the narratives of young people interviewed at the Jungle Camp and observations made by the authors during age assessments point to a need for a child-centred approach to social protection and poverty alleviation. Such an approach seeks to mitigate the effects of excesses and negative experiences of many young people on the move for a variety of reasons, even before they start moving. National and international child protection systems should be able to protect, safeguard and be responsive to the needs of all children on the move. It has been the case that in some countries poor record keeping is one of the key factors relating to a significant number of children who have gone missing in Europe. Improvement of information sharing between countries (no information available from most of the Baltic States) will go a long way to account for some of the missing children.

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The big question to pose is 'What are the social costs of being a child on the move?'. Asylum-seeking children are children in search of protection from the host states. There is a need to listen to what children say about their experiences and what kind of support they need. It is reasonable to argue for access to counselling services for the children to address the effects of the traumatic experiences in their lives.

The main limitations of this study were that it was carried out at the time the Jungle Camp was about to be shut down. The study was a snapshot of life experiences of would-be asylum seeking children. The authors would have liked to conduct an extensive study which would have involved observations during different times of the day including attempts to board lorries at night. Further studies should focus on experiences of children in designated and un designated centres as well as the activities of agents or facilitators who featured prominently in the young people's accounts

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## **YOUNG PEOPLE'S BLURRED IDENTITY. LIFE BETWEEN REALITY AND THE VIRTUAL WORLD**

### **Abstract**

Many works focusing on the (new) media (Levinson, 2010; Manovich, 2001; Castells, 2009) influencing the real world reveal, on the one hand, mainly negative consequences to a child (Spitzer, 2013; Spitzer 2015; Carr, 2011) and, on the other hand, positive impact to the many skills of young people (Buckingham 2007; Erneling, 2010). I do not want to dispute these statements, but I would like to examine and dissect the following problem: How does a child's identity change when he or she lives simultaneously in both real and artificial world? Accordingly, the child will definitely explore every day both worlds in order to fulfil his/her needs. The device used by young people is perfectly functional. Any mobile phone or a smartphone with access to the Internet can be perceived as a tool through which a person organises their world due to the technical parameter and portability of these devices. Next, to sensory perception, allowing us to orient ourselves in everyday life and proficient handling of the device become equally important. The child's identity is moulded by both worlds differently and the consequences of this process (psychological, sociological) are a "blurred identity". This term is a result of an unconscious process of transferring some values and behavioural patterns from the online community to the community functioning in real time and in real space. The period of adolescence is the time of reconciling and consolidating the new identity structure which is determined by the directions of the global web's development. An essential feature of the "blurred identity" is therefore its potentiality with all the consequence varying from high adaptability to changes to "natural" schizophrenic behaviour. The article includes outcomes of my survey research which was conducted among 195 respondents (the students and pupils) between 16 and 23 years old. In this research were attended 142 (72,8%) women and 53 (27, 2%) men.

### Introduction

The first part of the title of my article refers to the well-known essay by Clifford Geertz from 1980, *Blurred Genres*, in which the American anthropologist wrote about a new configuration in social sciences, and more broadly in academia (Geertz, 1980). In his opinion, social sciences have changed due to symbolic systems present in humanities, and containing the catchwords: text, drama, game. Their attractiveness was (and probably still is) based on the fact that they provide the researcher with interpretation as a way to reach findings. Interpretation allows us to cross the border of fact and enter the path of associating different senses in order to formulate more or less general universal truths and principles. Geertz referenced on this occasion the then popular works of Erving Goffman e.g. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1969) or Victor Turner e.g. *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (1975), using drama and game theories to explain certain social processes. Thus, the methodological purity of sociological discourse was disrupted, which is a good reflection of the term “blurred genres” coined by Geertz. In my reflections on the identity of young people born at the time of the information revolution, the word “blurred” is a key. In the first part of my reflections, I would like to answer two basic questions: How do I understand the essence of this blurring? What undergoes the process of blurring? The term “blurring”, which depicts the behaviour of users of new media, does not include a negative meaning. Therefore, to evaluate human activity in digital society by using ethical principles is not a purpose of this text. According to this essay, science, education, art and each element of social life are very closely connected with the digital world today. Moreover, children and adults co-create a certain part of cultural goods, e.g. fan fiction, blogs dedicated to art (literature, film, music), or independent journalism, because of the new media environment. The education process as well as the cultural function of libraries and museums have changed positively as a consequence of using the Internet during the last decade (Mills and el., 2015). Therefore, I am trying to grasp the main sense of the complex and heterogeneous phenomenon by using the term “blurred identity”.

Digital society is described by three distinguished categories of identity which were created by Manuel Castells, i.e. “legitimizing identity”, “resistance identity”, and “project identity” (Castells, 2010). The first one refers to the identity created by dominant institutions and ideologies, the second is related to the groups of people who are marginalized (and rejected) because of their values, origin, or social status. The last category of identity refers to the particular ideas of transforming the existing social order towards the creation of, for example, a movement for the protection of common values: peace, freedom, and social justice. Darin Barney examines and characterizes the complicated processes of building identity among members of digital society in his book *Prometheus Wired: The Hope for Democracy in the Age of Network Technology*. According to the author, the rapid increase in the democratization of Western societies is connected with technological progress (digitization), which affects the identity structure of young and adult people.

The term “blurred identity” used in this essay is a metaphorical depiction of contemporary identity which is more dynamic and more susceptible to changes than in the past (Rideout 2013).

### **New media and identity**

In response to the first question, we could somewhat contrarily say that its essence can be explained by the mechanism, well-known for the last 200 years, of dialectical method created by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. The thesis and antithesis reconcile their contrary characters in the form of synthesis, which gives beginning to the next link in the development of a phenomenon. In the cited essay, Geertz writes several times about the need to reconcile different, contradictory positions represented on the one hand by representatives of social sciences, and on the other by humanists. Blurring does not, therefore, have a form of a fully controlled process with a specified direction. It is rather a phenomenon close to the concept of entropy and principles of thermodynamics. We are more or less able to predict the effects of certain physical phenomena connected with energy flow, but the number of unknowns remains high. To me, blurring is more of a process than a state, which assumes its continuous development.



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An observer can only describe one of its stages and formulate conclusions on this basis.

Responding to the second of the posed questions, it is not enough to say that identity (individual and social) becomes “blurred”. Because as the information revolution unfolds, we know very well that identity associated with a specific person, known by their name and surname, can function alongside a virtual identity.

Since the identity on the Internet had no necessary correlation to the embodied identity of the user sitting at the computer, people could elect to take on identities that they did not occupy in the physical world. White people could be black, women could be men; rich people could be poor. By assuming online identity other than their own for the purposes of pleasure or curiosity, people partook in what is referred to as identity tourism. Identity tourism has effects that are potentially positive as well as potentially negative (Doran, 2014, p. 268).

According to Castells, digital society, like any other society, is based on relationships and these relationships take the form of communication (social?) networks. However, unlike the traditional social structures, digital society is characterized by flexibility, scalability, and viability (Castells 2009). These features point out the fact that network society is not determined by the government or state institutions, but it operates on the basis of the global and local scale due to the “nodes” (connecting points), which become a source of human activity. Consequently, the question of identity in digital society is closely linked to the process of identification with the group together with which one may implement certain activities on the Internet. A very good example of those undertakings is fan fiction (Gąsowska, 2015), Wikipedia, or the *Planet Hunters* science project.

When talking about the identity of young people, we must remember that both forms of identity coexist. Building your image using popular apps – Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook – is not the same process that occurs in real world conditions. Nonetheless, the different kinds of social activity in both the online and offline worlds are equally important

for young people. For example, talking to one's friends at school or via Facebook interpenetrate each other and, consequently, co-create a new dimension of the social activity. Therefore, it is difficult to indicate a strict boundary between these "hemispheres" of contemporary life.] "Identity tourism" is much less likely in the latter. However, also in the case of real-world identity the performative aspect must be taken into account. In the early 1990s, Anthony Giddens wrote about it in his book *Modernity and Self-Identity*, proposing consideration of identity in the context of identity dilemmas he defined (Giddens, 1991).

It is worth emphasising here again that the English sociologist's proposal is based on discursive functionalisation of binary cultural, psychological, and moral oppositions, which brings to mind the mechanism of Hegel's dialectical method, based on an active relationship between the thesis and antithesis.

Identity dilemmas, according to Giddens, are a result of complex socio-cultural processes, forming the following dichotomies: unification – fragmentation, powerlessness – control, uncertainty – authority, marketable experience – personal experience (Giddens, 1991, p. 187-201). Therefore, the sociologist's analysis suggests that even before the information revolution, and so before the appearance of the "identity tourist", the identity of a member of the western community was a result of the socio-cultural and psychological balance, resulting from the transformations of the modern world. Of course, thanks to the everyday routine and trust towards the surrounding reality (Winnicott, 1957) possible negative effects of this balance do not need to be severe. Today, the process of blurring affects identity, which – simplifying the matter to a degree – contains some elements of "vagueness" and "potentiality".

During adolescence, the issue of consolidation of identity takes on crucial importance. This was very clearly put by Charles Taylor who wrote that we have to an idea of who we are, we need to have an idea of how we became and where we are going (Taylor, 1992). Any stronger fluctuations in the sense of who we are lead to mental dysfunctions; among them schizophrenia:

[...] the act of the will is like a test of the I. When a person is unable to take it, they lose their own «I», cease to be themselves. The sense of identity depends on the «I»; everything in a person changes and so does the world around them, at times it is not possible to recognise the same person if they were different as a child, as a young person, as an adult, and as an old person, and yet they are still the same. This strangest dialectic of variation and consistency depends, it seems, on the «I» – in a subjective opinion, it is unchangeable (Kępiński, 1992, pp. 213-214).

In this situation, what is the role the new media, which in the last 15 years have become an integral part of a child's world? It is not my purpose to settle the issue of consequences of the virtual world's impact on the condition of a young person, especially on their identity formation process. However, using the results of my own observations and the findings of the survey on young Polish people aged from 16 to 23, I would like to outline the possible (but not certain or confirmed by long-term studies) scenarios of the process of identity "blurring" for teens living in the two realities – real and virtual. Following Giddens, I assume that modernity enforces a sort of plasticity of identity as a consistent feature in the code of the western culture. In other words, I ask to what extent performative identity may become "blurred", and what result this process may have in the future. Among the Polish studies devoted, in particular, to the issues of digital society and childhood, there are interesting findings disclosing children's attitude to new media devices and the Internet environment. The authors of the book entitled *The Smartphone and Tablet in Children's Hands* (Bogusiaa et al., 2016) argue that mobile devices (mobile phone, smartphone, tablet) are not only multifunctional items, but have also become children's "companions in their everyday life" (Bogusiaa et al., 2016, p. 533), and cultural resources affecting it. The authors argue that teenagers change their communication habits by using the numerous apps of the iPhone.

Thus, the children's world, similarly to that of the adults, in its major part depends on the access to the Internet:

[...] the potential impact of new forms of information and communication technologies (ICT) has been speculatively related

to almost every aspect of society, from home to work, from education to leisure, from citizenship to consumerism, from local to global. Perhaps their most radical impact appears to be the blurring of the traditionally important distinction. The result is a flurry of hype and anxiety, a pressure on the public and commercial bodies as well as on individuals to be seen to be responding, a fear of not 'keeping up' (Livingstone, 2002, p. 2).

<sup>1</sup>Obviously, the influence media on the young generations has been starting since 1950s' when television appeared in American households and TV set became rapidly a very popular the part of the leisure time of the young people (Livingstone, 2002; Montgomery, 2007).

Polish academics, representing different disciplines, conduct their research into the issue of using digital technologies by children and the findings of their analyses provide interesting information about the changing of young people's behaviour (Siuda and Stunża, 2005; Izdebska, 2007; Tomaszewska, 2012). Today, children can rapidly interact with digital society because of the Internet, which is the source of their non-institutional education and alternative experience.

### **The survey**

The survey consists of 7 questions divided into 2 groups. The first, comprising 4 questions, makes it possible for us to determine the relevant information concerning the amount of time spent on the Internet and the purpose and manner of using new media devices. The second group, comprising 3 questions, enable us to obtain information about the respondents' attitude to new media devices and to evaluate their transition from online to offline. Furthermore, the last question "What do you usually do when a device with the access to the Internet that you are using shuts down because the battery has run out?" indicates the respondents' behaviour in this particular situation. They could mark more than one answer to the questions in the first group, but only one answer to questions in the second group.

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Before I present the initial findings of the conducted research, I will mention some relevant data to outline the background information about the Polish society (*Digital, Social & Mobile in 2015*).

- 25 million Poles are systematic Internet users,
- 13 million Poles use social media,
- 9 million Poles use mobile devices for entertainment and professional purposes,
- There are 56 million mobile phones in Poland,
- Poles spend 5 hours a day in front of the computer,
- For 2 hours a day, Poles join the internet community via mobile devices,
- 56% Poles have constant access to the Internet.

I have formulated the survey questions in such a way as to get information on the conditions in which a young person uses a device. I therefore took into account the length of the period of using a device, the accompanying goal, circumstances, and the young person's relationship to the object. The results, as it is easy to guess, were not surprising. That is confirmed by the fact that teenagers are most likely (76%) to use a smartphone, on average for at least till 6 hours a day (34% plus "It is difficult to say" – 42%), for the purposes of socialising, entertainment, or education. Almost half of the respondents were unable to precisely define how much time they spend online during the day, which is probably a result of the very strong bond between the online and offline life of young people, or these data refer to the result of the phenomenon of immersion (Costello, 1997). Only a few per cent of respondents (3%) do not accept the device and treat it as a necessary evil. The results are more mixed in terms of the way young people rate the transition from the virtual world to real life. Although for most it is not a problem (83%), some (2%) admit to transferring behaviours from virtual reality to the real world. This, of course, is an effect of immersion, and not teenagers' issues with the ability to assess a situation. Trial tests I have carried out made me realise several facts which may, but do not need to, be confirmed by broader survey activities. The findings of the survey show that young people most often use both a smartphone (girls: 71%, boys: 87%) and a notebook (girls: 30%, boys: 43%). The least popular device among both girls and boys is the tablet (girls: 9.8%, boys: 6%). Next, boys use a desktop computer much more often than girls (girls: 22%, boys:

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41%). This difference may be related to the fact that boys are more likely to play computer games and, therefore, need a very good graphics card, which desktop computers are primarily equipped with. The investigation also shows that 44% of girls and 38% of boys are unable to precisely determine how much time they spend online. The fewest respondents declared that during the day they were spending about 1 hour (girls: 9%, boys: 6%, and over 6 hours (girls: 15%, boys: 16%).

The findings of the research related to the patterns of behaviour of young people online show that teenagers, first of all, communicate with friends (girls: 96%, boys: 95%). Next, the searching for various forms of entertainment on the Internet, e.g. watching movies and listening to music, are also very popular among the respondents. Every third respondent makes purchases online (girls: 37%, boys: 34%) and half of teenagers look for information which would be helpful for them at school or college (girls: 54%, boys: 47%). Very few of the respondents actively participate in the digital community by posting videos, photos, or music, although boys (26%) tend to do so more often than girls (11%). Only 4% of girls and 5% of boys among the respondents write a blog. Public transport (girls: 92%, boys: 87%) and school or university (girls: 77%, boys: 87%) are places where young people frequently use new media devices. The respondents very often use a mobile phone during social meetings (girls: 70%, boys: 73%), family gatherings (girls: 39%, boys: 49%), and also meals (girls: 45%, boys: 47%). The mobile phone is used by both girls (21%) and boys (20%) during meetings with friends. More than half of the respondents (girls: 58%, boys: 55%) have a positive attitude to their own new media devices, while the smallest percentage of the young people evaluate this feeling as negative (girls: 3%, boys: 5%). The majority of the respondents declared that they do not have any problems with the moment of transition from the online to the offline world (girls: 84%, boys: 77%), and only a few of them confirm that they confuse the online world with the offline one for a while (girls: 3%, boys: 2%).

### **Conclusions**

The device used by young people is perfectly functional. Its technical parameters and portability make us look at a mobile phone or a smartphone

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with Internet access as at a tool through which a person organises their world. Just as the invention of a telegraph completely changed journalism (the issue is related to the speed of obtaining information and distributing them over any distance), so a mobile device connected to the Internet modifies the relationship between the teenager and the world. Next to sensory perception, allowing us to orient ourselves in everyday life, proficient handling of the device becomes equally important.

New media devices have become an integral component of all steps performed by a teenager. The device is active during work (at school and university: 80%) and of course leisure during the socialising time (71%), the time spent “in isolation” at home (98%), and the time spent with family (42%) and within meals (45%). All activities performed by a teenager in the real world – other than sleep – are performed using the device. We should also speak about the high fluidity between these two categories of activity, rather than functioning within even conventionally marked boundaries. Only 5% respondents in nearly 200 indicated the church as a place where they use a smartphone.

I optimistically assume that stimuli indirectly and directly affecting the development of a teenager’s identity coming from the real world (family, school environment, peer groups) and the virtual world (online community) have similar values. Therefore, cultural patterns ingrained in a community will be distributed together with those which cross the boundaries of national cultures and are based on the mechanisms of fighting for values within the online community which Manuel Castells has written about many times (Castells, 2009). In cultural terms, network society offers easily renewable diversity values and inspires their members of the need for communication and interactivity.

The term “blurred identity” is a result of an unconscious process of transferring some values and behavioural patterns from the online community to the community functioning in real time and in real space. The period of adolescence is the time of reconciling and consolidating the new identity structure, determined by the directions of the global web’s development. An essential feature of the “blurred identity” is therefore its potentiality with all the consequences: from high adaptability to changes,

to “natural” schizophrenic behaviour<sup>2</sup>. Certainly, there is no disease such as “natural schizophrenia” but the existence of the multiple personality disorder is quite clear. The term “natural schizophrenia” is used figuratively in this essay and refers to the vibrant structure of a new media user’s identity.

<sup>2</sup>Contrary to common opinion Nathan Jurgenson, young sociologist, presents different point of view on the relationship between real world and the Internet. He argued in his essay that a young and adult people who use a new media devices in order to connect with social network do not shift real world in the virtual space. “I am proposing an alternative view that states that our reality is both technological and organic, both digital and physical, all at once. We are not crossing in and out of separate digital and physical realities, ala The Matrix, but instead live in one reality, one that is augmented by atoms and bits. And our selves are not separated across these two spheres as some dualistic “first” and “second” self, but is instead an augmented self. A Haraway-like cyborg self-comprised of a physical body as well as our digital Profile, acting in constant dialogue. Our Facebook profiles reflect who we know and what we do offline, and our offline lives are impacted by what happens on Facebook (e.g., how we might change our behaviours in order to create a more ideal documentation).” (Jurgenson, 2011).

The term “natural schizophrenia” strengthens the meaning of the term “blurred identity”. Both concepts serve to highlight the different (though not opposing) conditions in which a person functions, spending a large part of their time (school, work, entertainment) online. The spread of information on the Internet is meant to strongly and decisively affect the human mind or awareness. Thus, regardless of whether the subject of a text is fashion, sport or politics, the message on the Internet is based on the process of evoking strong emotions. The communication processes in digital society, which was described by Castells, drew our attention to the fact that convergence (Jenkins, 2006) is not only a technical matter, but above all one of culture, taking place in the minds of new media users (Castells, 2009). According to Castells, the process of managing emotions plays a crucial role in the communication in digital society. Various pieces of information get through to the users of the new media more effectively because of the particular framework of multimedia streams which have direct impact on human emotions and the process of understanding the information (Lakoff, 2008; Castells, 2009).



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Almost all of my outcomes are the same for women and men. I captured one a very interesting, maybe a strange, disparity between my female and male respondents. It is connected with the last question of my survey: "What do you usually do when a device with Internet access that you are using shuts down because the battery has run out (choose only one answer)? - I immediately look for a charger and a power outlet; - I don't care and put the device aside;- I feel discomfort". If I'm honest this result surprising me. Prior to proceeding to conduct the surveys, I had assumed that girls and boys would react in the same way to their device's battery running flat. I thought young people (both boys and girls) would be more determined in looking for a power source for their device than older ones. I had assumed that my older respondents (even by 5 years) should distance themselves from the world more than the youngest people. I was wrong in my forecasts. Thus, the accurate analysis of the outcomes was surprising.

### Women

- I immediately look for a charger and a power outlet 87 – 61%
- I don't care and put the device aside 32 – 23%
- I feel discomfort 23 – 16%

### Men

- I immediately look for a charger and a power outlet 17 – 32%
- I do not care and put the device aside 21 – 40%
- I feel discomfort 15 – 28%

What does mean this outcomes? Young women are the most sensible and practical than young men? Yes, it is possible. Moreover, young men cope with the use of the smartphone worse than young women. Maybe it is true. Nevertheless the mobile phone probably has a female sex because it is not only useful devices but it becomes addendum our identity. I suppose, this item adorns human body like a jewellery.

To sum up, the findings reveal that the new media devices (first of all, both the mobile phone and the smartphone) with access to the Internet do not have, according to the respondents' opinions, a negative influence on their functioning in the offline world. Therefore, they treat online reality as a dimension complementary to the offline world and their online socio-cultural activity can be an extension of the scope of their offline

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activity. In other words, one could say that young people are pragmatic in their treatment of the Internet and they are trying to use the opportunities offered by the “global village”.

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Gemma Hearne

## TO WHAT EXTENT IS CHILDREN'S AGENCY ARTICULATED WITHIN SCHOOL?

### Introduction

The socially constructed nature of childhood determines children's everyday experiences. Children's agency has become part of this social construction which is imbedded in a rights discourse. Schools have arguably therefore incorporated agency as to abide by a child's right to participate in decision making; influenced by the UNCRC (1989) and the 'new' sociology of childhood (James, Jenks and Prout, 1998). Agency is a complex and much debated topic and in its simplest terms can generally be understood as being an action of choice that can lead to change (Prout & James, 2003). Yet it can be argued many instances of children exercising agency in school are not really provoking any real change in the present lives of children. The hierarchal nature of the school and power relations can often mean the voices of children are excluded from participating in important decision making, children are commonly still seen in this process of 'becoming' (Leonard, 2016). In 1935 John Keynes wrote 'The real difficulty lies not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones...' (2009 p.4).

This paper critiques the role of agency within schools and argues it has become a counter-intuitive concept. Agency suggests empowerment; however, although imbedded in rights legislation it is articulated so that agency is controlled by adults, which can be beneficial for schools as this concept can be used to control and maintain existing power relations. This is due to an increased political and social need to control and construct childhoods to produce the desired adult citizen (Clark and Richards, 2017). Agency can be seen to have the desired attributes the state wants in adult citizens therefore these are promoted in childhood. The concept of hegemony will be used to explore Gramsci's (1973) arguments to the mostly accepted subordinate positioning of children (Rose, 2011) and how institutions such as the school can transmit this wanted culture. A theoretical exploration of the presence and indeed absence of agency in

children's school life will enable a greater understanding of its current place in the social construction of childhood.

### **A brief exploration of agency within schools prior to its current social and discursive popularity**

Historically little agency is evident and there has been tension around the extent to which young children can be considered as agentic beings. This perspective is informed by traditional discourses which hold an 'image' of children as incompetent and immature. The introduction of mass schooling meant the segregation of children from adults where children became the objects of social and administrative control (Foucault, 1977). Children's agency was restricted (Qvortrup, 1994) and within schools it was adults who maintained hierarchy, control and authority. Children were expected to be obedient and subordinate through moral and physical discipline (Shor, 1992) which reinforces unequal power relations between children and adults and can enforce hegemony through threat of punishment (Lukes, 2005). Foucault (1979) states the 'penitentiary technique' used in schools to maintain the status quo by punishing those who deviated from the 'norm' rather than the act itself, not only prevented further acts of resistance but also rewarded compliance to the norm. Such compliance suited the newly emerging industrialised nation state and became hegemonic in its capacity to shape how children were treated, educated and cared for generally. This use of discipline and punishment can be linked to the dionisan child (James, Jenks and Prout, 1998, p. 10) and how children were constructed as needing to be 'trained' to be docile 'good citizens'.

Children were also effectively controlled by a process of subdivision into fixed positions of age, gender and ability which enabled the normalising of timetables, exams and surveillance (Foucault, 1977). Gramsci (1973) argued these 'norms' become people's false consciousness which are then seen as common sense. Gramsci (1973) contended that hegemony operates through the control of people's false consciousness by spreading the desired culture through state institutions such as the school. For example, for children in schools, following these 'norms' becomes common sense, for which most accept without questioning. This becomes problematic as false consciousness reduces one's ability to be powerful and take individual action (Gramsci 1973). The routines within school that influence how space

and time are organised can therefore produce hegemony through the hidden curriculum and presume expected behaviour between teacher and pupil (Rose, 2011).

It wasn't until the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's that children's individual rights began to be recognised. During this time society viewed children as dependant on adults for protection and provision and in need of control. Children were seen to lack rationality, competence and agency (Jones and Welch, 2011). Individualism was not regarded as essential, therefore, although children's rights were beginning to be discussed, they were primarily focused on protection rather than children having their own rights as equal citizens (Smith, Lister, Middleton, and Cox, 2005). Adults determined what's best for children and therefore took responsibility in making rational decisions (Pilcher and Wagg, 1996). According to Pilcher and Wagg (1996, p. 97) it became necessary to have 'rights to protect children rather than participation rights to facilitate their involvement in decision making'. This focus perpetuates rather than challenges the unequal power relations whereby adults are seen as protectors and decision makers for the child (Jones and Welch, 2011).

### **In what ways have concepts of agency been incorporated into the school?**

Disciplinary education, and its associated features of passive pupils were beginning to be questioned in the mid twentieth century. According to Lee (2009, p. 80) the 'argument for 'deschooling society', for breaking the connection between education and rigid adult authority' was 'part of a broad cultural movement for the liberation of individual potential'. A more 'child-centred' society was being pursued in which children were seen as citizens of the future, with rights, needs and voices, as social actors in their own right (Hennum, 2014). A child focused society meant social policies were becoming more favourable for children with an emphasis on individual rights and a growing scientific knowledge underpinning these policies. Arguably, one reason for the greater value attributed to children at this time was the development of the welfare state in which social investment targeted children as it was in the state's best interest to expand resources on children who are seen as human capital of the nation's future (Dobrowolsky, 2002).



Despite such progressive developments, many historical educational practices are still present in modern schools, however, while Foucault (1977) highlights the school in the role of the creation of 'docile bodies', children do not always conform totally to adult norms. Power is not exclusively held in a particular group over another, as individuals can simultaneously be exercising such power (Devine, 2011). Giddens (1984) concept of power contends that it circulates between people through social interaction. Ensuring that, within the context of the school the power the teacher has in the classroom is never complete and power relationships between teachers and students can be both resisted or accommodated by children (Devine, 2011).

Advances in the sociology of childhood have highlighted the positioning of children in relation to adults and emphasised the implications of children's minority status for their capacity to be taken seriously within society (Qvortrup, 1994; James et al, 1998) The questioning of children's status directly links to citizenship and the ability for children to fully participate as members within society. The advance of citizenship can arguably be seen to be secured under neo liberal political conditions (Hindess, 2010). The rise of neoliberalism resulted in society moving away from a more collective society to one that privileges individualism (Alcock and May, 2014) therefore making agency more important. However, the extent to which this is ascribed to children is still very much contested (Lister, 2007). Wyness (1999) asserts that the processes of individualism can limit social membership to those that are considered as both rational and responsible which takes a classical liberal view.

Within the UK, social policy to promote citizenship can be seen to target young children in schools due to children being regarded as more receptive to citizenship initiatives which 'reflects an understanding of young peoples' status as ambiguous or lacking (Devine, 2002). Within the school where power is experienced it can be helpful to look at Marxist theories which although not specifically related to children, give an idea of how class and power can influence the extent to which the school can serve adults interests. It can be argued that the state wants ideal neo liberal citizens who are autonomous and self-relying individuals (Raby, 2014), therefore institutions such as the school can be used to promote

individualism (Oswell, 2013). Children become involved in the decision-making process as a way to create ideal citizens, who are autonomous, individualised self-reliant and responsible. Therefore, these skills can be shaped in childhood for a neo liberal climate (Raby, 2014). This highlights children's future citizenship and does not necessarily help children in the present. Smith, Lister, Middleton and Cox, (2005, p. 425) argue that UK social policy assumes that young people lack citizenship which is not based on 'concepts of citizenship, but on how youth is (mis)perceived'. Children are seen as 'citizens in the making' which is also reflected in policy where children's citizenship is referred to in the future tense (Marshall 1950, p. 25). However, children need to be able to strengthen their skills now as well as in the future as acknowledging children in the present recognises them as active agents (Innvernizzi and Williams, 2008).

Since the introduction of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child (1989) there has been increasing recognition that children should be able to participate in decisions that affect their lives. In recent years' policy makers, and educational institutions, amongst others, have promoted ways in which children can be more involved in decision making (Cox, Dyer, Robinson-Pant and Schweisfurth, 2010). The 1988 Crick report recommended the development of school councils as part of a developing citizenship curriculum. This highlights the social construction of childhood in which society now prioritises children's voices and consultation. The 2002 Education Act required schools to give a 'voice' to children, with many schools choosing to incorporate school councils to abide by a child's right to participate in matters affecting them.

The advantages of democratic schooling became a driving force for school councils and have been presented as a solution for the many criticisms of an 'over-prescriptive and hierarchal schooling system' (Rowe, 2003, p. 45). However, school councils tend to promote responsibility for future citizenship revealing a developmentalist view of childhood where skills developed as part of being a member will not necessarily be employed in children's present school life but when they leave and reach adulthood (Veitch, date unknown). Consequently, children's rights are often portrayed as responsibilities in which children are arguably given only in terms of what adults or society in general want or need. Therefore, the school

council can be viewed as tokenistic and a way of giving children agency but within narrow constraints, which ultimately reinforces the same power relations and social control. Cox et al (2010, p. 1) argues 'it is important to go beyond token decision making at an early age, to give children a true sense of agency in their own lives, and not only to rehearse for adulthood'.

Smith (2007) cites several studies indicating children have little faith in the effectiveness of school councils. For children, participation in school councils can arguably be more about providing opportunities for children to practice responsible attitudes rather than making important decisions that could lead to change. For children's participation to be effective, a recognition of children as component social agents in which their views are seen as both valid and important is required (Raby, 2014). Percy-Smith and Thomas (2009) argue that despite many formal structures for participation being developed such as the school council, the reality for most children is they may not actually feel empowered. Wyse (2001) asserts that participation in schools falls short of a transformatory vision and critiques the school council as being simply a product of the curriculum.

### **The reality vs rhetoric of children's agency in schools.**

Wyness (1999) states that despite the UNCRC being highly ratified, children remain marginalised and can still be classed as a minority group as a result of social exclusion and holding a subordinate position in relation to adults (Qvortrup, 1994). How we conceptualise children within society, their rights and abilities' affect what decisions adults believe children should make and when. The UNCRC (1989) states children should be able to make decisions which affect their lives in accordance with the child's age and maturity (article 12). This reiterates adult power and control whereby children are perceived to lack competence at a certain age and Skelton (2008) states that adults hold power in relation to children through age difference which is seen as a marker of power. Therefore, children's participation and power within society is inextricable with a maturation discourse (Alamen, 1994) in which a child's 'principal way of gaining autonomy and status is growing up' (Nasman, 1994, p. 187). However, becoming competent or responsible citizens is not necessarily age related but depends on numerous influences;

social, cultural and economic factors; competence is not limited to adults, nor is incompetence restricted to children (Unicef, 2007).

Constructing children as incompetent legitimises the limits placed on children's civic rights, which becomes problematic as children can be recognised as competent and holding strengths which are built on through social experiences and interactions (Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2017), making even the youngest members of society competent and social participants. This prejudice relates to concepts of 'ageism' (Hendrick, 2017). According to Franklin and Franklin (1996) ageism intensifies powerlessness inherent in being oppressed by structures such as social class, race and gender. Power between individuals is not only relational but such relations can become normative and self-regulating 'to the extent that opposition between dominant and subordinate person is limited' (Hendrick, 2017, p. 56). In schools, children may be unable to contest their subordinate position due to the subtle and routinized way in which these power relations are exercised. As Franklin and Franklin (1996) state 'The most effective exercise of power is a quiet affair in which individuals and groups may be ignorant of their subordination'. This can be linked to hegemony and false consciousness (Gramsci, 1973) whereby the invisible mechanism of control in schools can reinforce children's lower status through constant experience, reinforcement and mostly unquestioned 'norms' (Rose, 2011). In this sense, 'the school reflects, if not amplifies the child's lack of social status' (Wyness, 1999).

Leonard (2016, p. 126) argues 'Children may accept their 'limited' agency in the present because they can project to a future where their agency becomes more pronounced or where their resources for practicing agency become less problematic'. The school is seen as a pathway to success where children do not necessarily approve of schooling but accept it and its role in helping to secure future employment (Devine, 2002). Tilly (1991) argues this future reward is the incentive as to why subordinates comply to hegemony (Rose, 2011). However it is argued that children can resist the dominant hegemony by challenging school structures and some are able to work within in it, manipulating it for their own agendas (Tilly, 1991); thus, demonstrating agency.

Definitions of child may differ socially, culturally and temporally, but recent constructions of children acknowledge they have the capacity to understand the consequences of their decisions, to think abstractly and consider the interests of others (O'Neil, 2014). Thus developing children as mature in their decision-making capabilities similar to adults. Therefore, irrespective of age, children can demonstrate the capability to make decisions based on an understanding of not only their own but of others interests (Dockett and Perry, 2011). It is therefore questioned why schools continue to prevent children from being regarded as competent social agents (Dockett and Perry, 2011). King (1989) contends that teachers draw on a developmentalist child discourse using this as justification for children to be directed, contained and controlled.

Effective school management is arguably about raising standards, which are largely measured by test results within a performativity culture; the aim to produce a highly skilled workforce for today's economy (Jeffrey and Troman, 2012). With a 'philosophy of attainment over entitlement' Chitty (2015, pg 32) argues the 'current focus on skills acquisition fashions education as an assembly-line process for the production of 'the citizen''. The school is required to uphold government policy and initiatives which are regulated by local authorities and Ofsted through being regularly monitored and measured (Perryman, 2012). Therefore, power and authority in policy formation lie outside of the school and far from the children themselves. Within the school context, participation for children can be seen as more of a 'tick box' for the Ofsted inspection (Chitty, 2015), rather than children being able to make decisions that could lead to change. This growth of a consultation culture (Taylor, 2007) has been criticized for controlling the participation offered to children. According to Chitty (2015, pg 33) the 'agenda for consultation exercises is invariably not set by those who are consulted, and as such can be seen as a mechanism for affording legitimacy to the given programme of change and maintaining the status quo.'

Challenges teachers may face in listening and consulting with children can confront traditional hierarchies between teacher and student (Rose, 2011). The challenge to children's participation within schools lies in finding ways teachers might promote children's agency in practice (Mashford-Scott and

Church, 2011). Specifically, it may be problematic to promote individuality and the right to act autonomously whilst also maintaining cooperation and group cohesion (Hendy and Whitebread, 2000).

Advocacy for democratic schools and rights-based participation have been introduced to try and counter children's domination by adults and to increase children's involvement in school governance. Yet schools still mostly involve children in passive ways that are often tokenistic. Children's participation in decision making is arguably rooted within western neo-liberalism which favours individual autonomy more than citizen interdependence (Raby, 2014) Therefore schools arguably encourage children's participation in decision making as a way to prepare children with attributes such as individual responsibility and autonomy to become effective neo liberal citizens. Agency is therefore hidden and promoted within rights legislation in which the school then promotes, however this only deepens adult power and control and arguably has made children's agency hegemonic (Gramsci, 1973).

Agency is part of the social construction of childhood despite being a vague term that is often contradictory (Richards, Boggis and Clark, 2015). The imbedded contradictions within school on the reality vs rhetoric of children's agency within the existing economic and social order make it difficult for children to be afforded greater voice and consultation (Devine, 2002). Despite the vast changes in society and subsequently the way childhood is constructed, schools have changed very little since their introduction and continue to be hierarchical with issues such as empowerment and democracy perceived as threats to the teachers control and authority within school (Spencer, 2000). The mechanisms of control schools exhibit position children as subordinate and subsequently have negative implications for children's perception of their rights and status. This control is also problematic for children constructing themselves as citizens with a voice in which they are able to express and be heard (Devine, 2002).

For change to occur, adults need to give children a true sense of agency in their present lives and for children to also recognise themselves as active agents. This agency may be linked with individual capacities yet

does not need to foster individual agency linked to state and subsequently school requirements but should incorporate social relations (Raby, 2014). Schools need to move on from traditional organisational practises and to have greater recognition of the interdependence between adult and child (Richards et al, 2015). Children need agency, so they are able to believe they can take action and exert power in situations. Agency is not simply about the liberation of children, it enables greater consultation, allows for their voices to be heard and opens up new spaces for children's influences and involvement (Wyness, 2006). Children need to be able to democratically contribute to school structures, make important decisions, co-construct their learning (Rose, 2011), and be considered as citizens now in which they are seen as socially capable. However, within the school context, traditional power relations make this transformation difficult to achieve, not only due to its hierarchal nature but through norms embedded that for instance, success at school is success in life and therefore this fear of failure, even when children are aware of the hegemony that operates, will generally not resist these norms but comply for their future benefit (Rose, 2011).

Ultimately this paper identifies agency as being a contradictory term in which its usefulness for children is arguably delayed for the future. Agency is assumed to be beneficial for children suggesting a power to act, however, this paper questions the way agency is used and argues it can be more of a hidden mechanism of control to maintain existing power relations. The way in which children exert agency and negotiate power relations is complex, therefore further research is required to enable greater exploration of agency as a concept that can enhance children lives and the extent this can be achieved within a school context.

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## **MUSIC AND YOUNG CHILDREN IN KENYA**

### Abstract

Despite extensive research on music preferences in Western countries there is a paucity of information on the music preferences of young children in non-industrialized countries. The influence of musicians on young children in sub-Saharan Africa is not well documented. The aim of this study therefore was to establish the music preferences of young children in Kenya and also find out the influence musicians have on children. Using interviews, data was collected from 64 eight year old children in primary schools in Kenya. After data collection the children's responses were coded and frequencies obtained. A content analysis of the responses was also undertaken to complement the quantitative data. The findings of the study revealed that there were differences among boys and girls in their music preferences and the musicians had influenced the children in different ways. All the children mentioned having imitated the musicians who sang their favourite songs with the manner of singing or dancing style being the characteristics with the highest likelihood of being imitated. Based on the findings, this study recommended that musicians should be encouraged to produce songs having positive themes since they are role models to young children. In addition, teachers should also use music to teach educational themes and instil positive values in children.

Keywords: Children, identity development, music preference, role modelling, Kenya

### Introduction

Music has been described as important to individual's identities (North et al., 2010) and also as an aid to developing important social and sub cultural boundaries (Christenson & Roberts, 1990). Consequently, extensive studies on music have been carried out among adults, adolescents and children

in Western countries. Among adults, studies on music preferences have been found to reflect their identities and personalities. Litle and Zuckerman (1986), for example established that people high in sensation seeking liked intense music such as punk or rock music while people who believed they were creative liked listening to sophisticated music such as classical or jazz music (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003; Zweigenhaft, 2008).

Individuals who developed an early interest in rock music have been found to be more likely to be influenced by peers than by their parents (Roe, 1984) while those interested in heavy metal music have tended to be more alienated and engaged in risk-taking behaviours (Arnett, 2018; Klein, et al., 1993). Listening to aggressive music has also been linked to a permissive attitude towards violence (Johnson et al., 1995; Johnson et al., 2013; Johnson, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995; Rawlings et al., 1995). Guardians have also related violence problems at children's schools especially in boys to violent messages in rap music (Kandakai et al., 1999). Research has also revealed that adolescents may acquire ideas about what it is to be a man or a woman from images in popular music (Greenberg et al., 1986). Music videos for instance may emphasise gender stereotypes (Seidman, 1992; Ward et al., 2005) thereby increasing gender stereotyped impressions of interacting individuals (Hansen & Hansen, 1988).

Music lyrics potential impact is magnified by music video formats since individuals who may not understand lyrics can see the images which often contain scenes of excess sexism, violence and inappropriate sexual behaviour (Zillman & Mundorf, 1987). Alcohol and tobacco use are also glamorized in many music videos (DuRant et al., 1995; Gruber et al., 2005) and attractive role models appear as aggressors in more than 80% of music video violence. Research shows desensitization to aggression after watching music videos occurs while a decrease of violent behaviour appears after cessation of the music video broadcasts (Rich et al., 1998). Music videos and the mass media in general therefore can have an impact on individuals. Individuals appearing in the music videos can also become objects of identification, for example research has revealed that female pop stars in Mali are fashion trendsetters (Schulz, 2001). Adolescents have admitted to admiring musicians and seeing them as role models (Ivaldi & O'Neill, 2008). In addition, musicians actions captured in the media for

example on music videos are likely to be aped by young people (Amos et al., 2015; DuRant et al., 1997).

Research on music among children is especially important as the level of misinterpretation of music lyrics has been found to be greater among preadolescents possibly due to their limited life experience and immature cognitive development (Greenfield et al., 1987). However, there seems to be less research on the extent to which children are exposed to music in their everyday lives or its effects on them (Hallam et al., 2002). Conflicting findings also exist about the effects of playing music for children in educational settings. Early studies (Fogelson, 1973) found music to be a distractor that lowered reading test performance of eighth grade students while other studies (Hallam et al., 2002) found calming and relaxing music leading to better performance in arithmetic and memory tasks in children aged 10 to 12 but arousing, aggressive and unpleasant music disrupted performance on the memory task.

Researchers interested in children's music preferences have been guided by LeBlanc's (1982) theory. This theory argues that children's music preference is based on characteristics of the environment, listener characteristics and the characteristics of the musical stimulus. Characteristics of the environment such as approval from teachers (Dorow, 1977), adults (Greer et al., 1973) and disc jockeys and peers (Alpert, 1982) have been found to affect music selection by students. Researchers have also established that a demonstrator's gender (Killian, 1990; Killian & Satrom, 2011) and race (McCrary, 1993) may influence children's music preferences. Listener characteristics such as age have also been found to influence music preference. Younger children have been found to rate unfamiliar music higher in preference than older children (Fung et al., 2000). Other research (Brittin, 2000) has also revealed a preference among children for popular styles of music over unfamiliar styles. Children have also been seen to prefer musical stimulus characteristics such as fast tempo (LeBlanc et al., 1988) and high levels of humour (LeBlanc et al., 1992).

Although various studies have been carried out on music and music preferences among children, there is a paucity of documented research on children's music preferences in many non-industrialized countries. Most

of the available research on music preferences and its influence emanates from Western countries. The aim of this study therefore was to establish the avenues through which young children in Kenya access music, investigate the children's music preferences and also establish if the musicians and type of music children prefer influences the children's behaviour patterns. Research on music preferences might be especially important as knowing music preferences is important for the music culture, for the society and personal development of the individual (Finnaes, 1989).

### Method

The study was conducted among grade three children in four government primary schools in Thika Municipality in Kenya. Thika Municipality is an urban area and is located 42 kilometres from Nairobi which is Kenya's capital. Eight boys and eight girls in each school were included in the study. The sample therefore consisted of 64 children; that is, 32 boys and 32 girls. The children's ages ranged from 7 years 5 months to 8 years 4 months old. Individual interviews were conducted with the children after a research permit from the Kenyan Ministry of Education and informed consent were obtained from the school head teachers and children. The interview schedule among others contained questions that sought to elicit information about:

1. The children's favourite song
2. Where they had heard or usually heard their favourite song
3. Why they liked their favourite song
4. Their opinions about the musicians who had sang their favourite song
5. How musicians had influenced the children

The children's responses were coded and frequencies obtained. A content analysis of the responses was also undertaken to complement the quantitative findings

### Results

All the children interviewed had indicated they liked singing. The frequency of responses were examined for the question "which is your favourite

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song?” Most of the children had more than one favourite song with girls showing a preference for gospel songs while boys mentioned secular songs by Kenyan musicians more frequently as their favourite songs.

Specifically, 74% of the songs mentioned by girls as favourite songs were gospel songs and 26% were secular songs. In the case for boys, 59% of the favourite songs mentioned were secular songs and 41% were gospel songs.

Most of the children reported having heard their favourite song(s) mostly on television although some had heard the favourite song(s) being played or sung on or through different media such as both on television and on radio or both in church and on television. The children’s responses are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Where the Children Heard their Favourite Song**

	Percent of Responses	
	Boys	Girls
Television	45%	36%
Church	17%	13%
Television and radio	12%	14%
Radio	10%	6%
Church and radio	10%	8%
Church and television	3%	6%
School	2%	17%
Videotapes	1%	-

All the children said they went to church or attended Sunday school on Saturdays and or Sundays. They also reported listening to the radio every day or at least living in a house where a radio was switched on every day. However, only sixty two of the sixty four children interviewed had television sets at home. These sixty two children reported watching television for a duration ranging from once a week to every single day. Specifically, 56% of the boys said they watched television every day, 29% watched on weekends and holidays, 12% watched television three to six times per week, while 3% watched television only once each week. Girls who watched television everyday represented 50% of the girls, 35% watched television only on weekends and holidays, 6% watched television three to six times per



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week, and 3% watched television only once in a week. The girls who never watched television represented 6% of the girls.

When asked why they liked the song(s) they had named as their favourite, the children gave various reasons ranging from specific responses such as their favourite song(s) were good as they praised God to more general preferences for songs. Girls mostly talked of the songs praising God (58% of responses), being nice (29% of responses), but some did not have a specific reason for liking the songs and said they just liked the songs (13% of responses). Boys thought the songs were sung nicely (54% of responses), the musicians danced nicely (29% of responses), the songs praised God (13% of responses) and the songs were joyful (4% of responses).

When asked for their opinion regarding the musician(s) who had sung their favourite song(s), most of the children said they admired and would like to be like the musician(s) since among other reasons these musician(s) sung well. However, 7% of the boys' responses were that they would not wish to be like the musician(s) since they thought the musician(s) were ill mannered. The musicians the children perceived as being ill mannered were two Kenyan pop musicians who had been arrested in the past for being drunk and disorderly.

The various reasons the children gave for wanting to be like their favourite musician(s) are presented in table 2 and table 3.

All the children mentioned having imitated the musician(s) who sang their favourite song(s) at one point or another with the manner of singing and or dancing style being the characteristics which had the highest likelihood of being imitated. Boys said they had sung like the musicians (61% of responses), and also copied the dancing styles (29% of responses) and hand movements (10% of responses) of the musicians. The greatest majority of the girls' responses were that they had sung like the musicians

(44% of responses), danced like them (38% of responses), dressed like them (15% of responses) and also prayed like them (3% of responses).

**Table 2****Boys Reasons for wanting to be like their Favourite Musicians**

Reason	Percent of Responses
They sing well	29%
They dance well	19%
They are rich	14%
They praise God	14%
They are famous and or have fans	10%
They wear nice clothes, caps and jewellery	5%
They have girlfriends	2%
Would not want to be like the musicians	7%

**Table 3****Girls Reasons for wanting to be like their Favourite Musicians**

Reason	Percent of Responses
They sing well	53%
They praise God	33%
They are beautiful/cute	8%
They are clever	2%
Just want to be like musicians for no particular reason	4%

It was quite apparent from the children's responses that music and musicians played a role in their lives.

**Discussion**

The data has shown young children's reasons for their preferences and the mediums through which they experience music. In addition, the study has shown children of different genders have different music preferences with girls demonstrating a greater preference for gospel songs while boys said they mostly liked secular songs. The girls greater interest in gospel music maybe as a result of socialization and the Kenyan society's expectation that women should be more religious while the same may not be expected of men. Differences in boys and girls music preferences implies the type of music they prefer may be playing a role in identity formation as males or females. Previous studies (Colley, 2008; Toney & Weaver, 1994) have shown that gender plays a role in music preference.

The children reported having heard their favourite songs mostly through

the mass media, in church or in school. This is not surprising as most of the children interviewed said they had access to radios and television sets at home and they also attended church services on weekends. It has been observed that some of the types of music children are likely to come into contact with are church music and secular music in televisions and radios (Nzewi, 1985; Strasburger et al., 2013). It is however important to note that the media as a socialization agent is different from other agents of socialization such as the family because the media is only interested in making a profit therefore will present what it assumes individuals want while the family is interested in imparting societal values, attitudes and beliefs (Arnett, 1995).

Exposure to certain kinds of music may also have influenced the children's preferences. Research by Peery and Peery (1986) has established that continued exposure to particular kinds of music can influence children into liking these kinds of music. A preference for popular styles of music over unfamiliar styles has also been established (Brittin, 2000; Demorest & Schultz, 2004). What was striking was that there was no mention of Kenyan traditional songs among the favourite songs mentioned. This might imply that Kenyan children are not sufficiently exposed to Kenyan traditional songs.

The children gave various reasons for liking the songs they named as their favourite songs for example the songs were sang nicely or the musician(s) danced nicely. The girls specifically pointed out that they liked some songs because the musicians who had sung them were beautiful. These findings are similar to those obtained by Duck (1990) who found that one of the reasons 11 year old girls in her sample wanted to be like pop stars was because the pop stars were physically attractive.

It is noteworthy that none of the children said they liked a song because it had nice lyrics but this is not surprising as children at this age usually work best with concrete objects and not with abstract terms (Piaget, 1962). Sometimes visual aspects such as musicians dancing styles or attire may draw more attention than the lyrics of their songs (Schulz, 2001).

Most of the children also said they would like to be like the musician(s) who

sang their favourite song(s) and they had at one time or the other copied these musicians. Children sometimes imitate models who they perceive as powerful and or admirable (Bandura, 1977). Past studies (Johnson, Jackson & Gatto, 1994; Meyer, 2008; Rehman & Reilly, 1985) have also put forward similar arguments that certain kinds of music may encourage certain kinds of behaviour.

### **Conclusion**

This Kenyan small scale suggests young children have a great interest in music and are influenced to a certain extent by musicians. The teachers during informal conversations with the researcher had also mentioned they teach mostly gospel songs to the children. Teachers are therefore playing a role in the children's musical tastes and values since they are one of the most important early influences on children.

Children's revealing of the mass media, school and church as sources of their favourite types of music implies that mass media, school and church are important socialization agents for children in this age-group and whatever message they put forward is bound to influence children's lives. Music seems to influence children's behaviour patterns and this implies music and musicians are playing a role in young children's lives. The children's admission that they imitate musicians also implies musicians are objects of identification therefore play a role in children's identity development.

One of the aims of this study was to establish the avenues through which young children access music and based on the findings of this study, it would be recommended that parents monitor their children's radio listening and television viewing since television and radio are potential teachers for children. The media especially has been perceived as playing a role in the shifting of identities and growth of multiple identities as it conveys images and messages across borders (Hall, 1996).

This study was conducted in a fairly urban area. Perhaps future studies could compare rural and urban children's music preferences. It would be interesting to see the differences if any that exist in rural and urban

children's music preferences. Since musical favourites are subject to rapid change (Webb & Lamont, 2009) longitudinal studies could also be carried out with young children from their early childhood years up to their adolescent age. Such studies may provide invaluable data on trends in youth's music preferences and perhaps an insight in similarities and differences in music and identity formation as children get older.

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## **YOUNG CHILDREN'S VIRTUAL INTEREST IN SCIENCE: A CASE STUDY**

### **Abstract**

Minecraft is a popular simulation-based computer game. This paper examines how children can express an interest in science and engineering by playing Minecraft, illustrated by empirical data from one case study child. The evidence is drawn from a larger qualitative study that tracks a group of eight children's emerging interest in science from the age of 5 to 7 years old. The purpose of the study is to gain a greater understanding of the ways in which children express their interest in science. Using a creative multi-method tool to collect data, I have viewed a child's world through a number of different windows – the child's own words and actions, and the words of his parents and teaching staff. Findings suggest that the case study child expresses his interest in science and engineering in both the physical and virtual world.

**Keywords: Interest, science, engineering, Mosaic Approach, Minecraft, identity**

### **Introduction**

This paper focuses on selected data from one case study child, from a larger two-year research study into children's interests in science. First, I outline the overall aim of the study and introduce the research questions. Then, I explain the conceptual framework that underpins the study. Finally, I analyse the data for one child and discuss the findings.

The purpose of the study is to gain a greater understanding of how children express their interest in science, using qualitative research methods to consider this from the perspective of eight case study children, from age 5 to 7 years old. My aim is to demonstrate the complexity of how children

perceive themselves and express their interests, with a particular focus on their interest in science. Many studies have been written about the decline in pupils' attitudes towards science from 11 years old onwards and the concern that fewer young people choose to study science subjects post 16 (Potvin and Hasni, 2014, summarise 621 studies). However, young children's emerging interest in science is a far less researched field in comparison to studies involving older pupils. I would argue that examining the views of young children towards science is essential for our understanding of why some children develop an enduring interest in science and others do not.

The research methods used in this study are based on the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2011), and gather qualitative data from a wide range of sources, such as, young children, school staff and parents. This approach is participatory and treats children as social actors who are expert in their own lives (James and Prout, 2015). Children made active choices about how best to express their interests through photographs, drawings, 3D models and conversations. To help reduce the power imbalance between the young participants and researcher, I presented myself as a 'non-threatening person who asks ignorant questions' (Ebrahim, 2010:294).

The research questions used to guide this study are:

1. How is children's interest in science expressed?
2. In what ways does interest in science change between the ages of 5 and 7 years old?
3. What interactions with the material and social context foster and maintain children's interest in science?

This article focuses predominantly on the first research question and considers whether an interest in science can be expressed virtually through the computer game Minecraft.

### **A conceptual framework of interest development and identity**

The conceptual framework I present models the dynamic relationship between interest development and identity. It is based on a particular definition of the term interest and theoretical model of how interest

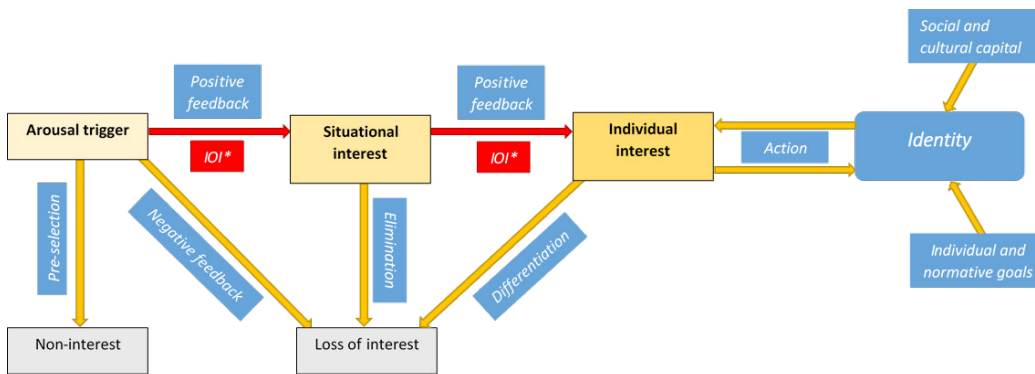
develops. People use the term interest in everyday conversation and have an intuitive understanding of what they mean by it, as we have all had a direct experience of being interested. However, this everyday use of the term can cause challenges to researchers, since each researcher and participant constructs their idea of interest in a unique and personal sense (Valsiner, 1992). The definition of interest I have chosen to work with has led me to investigate the phenomena of interest development in a particular way – my research questions focus on socially constructed subjective experiences and an epistemology that recognises children’s perspectives as central to understanding their own lives.

This study employs a definition of interest as a psychological state, generated from interactions between individuals and their environment and manifested as positive emotions, such as feeling energised and curious, leading to motivated behaviour (Panksepp, 2003). The process of interest development can be broken down into phases and this study considers two predominant theories – the person-object theory of interest (Krapp, 2000) and the four-phase model of interest development (Hidi and Renninger, 2006). Common themes in both theories of interest development are that interest involves a relationship between an individual and an object or event and generates a positive affective experience. Interest also satisfies cognitive curiosity and develops through sustained interaction between an individual and an object or event. In addition, interests are compatible with intrinsic preferred values and of personal significance.

Interest development does not happen in a vacuum and is greatly influenced by social behaviour and children’s sense of their own identity. Our self-concept develops from observing our own and others’ reactions during repeated social interactions. Cooley (1902:179) describes this as the ‘looking-glass self’ – how we imagine others see us, what judgements they make of us and how this makes us feel. Self-concept is the mental capacity to think about oneself – self-reflection and reflexive thinking (Lieberman, 2007). One way to conceptualise this sense of self as object is a cognitive schema of stored information and symbolic meanings that we use as a framework to interpret our experiences (Stryker and Burke, 2000). Social interactions develop self-concepts and self-concepts affect social behaviour and social structures.

Identities represent the multiple ways we make sense of our self-concept and sociology researchers conceptualise identity as plural, fluid and influenced by internal and external factors, such that individuals can simultaneously hold and identify with multiple identities (Lawler, 2008). Hull and Zacher (2007:75) state that identities are located within a social, cultural and interactional context ‘sometimes in concert with people, sometimes in opposition to them, but always in relation to them’. Identity theory proposes that we are active agents in creating our identities and that we have the agency to enact identities in specific contexts. Our identities are determined by our traits, social relationships, roles, values, goals and social group membership. We can have individual identity and group identity. Some of our identities are stable across different situations whereas others are malleable and context sensitive (Oyserman et al., 2012).

The conceptual framework I present here attempts to portray the dynamic relationship between interest development and identity. As a two-dimensional diagram, the model’s purpose is to illuminate the process of interest development, with a particular focus on its relation to identity.



\* IOI = Interaction with Object of Interest

Figure 1 Conceptual framework of interest development. Based on the person-object theory of interest (Krapp, 2000), the four-phase model of interest development (Hidi and Renninger, 2006) and identity theory (see Stryker and Burke, 2000).

In the conceptual framework above, I have represented interest development as a linear process, however I acknowledge the limitations of the diagram – not least, because I have positioned identity (and social and cultural capital) as interacting only with individual interest, whereas they directly influence all phases. The first phase in the model is arousal trigger, something in the environment that catches children’s attention. At this stage, some children will go no further in terms of following their curiosity. They will make a quick decision, often unconsciously, that the arousal trigger does not match with their ideal prototype self (Hofer, 2010). This preselection prevents situational interest – children observe the arousal trigger, decide ‘it’s not for me’ and choose not to explore further. Therefore, children’s identity influences the very first step in interest development. Alternatively, if children’s self to prototype matching is positive, they think along the lines of ‘this looks like fun’ and engage with the activity (ibid.).

Once children have chosen to explore the activity, the interaction may feel rewarding, in other words, the evaluation of feedback whilst engaging with a potential object of interest is positive. This leads to situational interest. Some children will not develop situational interest because they do not enjoy this initial interaction with a potential object of interest. The experience may not be congruent with their self-concept, that is to say, it is not compatible with their identity, values and goals. Therefore, the outcome of an arousal trigger can be emerging interest for some children or elimination of interest for others (Hidi and Renninger, 2006). Situational interest may develop into individual interest if positive affective feedback continues; children feel an intrinsic motivation to learn about their object of interest and actively choose to do so. Meanwhile, other children, faced with the same opportunity to interact with an object of interest may experience their interest waning, because they do not sufficiently value the object of interest or it is in conflict with their personal aims and ambitions (Hofer, 2010).

The final phase of individual interest is both fluid and stable. Some interests will endure and become highly valued as an integral part of children’s identity. These interests become increasingly differentiated, as children grow older (Krapp, 2002). Some interests wane, either because they do not contribute to personal and normative goals (influenced by social and

cultural capital) or because they are incongruent with a changing and developing self-concept. Young people who identify with a particular social group may act in ways that are stereotypical for that group, including their choice of interests, in order to signal their collective identity. Once a choice is linked to identity, it becomes automatised; it feels right and does not require reflection (Oyserman et al., 2012). Identity affects choice of interests and individual interests become part of identity. This is a dynamic process where identity as a performance results in actions (Brunstein et al., 1999).

There is an alternative sociocultural explanation to the model of interest development presented above. Hedges and Cooper (2016) challenge studies that focus on the interaction between individuals and their objects of interest, claiming that this interpretation trivialises children's interests. They propose that there are deeper symbolic motives for children's interests, where children draw on 'funds of knowledge' (González, et al., 2006). A sociocultural perspective interprets children's interests as stemming from participatory learning in family and community experiences, where children are motivated by their curiosity about life and desire for social engagement. The following section looks at the data collected for one of the eight case study children and a possible interpretation, based on the conceptual framework of interest development and identity presented above. I have interpreted data by applying an intra-individual and individual-socioecological reference frame (Valsiner, 2014). The reference frames provide a bridge to demonstrate the interconnections between a psychological concept of individual interest development with that of a sociocultural construct of interest as performance. Therefore, the ensuing discussion also considers the alternative funds of knowledge interpretation.

### **Case Study: Hakim and Minecraft**

I first met Hakim (pseudonym) when he was five years old, in a Reception class of a small inner-city primary school in England. During my visit, I watched him paint several pictures of houses. No other children in the setting chose to do this. When I gave him an iPad to take photographs of whatever he liked, he photographed the construction blocks outside and



his paintings of houses inside. He told me he liked painting pictures of houses, and that he had a fish tank at home and kept fish, but he wanted to swap them for a dog. His parents told me that at home, he hardly played with his toys, preferring to make things instead; they said, 'Hakim is very interested in construction and building things. His dad is a joiner. He's always ready to get the craft materials out at home'. His teacher described his special interests as painting and building houses.



Figure 2 5-year-old Hakim's pictures of houses

I visited Hakim's school several times a year for the next two years and in each two-hour visit; I observed the case study children, talked with them about their interests and offered them an iPad to take photographs if they wished to. In the first year, Hakim often played on his own; he made houses out of Lego, used construction kits, planted seeds and investigated pouring water into different containers. His parents described how he had been experimenting with ice and different materials at home to see which is stronger.

During my visits the following year, I observed Hakim playing more frequently with the other children, riding bikes and playing football. I also noticed that he had stopped painting and building houses. When I asked him, 'What do you enjoy doing at the moment?' He replied 'Lots. Minecraft. Do you know what I'm building now? I'm building my own house and I'm having dogs in it.' His teacher and parents concurred and told me that he enjoyed playing on the iPad. When I enquired, 'Are you doing any painting?' he replied 'No. That's all boring for me now.'

## Data analysis

Initial data analysis focused on classifying data in terms of whether it demonstrated an interest in science or not. This approach to analysis is deductive, because the research questions and conceptual framework (about interest in science) focus on specific aspects of the data, rather than the entire data set (Braun and Clarke, 2013). The table below categorises objects of interest, using data collected from Hakim to exemplify what I interpret to be an interest in science or not. As you can see, interest in science includes physical objects, concepts and processes.

Object of Interest	Percent of Responses	
	Science	Not Science
Physical object/concrete/people	Magnets, Meccano set, water tray, fish.	Jigsaw, loomband bracelet, cars.
Concept/field of knowledge/abstract idea	Pets and houses.	India and superheroes.
Activity/process	Growing fruit and vegetables, building a Lego house, investigating ice melting, playing Minecraft.	Playing tig, playing the recorder, riding bikes, painting/drawing pictures.

Table 1 Examples of different types of interest (categories by Neitzel et al., 2008)

Once I had categorised data as science or not, I then categorised it into the disciplines of science. Since the study was carried out in a school, I used the Early Years Framework (DfE, 2014) and National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) as my starting point, focusing on the specific statements relevant to the age of the case study children. In doing so, I was applying 'researcher-derived codes' (Braun and Clarke, 2013:207) to the data. I identified different disciplines of science in Hakim's data and categorised his interests as scientific enquiry, materials and engineering. I am using the term

engineering to encapsulate the process of building and testing structures and machines (Brophy et al., 2008).

An alternative way to interpret Hakim's data is to apply the concept of funds of knowledge accumulated from everyday engagement with social activities (Chesworth, 2016). Hakim's interest in houses and engineering could relate to his father's profession as a joiner and the encouragement he receives at home to engage in activities such as cooking and gardening, rather than playing with his toys. It could confirm Wood's (2014) view that children's interests stem from their fascination with the adult world and they aspire to enact adult roles. Hakim's play choices and expression of interest in pets and Minecraft could be connected to his social isolation in the Reception class, as evidenced in the data. Hakim joined the class late in the year, then had several long absences through ill health and does not live in the local area to the school. His teacher commented that he found it hard to build friendships during his time in Reception and it was not until Year 1 that I observed him regularly engaged in imaginary play and football with the other children. Applying an alternative lens to the data emphasises the interdependence of individual and context (Rogoff, 1998). I propose that the ways in which children's interest in science are manifested may be partly internalised and partly sociocultural performance.

### **Discussion**

This case study illustrates how an interest in science can be expressed in different ways. Hakim's interest in science and engineering did not stop when he stopped painting and building houses, instead he was expressing his interest differently - through a simulation-based computer game. Minecraft (released in 2011) is a popular game with primary age children in which players build constructions out of textured cubes that have different properties (Hobbs et al., 2017). Minecraft has been used to enhance the teaching of science topics such as adaptations, structures and sustainability (Short, 2012). Minecraft taps into an interest in science and engineering because it allows players to experiment and hypothesise by manipulating variables and using blocks made of different materials with different properties analogous to the real world (Nebel, et al., 2016). Nguyen (2016) traces Minecraft's ancestry to a post war interest in abstract

geometric construction blocks and toys such as Lego. He argues that in the 1960s, parents encouraged their children to play in an open-ended way with a box of Lego because of the emerging field of humanistic psychology, for example, Maslow's (1963) description of children as naturally creative. Playing with construction toys would cultivate the next generation of innovators and children who aspired to have a career in science and engineering (Nguyen, 2016). Minecraft continues this tradition of building structures from simple components, only in a virtual world. Hakim's interest in Minecraft allows him to construct virtual houses, as he used to do previously with building blocks.

### **Summary**

At six years old, Hakim reflects on his changing activities and says that painting is 'boring for me now', suggesting that he sees himself differently to his five-year-old self, who found painting houses an absorbing and enjoyable activity. His object of interest, Minecraft, and his growing sense of identity, has directed his interest away from painting but not away from science. This study applies an intra-individual reference frame, as well as an individual-socioecological reference frame (Valsiner, 2014) and highlights that children's interest development must be viewed alongside their identity development, interdependent on social and cultural context, rather than in isolation. My findings focus on how one child expresses his interest in science and engineering both physically and virtually. In addition, the evidence suggests that home and school can support a child's interest in science, through access to physical and technological resources (including computer games) that encourage construction and investigation.

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## **THE CASE OF INCLUSION AND PROGRESS**

### **Abstract**

Inclusion has been recognised as an ongoing process, reflecting changes in political positions, values, policies and practice. As inclusion in the UK develops from focusing upon children with Special Educational Needs to recognising all children in order to resolve inequalities in society, inclusion in government policy is being equated with educational outcomes rather than the process by which it is achieved.

Within a constructivist paradigm, the research utilises a case study methodological approach carried out in one school, sampled for its uniqueness. Shakespeare School, a pseudonym, successfully supports a group of children who are considered to be at risk of underachievement to make outstanding educational progress. Located within an inner city and currently situated near the bottom of the national educational league tables, this school is rated within the top 5% for academic progress within the country. Therefore, it is of significant interest for this research to detail the systematic inquiry undertaken into the relationship between inclusion and progress within this school.

The findings of the research demonstrate that Shakespeare School is a transformational organisation, where all children and staff are welcomed, empowered and valued as members of a creative, academic, social and emotional learning collective. The research provides new knowledge challenging the way inclusion is currently understood and identifying a holistic model of inclusion and progress that is characterised by the school's philosophy, creative curriculum and leadership in practice. As a result, the research provides holistic, practical contributions in the detailing of the school's bespoke and creative approach in support of positive learning experiences for both the inclusion and progress of all its children.



The research concludes that the methods by which children's educational outcomes are achieved matters not only for the treatment of children but also for equity, social justice and entitlements. This paper determines that the relationship between inclusion and progress can be a positive one, particularly when children are placed at its centre.

**Key words: inclusion, progress, case study, leadership, curriculum and creativity.**

### **Introduction**

The research I undertook stemmed from an interest in the connection between social justice and inclusion within education. Developing a socially just education system in order to support social, educational and economic reform has been a focus of government rhetoric since the Newcastle Commission Report written in 1861 (cited in Alexander, 2010) called for an increased number of children to be educated in order that they could join the expanded workforce required for greater industrial productivity (Wood, 2004). However, as soon as this act of including more children in school occurred, the segregation and exclusion of some children through the categorisation of deficits and handicaps was based upon a within person impairment (Johnstone, 2011) and a medical model of inclusion was legitimised (Thomas and Loxley, 2001). An understanding of social justice therefore became based on how the inclusion of children and their differences was understood and managed.

Over one hundred and fifty years after the Newcastle Commission Report, Nicky Morgan as the Secretary of State utilised the same narrative of social, economic and educational reform within the publication *Educational Excellence Everywhere* (DfE, 2016). She emphasised that all children must achieve high educational progress and outcomes in order to resolve not only the country's economic development but the inequalities within society; education was positioned as 'the engine of social justice and economic growth' (p.8) and inclusion seen as synonymous with educational outcomes. Any concern for the process of inclusion and the treatment of children in order to achieve the required expectations of outcomes were rejected within the publication, as the government confirmed that

'outcomes matter more than methods' (p.12). Educational Excellence Everywhere (DfE, 2016) not only equated inclusion and therefore social justice with educational outcomes, but the same educational discourse that holds teachers and schools to account also ensured that children are accountable too. Theresa May in her speech in 2016 to the British Academy proclaimed: 'I want Britain to be the great meritocracy of the world'. In education this focus on meritocracy is seen as being displayed by children's individual hard work in order to achieve. Therefore, the concept of work ethic as a within person deficit or strength is aligned with a medical model of inclusion and enables differential outcomes in education and society to be reconceptualised as a product of that work ethic. Therefore, poverty as well as educational failure can be portrayed as a matter of the personal choice of the 'unmotivated, unambitious and underachieving' (Reay, 2009, p.24). As inclusion is therefore both the process and outcome of social justice for children, it appears that any agreed definition of the term inclusion remains elusive.

### **Literature Review**

The principle that an inclusive education system is based upon a moral and ethical obligation (Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2000), the equality of opportunity and an entitlement (Lipsky and Gartner, 1997; Oliver, 2000), appears to be accepted and not debated within research literature. The plurality of inclusion recognises that what some authors consider a 'buzz word' (Evans and Lunt, 2002, p.41), others such as Glazzard (2014) see as a 'proactive stance' (p.40). Whilst Bailey (1998) considers it to be a fervent campaign by the disability rights movement, Hodkinson (2012) recognises it as the dominance of one group controlling the identity of another. For some authors the definition of inclusion relates to the restructuring of provision to promote a sense of belonging for children on equal terms (Kunc, 1992; Oliver, 2000; Gross, 2001), with Warnock (2005) considering inclusion to be regarded as a common endeavour of learning, providing a sense of worth (O'Brien, 2000). Lauchlan and Greig (2015) concluded that most people's construction of an understanding of inclusion would probably agree on what they mean by it:

It is generally taken to mean that children and young people are included both socially and educationally in an environment where they feel welcomed and where they can thrive and make progress (p.70)

Whilst there have been a variety of models of inclusion associated with the differing perspectives, the developing capability framework has been seen to underpin a human rights approach and in doing so offers an opportunity for developing an understanding of its relationship to social justice. Originating from the work of Sen (1985) in the field of normative economics and philosophy, the approach has been considered by educational researchers interested in both disability and equality (Terzi, 2005; Nussbaum, 2009). The capability to function framework, focuses upon human diversity, real choices and individual goals and well-being. In Sen's approach, capability refers to the real opportunities and agency provided in support of freedom of choice, with functionings regarded as the 'achievement of a person: what she or he manages to do or to be' (1985, p.12). Functionings are recognised as valuable to the person, something they have chosen and therefore related to their well-being and personal fulfilment. The commodities available to a person, the environment in which they live as well as that person's individual characteristics are acknowledged as having the potential to impact upon a person's capabilities, and in turn their functionings. Capability theorists have highlighted that the interaction of those personal and social commodities enables any evaluation to not focus on a person's impairment or deficit in isolation (Terzi, 2005). Disability is therefore not defined not in terms of a medical model, but regarded as a deprivation or limitation in capability or functioning (Mitra, 2006). Within my research there was an opportunity to consider the relationship between this framework for inclusion and that of Bourdieu's work on social justice.

In his 1977 publication *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, Bourdieu challenged the role schools and the education system played in the marginalisation of some children by actively seeking to reproduce rather than ameliorate cultural and social inequalities. Bourdieu (1985) highlights three main areas as relevant for transformation in education: habitus, cultural capital and the field. His version of habitus has been

considered as a person's internalised dispositions that at a subconscious level supports their action and choices. The habitus of children is seen as developing from birth through what Jenkins (2002) refers to as imprinting 'in a socialising or learning process which commences during early childhood' (p.75). The advantages, as well as disadvantages, of a child's background are therefore regarded as not only orientating a person to adopt the dispositions of the group in which they were acquired, but recognises that this may also be at odds with the values schools seek to offer and reward. *Cultural capital* was regarded by Bourdieu as the cultural values, knowledge and attitude acquired through a child's background and what Henry et al. (1988) referred to as 'all the competencies one class brings with them to school (p.233). Children whose families developed different cultural capital were seen by Comber and Hill (2000) as entering the education system with 'cultural capital in the wrong currency' for success (p.80), thereby perpetuating inequality. Bourdieu's concept of the field has been considered as the space or context, structured by different forms of capital, and an area in which the habitus interacts. The field can therefore be regarded as operating at the level of a school. The school I selected for the research was Shakespeare School, as the children who attended it had high levels of social deprivation and were at risk to underachievement, yet made outstanding academic progress. I wondered by what methods this was achieved and what model of inclusion was in operation that appeared on paper to be supporting a socially just educational approach in reality.

### **School Context -Case study**

Shakespeare School is based within one of the fastest growing and culturally diverse cities in the country with recognised high levels of social deprivation poor health outcomes for inhabitants. Nationally the Local Authority (LA) has been judged to be one of the lowest performing authorities with over 60% of children not achieving the expected outcomes on leaving primary schools compared to 47% nationally (Perera et al., 2016). The school opened in 1935 and currently has over one hundred and twenty adults working on site with over seven hundred children on roll, many of whom are regarded as vulnerable (DfE, 2016). 30% of children at school are considered as having Special Educational Needs (SEN), a greater

proportion of children than the national average of 14.4%. Greater too is the percentage of children in receipt of pupil premium, with a quarter of all children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) instead of 14.5% nationally. 80% of children have English as an Additional Language (EAL) at school compared to 20.1% nationally and over thirty different languages are spoken.

However, compared to the average city results where 39% of children achieve the expected outcomes by the end of primary school, 70% of the school's children continue to reach this level within Shakespeare School. The measurement of progress that compares the results of children nationally with similar prior attainment, puts Shakespeare school in the top 5% of schools within the country for adding value to children's learning, a measurement that government regards as an indicator of school effectiveness, evidence of inclusion and relative uniqueness. The tension between inclusion and the standards agenda is well recognised (Black-Hawkins et al., 2017), so by researching Shakespeare School's solution for their children I aimed to construct their model of inclusion in order to inform the way the term is currently understood and challenge the statement from government that the methods by which inequality is resolved matters less than educational outcomes.

### **Methodology**

I approached the research utilising the paradigm referred to by Denzin and Lincoln (1994) as constructivism. In the same way that the literature identifies multiple inclusions, constructivist ontology recognises multiple realities. With inclusive values of empowerment and equality, constructivist epistemology considers the role of the researcher as a facilitator (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994 p.114), an interpreter and 'gatherer of interpretations' (Stake, 1995 p.99), empowering participants through the construction of a collective understanding of knowledge. The constructivist ontology therefore supports the 'key philosophical assumption' (Merriam, 1998 p.6) of qualitative research, that reality is constructed by individuals as a result of their experience. I was able to utilise methods of qualitative data collection that enabled me to 'strive for a depth of understanding' (Patton, 1987 p.1). In line with the ontological and epistemological position

of constructivism, the methodological framework of case study that is situated in a constructivist paradigm was selected for my research (Stake, 1995). This enabled the methodology to remain connected to the 'core values and intentions' of the research (Hyett et al., 2014 p.2). Purposeful selection, as opposed to random selection, of Shakespeare School as a single case was focused upon maximising what could be learnt based upon its uniqueness (Miles and Huberman, 1994), as seen in Figure 1. Whilst quantitative researchers in seeking for generalization would recognise such uniqueness as an error, a carefully chosen case with a clear rationale for its selection is seen as critical in order to add to knowledge and lead to discovery (Flyvberg, 2001).

	<b>National</b>	<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Shakespeare School</b>
Reading	66%	52%	70%
GPS	72%	62%	85%
Maths	70%	59%	82%
Writing	74%	73%	79%
RWM	53%	39%	70%

Figure 1 2016 Key Stage Two results- percentage of children achieving national expectations at Shakespeare School

The research process of the data collection and analysis can be seen in Figure 2 with the steps of thematic analysis shown in Figure 3.

The participants in the study were all staff working across a range of roles within Shakespeare school, including four members of the Senior Management Team (SM), six teaching staff (T), three Teaching Assistants (TA) and four Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA).

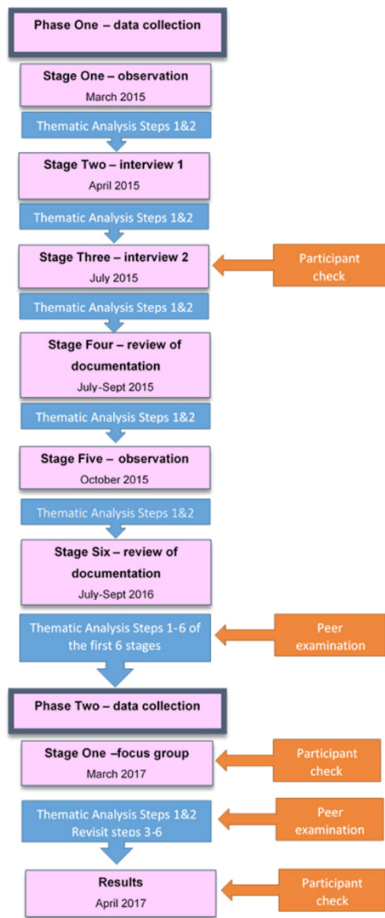


Figure 2 Phases and stages of data collection with steps of data analysis

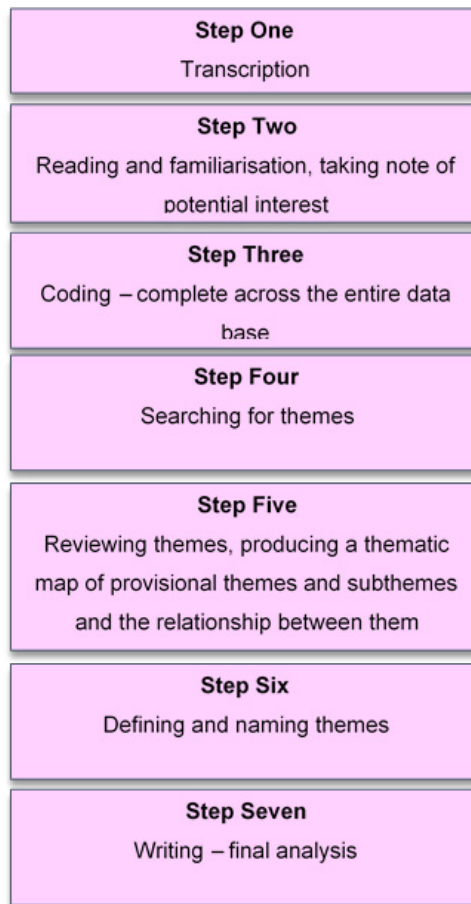


Figure 3 The steps of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.202)

**Results and Discussion**

The school achieves both inclusion and progress for its children through the holistic and joined up approach it takes between the three main themes and subthemes found and identified in the model shown in Figure 4. There is an alignment between the philosophy the school holds regarding the inclusion of their children and how that philosophy is implemented through their creative curriculum and supported by leadership values. All three themes are connected by the blue central columns that represent key areas of learning for the inclusion and progress of both children and staff in order that they thrive. Whilst arranged on top of each other, the model does

not imply a hierarchy of themes, instead the dotted lines symbolise the dynamic and transformational nature of the model. The children are central to it, and as the cohort's current or future needs change the layers of the model will adapt as part of the transformational focus of the school.

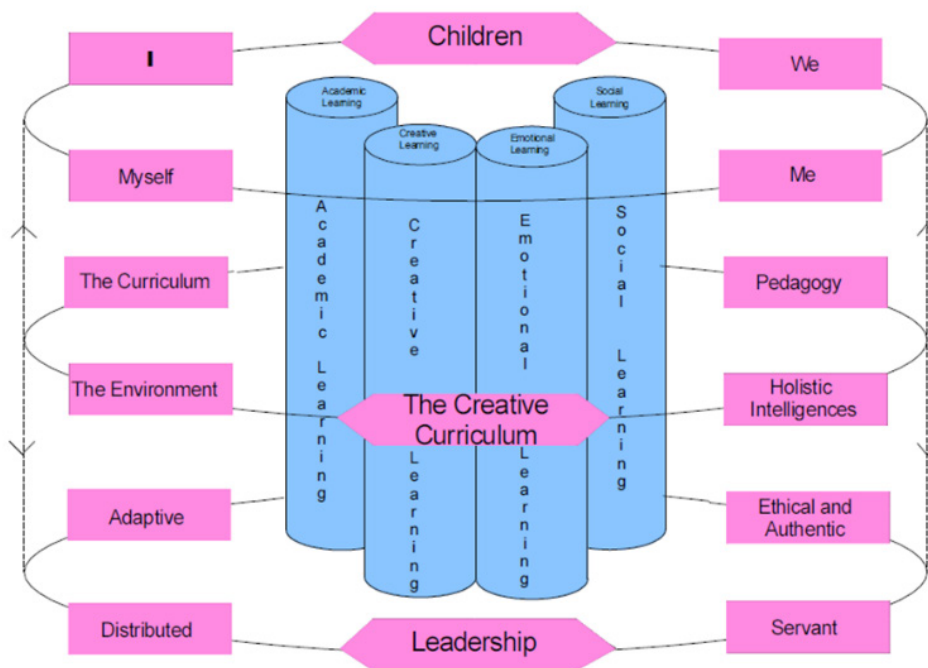


Figure 4 A model of inclusion and progress for social justice, as identified at Shakespeare School

The theme *Children* presented the school's philosophy and participants understanding of inclusion and progress. Theme One provided four subthemes, 'I', 'myself', 'me' and 'we', each aligned to a central area of learning in support of inclusion and progress, academic, emotional, creative and social learning. Three main points arose from this theme. Firstly, the inclusive values and philosophy of Shakespeare School supported their transformational goal and aspirations for all children which led to high expectations for all based upon growth mindset (Dweck, 2012). This enabled the distinction to be made that if the government position of high expectation is based upon a medical model of inclusion and a fixed mindset of learning, then high expectations are nothing more than symbols of inclusion without the power to transform children's lives. Each child in



school was recognised as having the capacity to succeed and develop their learning. This was supported by the context for that transformation through empathetic relationships between the staff and children as well as between children in order that they thrive. It was recognised as important that children were involved in those high expectations, developing children as agents in their own learning and who could problem solve, utilise independent thinking skills and take pleasure in their responsibility for and of learning. The co-agency between children and staff as well as the treatment of differences was based upon human and humane relationships whereby both children and staff remained proactive and motivated to learn. Secondly, the school's inclusive mindset was underpinned by a set of non-negotiable entitlements for all children. They were to be treated fairly, labels of difference rejected, each valued and with the same amount of staff time provided to all children. Children had an entitlement to be known as an individual as well as part of a collective, participating in the full curriculum with a commitment that everything would be done to engage, excite and facilitate their responsibility for learning. Children were not removed from the class or the curriculum for interventions, a legacy of the medical model for understanding inclusion that has been supported by government for both the treatment of children found to be educationally underperforming, or in order that schools can demonstrate appropriate use of pupil premium money for those in receipt of FSM. Thirdly, difference was not based upon comparison with others, nor seen as a static concept that limited what children could achieve that leads to labelling. Differences were recognised and respected across the four central areas of academic, emotional, creative and social learning, valued for developing the whole child and what made a child unique.

Theme Two was identified as *The Creative Curriculum*. The school's created curriculum and pedagogy remained a child centred approach that was a fusion of both excellence and enjoyment and informed by the philosophy of Theme One. Their curriculum provided a context and commodity that valued all children (Hodkinson, 2010) by both responding to the diversity and needs of the children in school (Slee, 1999) and engaging them in learning (Kellet and Nind, 2003) as part of a collective. The curriculum was delivered through the school's knowledge centred thematic approach. However, rather than considering knowledge as a static concept that

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children merely reproduced, the curriculum focused upon developing knowledge and skills that aim to support them both as learners and citizens beyond school. The school had demonstrated its own risk taking in developing their curriculum, and risk taking of children in learning was recognised as essential for both their progress and inclusion. The focus on developing empathy was seen as crucial to both collaboration and enabling children to feel confident to challenge themselves, confident that failure would not be perceived negatively. Engaging children in learning was recognised as not being automatic and resulting from children's presence (Ellis and Tod, 2014), but as a pledge between children and staff through the creation of a shared childhood, utilising what children had in common and stimulated by stories, the environment (Figure 5), their senses, emotions, imagination and creativity (Robinson 2015). A framework of valued holistic intelligences was embedded within the curriculum in support of academic, emotional, creative and social learning. Academic learning was seen as one area of learning, and with the combination of social, emotional and creative learning all learning was regarded as valuable for the school's philosophy of the whole child as present in Theme One.



Figure 5 The school's creative environment

Theme Three identified the school's philosophy for *Leadership* that enabled staff to role model their active, moral responsibilities as adults.

This included their authentic treatment and support of others as well as their response to developing their own long term learning transformation. Bass (1985) refers to this approach as transformational leadership. The philosophy of leadership in school modelled the same understanding and treatment of difference to staff as it did to children, the same encouragement to take risks in learning and to be challenged, the same focus on collaboration for co-creating learning and creativity for generating next steps. As a result, like the active learning they promoted for their children, staff experienced the benefits of the skills they taught. Through the focus on active leadership not only were academic skills supported, but subject knowledge was also enhanced. Staff reported their openness to learning from others, including children, and immersion in their own learning as part of the 'flow' of learning (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013, p.110). The research at Shakespeare School led to an agreement with Flem and Keller (2000) that the successful inclusion of children is related to a school's leadership. A combination of leadership philosophies were recognised within the school, this included: Heifetz and Linsky (2004) for adaptive leadership, Hodges (2016) for distributive leadership, Greenleaf (1970) for servant leadership, Spears (2002) for empathy in leadership, Yukl (2006) for authentic leadership and Northouse (2012) for ethical leadership. The skills of the Holistic Intelligence framework were developed, practised and modelled by staff as part of the school's approach to leadership and therefore experienced first-hand by those responsible for teaching them to children.

The school's holistic approach enabled inclusion and progress to be part of the same transformational process for children and staff. Progress was regarded not as attainment or outcomes but about transforming lives within and beyond school, not just for learning but for children as citizens. Learning across the Holistic Intelligence framework, like knowledge, mindset and habitus was not regarded as a static concept, but as transformative, 'possibility thinking' (Craft and Jeffrey, 2004 p. 41), whereby both agency and learning within a network of others was valued. Inclusion was broader than children with SEN, including all children and staff as a collective to which they all belonged. The inclusive ethos, pedagogy, curriculum and leadership approach of Shakespeare School recognised children's rights, entitlements and the value of difference; with difference

regarded as diversity rather than deviancy. Empathy was regarded as a key skill and leadership skill in supporting both inclusion and progress by providing an understanding of others, supporting a sense of belonging as well as being utilised to support high expectations based upon a growth mindset and the freedom to take risks in learning. Within the humane context of the school risk taking was seen as a sign of inclusion, a freedom to learn, consider possibilities and aspire. The creation of allness within school was supported by the provision of an engaging, responsive and shared childhood for children, one that they all had in common through their creative curriculum, providing the humane and motivational context, conditions and opportunities for inclusion and progress in learning to take place so that all children could thrive. As a result, Shakespeare School resolved the tension between a child's possession of knowledge and their participation in the social process of learning and belonging.

A combination of Sen's capability approach with the work of Bourdieu was identified as an appropriate model for inclusion, and one that recognises the methods by which social inequalities can be responded to within school but does not ignore the physical, social, economic, cultural and political dimensions of children's lives outside school. As a result, rather than school being 'the (my emphasis) engine of social justice and economic growth' (DfE, 2016, p.8), it is positioned as an invaluable part of the whole engine in a child's life that government has its own responsibilities for maintaining, reproducing or ameliorating the inequalities children face. Norwich (2013) highlighted that Sen's capability approach was incomplete in that it did not take into account social power, constraints and how the dilemma of difference is resolved in practice, suggesting that it would benefit from being 'integrated with other approaches' (Norwich, 2008, p.20). My research at Shakespeare School has responded to this, providing an example of this fusion in practice (Figure 6).

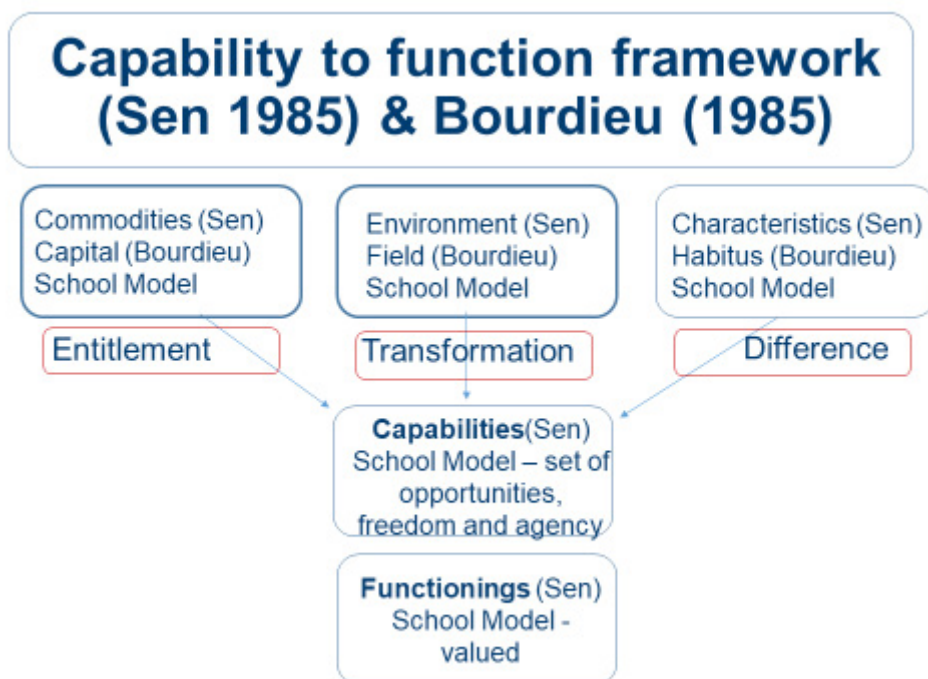


Figure 6 The combining of the work of Sen (1985), Bourdieu (1985) and the research at Shakespeare School

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## **THE ETHICS OF INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE DIRECTLY IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

### **Abstract**

This paper draws on a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project carried out in the secondary school of an independent day and boarding school in the east of England. An adult researcher and five young researchers (R4U) worked together to explore bullying at the school. The PAR framework allowed for a close working relationship to develop between the adult and young people but the closeness associated with PAR can raise specific ethical issues. This paper explores two specific issues: insider and outsider knowledge and a shift in power dynamics, and discusses how these issues were ameliorated as the project evolved.

### **Introduction**

This paper focuses on a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project, conducted in an independent day and boarding school in the east of England (O'Brien, 2014; O'Brien et al., 2018a, 2018b). The Olive Tree School (pseudonym) has both primary and secondary provision and this study took place in the secondary school. Five self-selecting students worked with the first author (Niamh) to explore bullying in their school and together formed the research team. These students called themselves R4U (Research for You) with the caption, 'Researching for Life without Fear' and received training in research methods, analysis and dissemination. The team worked closely to develop the research methods aimed towards the whole school, including parents and teachers; and in co-analysing the data and presenting and disseminating the findings. The close working relationship associated with PAR can be viewed as a strength in generating new knowledge and making changes, but this closeness can also raise specific ethical and political concerns (Williamson and Prosser, 2002). This paper

highlights some of the ethical issues raised during the research process and critically reflects on how they were ameliorated as the project evolved.

We will begin by setting the methodological context and introducing the members of the research team. We will then focus on two specific ethical implications apparent in this project while drawing on relevant literature.

### **Methodological Context**

This study used a PAR framework rooted in the philosophy of social constructionism. Underscoring this design, was the notion that bullying is a social construct which can be best understood by exploring the context to which it takes place (Schott and Sondergaard, 2014), as well as listening to those at the centre of the experience (O'Brien et al., 2018a). Accordingly, the current research was carried out 'alongside' students of the school rather than the conventional approach of 'on' them (Kellett, 2010).

Traditionally, young people have been perceived as incompetent and unable to participate in making societal changes or actively participate in research, but this notion has been, and continues to be, challenged (Kellett, 2010; Percy-Smith, 2015). PAR has proved particularly successful as an approach to engaging young people in research and Ozer and Wright (2012) refer to Youth-led participatory research (YPAR). The underpinning ethos is that young people identify problems that they want to address, carry out research to find out more and subsequently advocate for change based on what is found. Our study was conducted within a similar framework. The research team carried out two PAR cycles through planning, acting, observing, reflecting (Lewin, 1946) while a third cycle focussed on the 'action' from the study: the development of a draft<sup>1</sup> anti-bullying policy. Although our first PAR cycle was initiated by Niamh, it provided the opportunity for the research team to identify the bullying concerns at the school and consequently address these concerns through PAR. Cycle one was therefore exploratory in nature where we explored the bullying definition in the school as well as how satisfied members of the school community (students and adults) were with how bullying was handled. Through the participatory process and cycle one collaborative data analysis, two key concepts emerged for further investigation in cycle

two: the 'snitch' (a negative connotation for the one who tells), and what constitutes 'serious bullying'. These findings are published elsewhere (O'Brien, 2014; O'Brien et al., 2018b). The research team then worked together to explore these concepts through collaborative data collection, analysis and dissemination methods in the second PAR cycle.

<sup>1</sup>The strategy was always intended to be in draft format to allow for changes when necessary

Central to PAR is the generation of knowledge through academic and local expertise (Veale, 2005), so a partnership is formed. Within YPAR, Ozer and Wright (2012) suggest that research is implemented by young people with support (emphasis added) from adults and the recommendations for change are based not only on the data but also on the lived experiences of the young researchers. Although the latter was true of our study, the former was viewed somewhat differently. Niamh did not play a 'support role', she was an active member of the research team rather than a facilitator of youth led research. It was important to understand what her 'adult' role was contributing to our new found knowledge. The role of the adult and all team members was critically explored in the study and we provide this critique elsewhere (O'Brien et al., 2018a)

A strength of PAR is that it provides oppressed people with the tools they need to make changes in their lives (Veale, 2005). Although young people can be considered 'oppressed' in terms of how their voices have been traditionally muted, the term 'oppressed' may not fully encapsulate PAR (Stoudt, 2009). In his study exploring bullying in a private school for boys using a PAR framework, Stoudt (2009) recognises that PAR has also been used to explore privilege and refers to the seminal work of Lewin (1946) who reflected that it is similarly important for the social sciences to engage with structural privilege. Reason and Bradbury (2008: 700) propose that although oppression and privilege are opposing experiences there is a need for both sets of work:

The pedagogy of the oppressed must be matched by a pedagogy of the privileged if we are to move our world toward justice and sustainability

Stoudt (2009:10) goes on to say that Reason and Bradbury (2008), advocate for a “pedagogy of the privileged” to include:

...inquiry processes which engage those in positions of power, and those who are simply members of privileged groups—based on gender, class, profession, or nation.

As this study was located in an independent school, it was important to recognise the perceived privilege the students came from but it was paramount to acknowledge their ‘oppression’ as young people, with regards to having their voices heard on a wider societal level. To that end, R4U were recruited to the study as active members of the research team. They comprised three boys and two girls: Hanik, Taha, Patrick, Amy and Hope<sup>2</sup> and they worked with Niamh for two academic years. Through data collection methods including questionnaires, focus group and interviews across the two PAR cycles, the research team heard the views of 155 students from year 7 to year 13. Of these 155, 85 were girls (21 boarders, 64 day students) and 70 were boys (27 boarders, 43 day students). We also sought views from adults through online and paper questionnaires (135 parents and 12 members of school staff).

The underlying principle of this study was to challenge the traditional image of children as incompetent which denies them access to knowledge and power that in turn increases their vulnerability (Christensen and Prout, 2002). PAR provides this challenge but is not without ethical and political implications.

<sup>2</sup>I am using the real names of the young researchers as they requested I use them rather than pseudonyms.

### **Ethical considerations in the project**

PAR generates close and collaborative relationships and consequently, political and ethical problems can arise for both researchers and participants (Williamson and Prosser, 2002). Meyer (1993) for example, argues that traditional aspects of informed consent are not adequate for this approach because participants are not only consenting to the

research but equally consenting to and supporting the ideas made for change. She goes on to say that sometimes, cooperation in PAR is forced and therefore contradicts the ethos of willing participation. Further ethical issues are apparent when enabling children and young people to participate in research, around how the research is translated, interpreted and mediated (James, 2007). In other words, the role of children's voice and how it is being used to inform research, is a question of importance as traditionally these perspectives have been presented through adult interpretations (Bragg and Fielding, 2005; James, 2007; Clark and Richards, 2017). However, Fitzgerald et al. (2009) suggest that adults must be prepared to act on what comes from children's involvement based on the invitation children are sent to participate in dialogue with them. Therefore by responding appropriately, adults send children the message that they respect what they have to say and trust the knowledge they have about their social world. Indeed Clark and Richards, (2017: 140) suggest

Upholding children's voices, particularly as experts, means listening even when such voices make us, as adults uncomfortable.

It was paramount that our study included the views of students from the outset. Subsequently, the study began when Niamh contacted the vice-principal of *The Olive Tree School*. She relayed the intention to work with students to explore bullying using a PAR framework. The vice principal was interested in this approach and agreed that presenting these ideas to a group of students would be the best way to gain support. Niamh presented the proposal to the student support group 'Blossom' (pseudonym). This group comprised sixth form pupils dedicated to hearing the student voice and helping with the student experience. The students read the developed information sheets and suggested changes to language and presentation style to generate interest for the would-be co-researchers. They agreed together a presentation that Niamh delivered during anti-bullying week and following this, the five self-selecting young researchers came forward. Through the involvement of students from the outset a sense of ownership in the study emerged and strengthened as the project evolved.

During the study, the participatory process was evaluated at three points; at 6 months, 18 months and 36 months, to assess the perceived level of

participation of each research team member and to address any potential issues before progressing with the project. Each evaluation fed into the next to provide an in-depth appraisal of how participation happened and the relationships that developed as a result (O'Brien et al., 2018a). These evaluations highlighted some ethical challenges pertinent to this project, two of which are addressed below:

- Insider and outsider knowledge
- Power dynamics

### **Insider and Outsider Knowledge**

Bragg and Fielding (2005) suggest that proposals for research which originate from students, should attempt to challenge adult assumptions and not merely reflect approved adult topics. Although the decision to begin this study by exploring the bullying definition was made by Niamh, as the study evolved the direction of the research was decided by the research team together. Consequently, exploring the concept of the 'snitch' and 'serious bullying' in the second PAR cycle, originated in the research findings and the participatory process during cycle one. Through the PAR process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Lewin, 1946) R4U were able to use their insider knowledge to shed light on the bullying issues at *The Olive Tree School*. It is unlikely that the focus of the study would have specifically been on 'the snitch' without this insider perspective. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the teachers of the school would have been made aware that 'snitching' about bullying is something the students worried about. Indeed Bland and Atweh (2007) and Ozer and Wright (2012), who both evaluated participatory research with young people, found that as a result of the participatory process, students were provided with opportunities to engage in dialogue with decision-makers and bring aspects of teaching and curriculum to their attention. These authors advocate that such an opportunity was unlikely to have taken place without the active involvement of young people in the research process.

R4U were fully involved in the analysis process through coding and interpreting the data with Niamh. Drawing on their insider knowledge, they understood the data somewhat differently to Niamh as they appreciated the



bullying situation in the school. This added a further layer to the analysis as Woodhead and Faulkner (2008) note, typically data including interview transcripts are analysed based on adult assumptions and ideologies. This process provided opportunities for questions to arise from the data whilst allowing the team to capture participants' collective and individual stories. Furthermore, through participatory data analysis, the recommendations from the research were based not only on the findings but also on the lived experiences of R4U as students with unique knowledge about the social interactions at the school. Previously, 'traditional' researchers devalued the experiences of research participants arguing that due to their distance from them, they themselves are better equipped to interpret these experiences (Beresford, 2006). However, Beresford (2006) suggests that the shorter the distance between direct experience and interpretation, the less distorted and inaccurate the resulting knowledge is likely to be.

During data analysis, R4U were empowered to reflect on their contextual knowledge, either as day students or boarders of the school, to interpret what the data were telling us. In team discussions about why some students might feel fearful to report bullying for example, R4U had their own ideas as to why this might be the case which added to the nuances of the findings. This insider contextual knowledge, along with the research findings, fed into the development of the draft anti-bullying strategy. Additionally, R4U had insider knowledge about the immediate and long term problems in tackling bullying that the draft strategy could potentially address. An example can be seen in the lack of training for both Blossom members and the staff team. Training for Blossom members about how to deal with bullying and other sensitive issues was considered imperative by R4U. Hanik, as a Blossom representative, commented that the training on sensitive issues was not sufficient: "about 30 seconds on child protection but that's it" (Hanik). The team agreed that training for Blossom could build the confidence of members to feel more prepared to deal with sensitive incidents.

### **A shift in power dynamics**

Given that perspectives of young people are usually presented through an adult lense, Jones (2004) questions whether democratisation in

research is possible and whether young researchers actually benefit from being involved. This focus on power dynamics is continuously debated in the research literature (O'Brien and Moules, 2007; Kellett, 2010). Ozer and Wright (2012) acknowledge that power relations in YPAR can be problematic, adults need to enable young people to take ownership over the project while at the same time providing the support structure to enable them to develop the skills necessary to conduct the research. Nonetheless, this power can be viewed as both negative; where adults hold all of the power over young people and hence little democratisation in decision-making, and as a positive where power becomes the ability, or indeed the capacity, to act. In this positive view, power derives not only from the position of the adult over the young person but also vice versa (O'Brien and Moules, 2007). Thus, in the research process:

Power moves between different actors and different social positions, it is produced and negotiated in the social interactions of child to adult, child to child and adult to adult in the local settings of the research. (Christensen, 2004:175).

In our project, power shifts took place not only between Niamh and R4U and back again, but also between R4U themselves. An example was evident in deciding the topic for cycle two. Patrick observed Hanik and Taha as having a greater input into this decision than Niamh or the young people as a collective. Patrick attributed these views to the fact that Hanik and Taha had attended more meetings than he had and had more input into the decision about what to explore. At this point it was important for the team to discuss our view of participation. We took the view of McIntyre (2008) who suggests that for participatory research to be successful the focus is on *quality* of the meetings attended rather than *quantity*. It was agreed that members of the research team needed to participate on their own terms and acknowledged that there would be times when not everybody could attend meetings, but most importantly each contribution was equally valid in arriving at overall group decisions. Through ongoing dialogue, R4U members provided examples of where they felt their input to a decision was taken seriously and all suggested their involvement provided them with personal gain.

Through constant evaluation, the research team observed the multi-dimensions of power in the project (O'Brien et al., 2018a). It was apparent that all of the power did not rest with Niamh, nor with R4U, but that power was shared between Niamh and young people depending on the context of the process. Unlike the linear models, which suggest participation is fully achieved once young people are leading the projects, evaluations from this project highlighted the fluidity of participation where a relational partnership can develop between adults and young people as they move through the participatory process (Moules and O'Brien, 2012; O'Brien et al., 2018a). In the context of writing up research, Clark and Richards (2017:137), draw our attention to the lack of acknowledgement of this relational process. They argue that as researchers we cleanse the findings: "...of that which reveals cooperation, collaboration, negotiation, and participation as epistemological evidence." These authors suggest that children's agency, with regard to having the ability to make decisions and take control of their own lives, can develop as a result of the relationships they develop with adults in the research process. Indeed these authors also recognise the multiple relationships children will develop as part of their wider networks which can equally impact their sense of agency.

Conversely, there were times when adults, external to our project, held the position of power and restricted progress. When seeking ethical approval from the university for cycle one, we argued that students of *The Olive Tree School* were competent to consent for themselves to take part without seeking parental consent. Coyne (2010) argues that once a child is deemed competent to consent, parental consent is not always necessary in social research. Certainly, Masson (2000) defines competence as the level of understanding needed to make choices. However the ethics committee did not recognise this notion of competence and required us to obtain *consent* from parents<sup>3</sup> and assent from students. We argued that assent does not apply and given the ages of these students, they were deemed competent to give their own consent unless it could be proven otherwise (Alderson, 2007). We reached a compromise that *permission* from parents of students wishing to participate would be sought, but that consent to actually take part would come from the students themselves. The ethics committee approved this method. The issue of consent was challenged again in cycle two based on findings from cycle one. In the focus group during cycle

one, a number of students were unable to participate as adult permission could not be sought. We argued that the voices of these students were missing from the data and that the need to seek parental consent was not necessary for the research going forward. R4U also felt very strongly about this imposition:

“Students should be able to talk to us about bullying in school without having to ask their parents’ permission. I wouldn’t like to ask my mum if I could speak.” (Amy)

The ethics committee accepted our position and the research continued without seeking parental consent.

<sup>3</sup>Parents’ refers to those with parental responsibility for students at the school

Adults acted as gatekeepers at other points during the project. In disseminating our findings, some of our presentations were cancelled due to (adult) timetable changes at the school. Publishing was impeded by adults who did not respond to our queries in taking the work forward. At other times the research team compromised with adults and school officials, evident in drafting the anti-bullying policy for example. Despite these barriers, adult-child relationships were an important aspect of this research. These circumstances strengthened our relationship with adults as we began to understand their position and vice-versa.

Adults also supported the project in many ways by providing lunch and a room to work from and subsequently working with the team to design the draft anti-bullying strategy. Consequently, the quality of the relationships between adults and young people and how they actively collaborate is the main component to youth participation (Percy-Smith, 2015; Clark and Richards, 2017)).

### **Conclusion**

This project enabled a group of young researchers to play an active role in implementing change at their school through reflection and action at each

stage and in challenging the status quo. Without this active involvement it is unlikely that the findings would have reflected the student voice and the subsequent action (a whole school anti-bullying policy) generated from the project. This research supports the theoretical underpinnings of childhood studies, recognising that young people can, when empowered to, make valid contributions to knowledge which enable adults to theorise and understand the social world that they occupy.

The PAR process enabled R4U to play an active role in implementing change at their school. R4U were determined to rise to the challenges presented through this research and this was supported by the willingness of the adults involved to listen to the students and take their views, and indeed their findings, seriously in implementing the draft anti-bullying strategy. Importantly, the research has allowed for constructive dialogue between the students and teachers in terms of understanding what is important to students and the possible reasons why bullying remains unreported at the school. Without the active involvement of R4U throughout the project this realisation might not have been possible.

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## **ENSURING RIGOUR AND TRUSTWORTHINESS IN A QUALITATIVE STUDY: A REFLECTIVE ACCOUNT**

### **Summary**

The reflections reported on here are based on a study that investigated social workers' perceptions of key influences to effective collaborative child protection decision making and practice. The study drew on evidence from a constructivist-interpretivist qualitative research design; involving semi-structured interviews with qualified and experienced social workers and from direct, non-participant, observations of child protection meetings. In line with the focus of this reflective account, a number of strategies were adopted to ensure rigor and trustworthiness throughout this qualitative study. Evidence from the study suggests that, apart from the multilevel relationship, organisational, and external influences, child protection decision-making does not rely entirely on the threshold criterion of the likelihood and significance of risk of harm. Instead, professionals use a combination of discretionary intuition and analytical judgement when making decisions. Conclusions drawn from the study include that, existing guidance on decision-making is inadequate. This study, contributed to considerable conceptual clarity regarding the complex child protection decision-making process.

**Key words: bias and subjectivity, rigour and trustworthiness, reflection, reflexivity, saturation, triangulation**

### **Introduction**

Rigour and trustworthiness are to qualitative research what reliability and validity are to quantitative research (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). Ensuring rigour and trustworthiness is a criterion for achieving quality in a qualitative study by reducing biases

and subjectivity. One of the distinguishing characteristic of constructivist-interpretivist qualitative studies is the epistemological relationship between the knower and the known (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998); which relates to the close interactive dialogue between the investigator and research participants who are the object of the investigation (Schwandt, 1994). Yet, this inseparable close relationship between the researcher and what is being researched is also its main source of criticism with regard to the perceived inherent biases and subjectivity in the overall quality of the study (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). This reflective account explores how a number of strategies that were adopted to ensure rigor and trustworthiness throughout a qualitative study.

### **Strategies employed to ensure rigour and trustworthiness**

Owing to the concerns associated with bias and subjectivity in qualitative research, a number of strategies were employed to ensure rigour and trustworthiness throughout the research process, namely:

- Ethical considerations
- Reflection and reflexivity:
- Principle of saturation
- Member checking
- Triangulation
- Lincoln and Guba (1985) criteria for ensuring rigour and trustworthiness

### **Ethical considerations**

Crucially, all research involving human participants, should have research ethics approval and research ethics approvals remain an important responsibility since the publication of Nuremburg code and the Helsinki declaration (World Medical Association, 2013). The first step to ensuring rigour and trustworthiness in this study was the ethical considerations which began with enabling access to the research sites and participants through gate keepers (Creswell, 2009). This involved a protracted process of completing various forms including the ethics application form; insurance and indemnity cover forms; information sheets and consent forms. The process was long-drawn-out but ultimately, after fulfilling all

the requirements for this rigorous process, ethics approval was granted by Local Authority's Research Ethics Governance Committee.

### **Use of reflection and reflexivity**

Reflection involves taking a step back in order to make meaning, understand and learn from experience (Fook, 2002; Gibbs, 1988), while being reflexive is self-introspective and enhances self-awareness (Bradbury-Jones, 2007; Savage, 2007). Throughout the study, reflection and reflexivity were employed to minimise subjectivity and biases (Bradbury-Jones, 2007; Long and Johnson, 2000; Peshkin, 1988; Savage, 2007). Reflection and reflexivity were employed throughout the research process with aid of two main frameworks, namely;

- Peshkin 'I's, model of reflection
- Insider-outsider perspective.

### **Peshkin 'I's, model of reflection**

Employing the Peshkin (1988) model of reflection involves actively seeking out and maintaining reflective and reflexive attentiveness to biases and subjectivity throughout the research process from different vantage points. Rather than subjectivity being an accidental discovery or occurrence, using this Peshkin 'I's model requires meaningful attentiveness to one's own subjectivity, while also acknowledging that subjectivity is ever present in the entire research process (Peshkin, 1988). In this regard, the Peshkin 'I's, model of reflection was used to reduce the influence of what was already known from learning, teaching and practice, to keep the passion under control, and to filter assumptions and interpretations already held, for example, from three levels of:

- 'I' as an experienced social worker,
- 'I' as a social work academic, and
- 'I' as a former child protection conference chairperson

In short, the Peshkin's model enabled constant reflection and reflexivity to be made throughout the research process and at different vantage points.

### **The insider-outsider perspective**

As with the Peshkin's model, the insider-outsider perspectives involved adopting different vantage points, at one level: as a passionate insider, with knowledge and experience, and at another: as an outsider undertaking the study. These different perspectives introduced tensions and dilemmas which had to be balanced and managed reflexively (Allen, 2004). For example, reflexivity ensured that the knowledge, experience and passion about the research topic was consciously separated from what social workers were describing and looked at more objectively as evidence (Allen, 2004; Rouf, Larkin and Lowe, 2011).

### **The principle of saturation**

The principle of saturation was applied to enhance rigour and trustworthiness in this study. The principle was used within purposive sampling to achieve the sample sizes of sixteen (16) research interview participants and twenty (20) direct, non-participant observed child protection meetings. Saturation is a point of diminishing returns when applied to sampling in a qualitative study (Mason, 2010; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003) or the point at which the collection of new data does not shed any further light on the issues under investigation (Glaser, and Strauss, 1967). With both samples, the sixteenth interview and twentieth observed meeting were the points at which the collection of new data from either of the two sources did not shed any new insights on the issues under investigation. At this point the decision was made that there was nothing to be gained from any further interviews or observations. Saturation is often considered to be the most important factor to think about when mulling over sample size decisions in qualitative research (Charmaz, 2006; Dworkin, 2012; Mason, 2010). While saturation is rooted in the theoretical sampling in grounded theory studies (Glasser and Strauss, 1967), in this instance it was used to ensure robustness of the data. For example, both samples were purposively selected through saturation process (Brown, et al, 2006; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). The saturation point was therefore reached when additional interviews or observations did not seem to bring about any changes to the emerging themes and the conceptual framework.

Saturation was also interwoven throughout sampling, data collection and data analysis.

### **Member checking**

Member checking involves allowing research participants to review their audio recording or going through their transcripts. Member checking is considered to be the single most important activity for bolstering a study's credibility (Creswell 2009; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this study, although some declined, all research participants were given the opportunity to verify the data before it was analysed.

### **Triangulation**

Findings from both data strands were compared through triangulation in order to establish either, convergence and divergence, thus ensuring rigour and trustworthiness in the findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; O'Cathain, Murphy and Nicholl, 2010; Ponterotto, 2005). Triangulation also enabled the development of comprehensive understanding of the issues under investigation (Patton, 1999) as well as provided a greater perspective about the data (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013; O'Cathain, Murphy and Nicholl, 2010). Figure 1 below provides an illustration on how triangulation was applied this study.

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS		TRIANGULATION PROTOCOL	QUALITATIVE OBSERVATION FINDINGS	QUALITATIVE COMMENTS
Super ordinate Themes	Main Themes		Collaborative influences that were observed	
Multi-level relationship influences	Professionals' relationship influences <i>(Barriers and enablers)</i>	AG	Professionals influences	There was convergence hence agreement, between what social workers perceived and what was observed about professionals', lead social workers' and family members' influences that were observed.  Evidence of the presence of multi-level relationship influences at professionals', lead social workers' and family members' levels was established during both interviews and observations. The systemic relationship between multi-level relationship influences was evident in both interviews and observations in with the conceptual framework.
	Lead social workers' relationship influences: <i>(Barriers and enablers)</i>		Lead social workers influences	
	Family members' relationship influences: <i>(Barriers and enablers)</i>		Family members influences	
Multi-level organisational influences	Professionals' organisational influences <i>(Barriers and enablers)</i>	PA	Organisational influences were not specifically included in the observation sheet	Although organisational influences were not specifically included in the observation sheet, evidence of multi-level organisational influences at professionals', lead social workers' and family members' levels was established during both interviews and observations. However during observations for example C5CP1and C3CP2 meetings organisational influences were observed due to absence or change of social worker and the line manager stepping in.
	Lead social workers' organisational influences <i>(Barriers and enablers)</i>	PA		
	Family members' organisational influences <i>(Barriers and enablers)</i>	PA		
External influences <i>(Barriers and enablers)</i>		AG	External influences	There was agreement, hence convergence in what participants said and what was observed about external influences. Similar external influences were identified in both interviews and observations.
Decision-making influences <i>(Barriers and enablers)</i>		AG	Decision-making prioritisation influences	There was agreement, hence, convergence about the lack of clarity of the decision making criteria. Instead there was evidence of discretionary and intuitive multiple and professional judgement criteria being used during interviews and observations.
		AG	Child protection outcomes influences	There was evidence that child protection outcomes being due to collaboration in what was observed although participants were not specifically asked about child protection outcomes e.g. during C1CP2 and C3CP2 as cited in Chapter 6

Key to Convergence Coding Scheme: AG=agreement; PA=partial agreement; S=silence; DA=Dissonance

Figure 1: An illustration of a triangulation protocol comparing qualitative interview finding to qualitative observation findings.

**Lincoln and Guba, (1985) criteria for ensuring rigor and trustworthiness**

This study also adopted the Lincoln and Guba, (1985) criteria for ensuring rigor and trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness was ensured mainly, through adhering to each of the following criteria:

- Credibility;
- Transferability;
- Dependability
- Confirmability

### **Ensuring credibility**

Ensuring credibility is used in qualitative research in preference to internal validity in quantitative research. In this study ensuring credibility involved aligning every step in the research process, paying attention to the fit of the question, data, and method, as well as, ensuring that each step in the data analysis is properly accounted for (Richards, 2005).

### **Ensuring transferability**

Transferability in qualitative research is used in preference to external validity/generalizability in quantitative research. For example, while the qualitative findings for this study may not be generalised due to reliance on a small sample, the extent to which they can be applied to other situations may be a consideration (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011; Whittaker, 2010). The in-depth understanding of the context of study and a detailed description of what was studied may allow comparisons and transferability to be made (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013; Shenton, 2004; Whittaker, 2010). In that regard, the thick contextual information about the background to this study and its setting was provided to facilitate transferability. Similarly, studies in the literature review that employed similar research methods in comparable and different environments were also considered.

### **2.6.3 Ensuring dependability**

Dependability, as opposed to reliability in quantitative research was also employed in this qualitative study. As with credibility, ensuring dependability in this instance involved maintaining trustworthiness throughout all steps in the research process (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).



This involved the use of constant reflection and reflexivity, and detailed reporting to facilitate replicability. Figure 2 below provides a visual flowchart which illustrates the different stages and decisions made throughout the research process for this study.

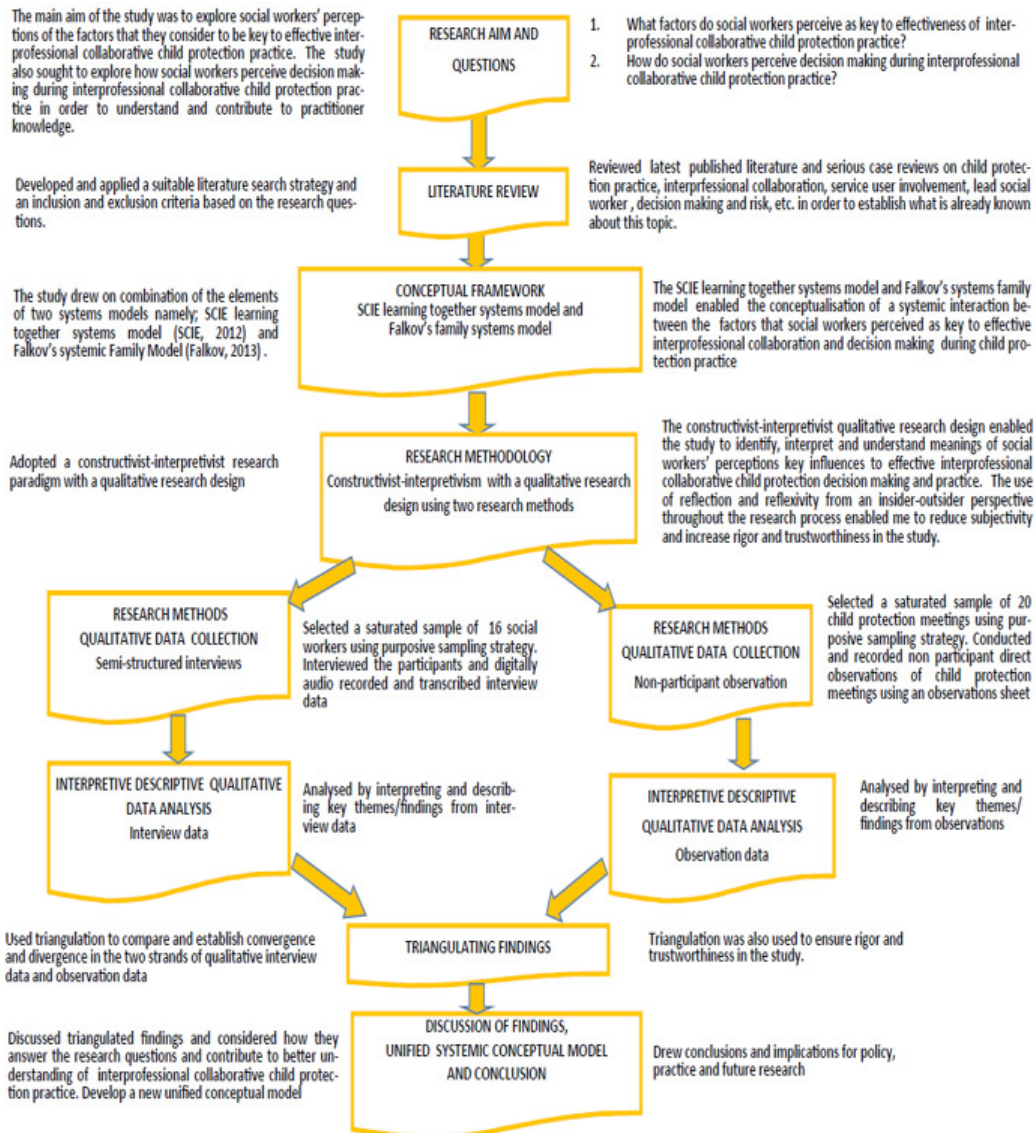


Figure 2: A visual flowchart illustration of the different stages and decisions made throughout the research process



Figure 3 below also illustrates the specific steps that were followed during the interpretive descriptive data analysis, to demonstrate transparency and dependability of the research process and the study as a whole.

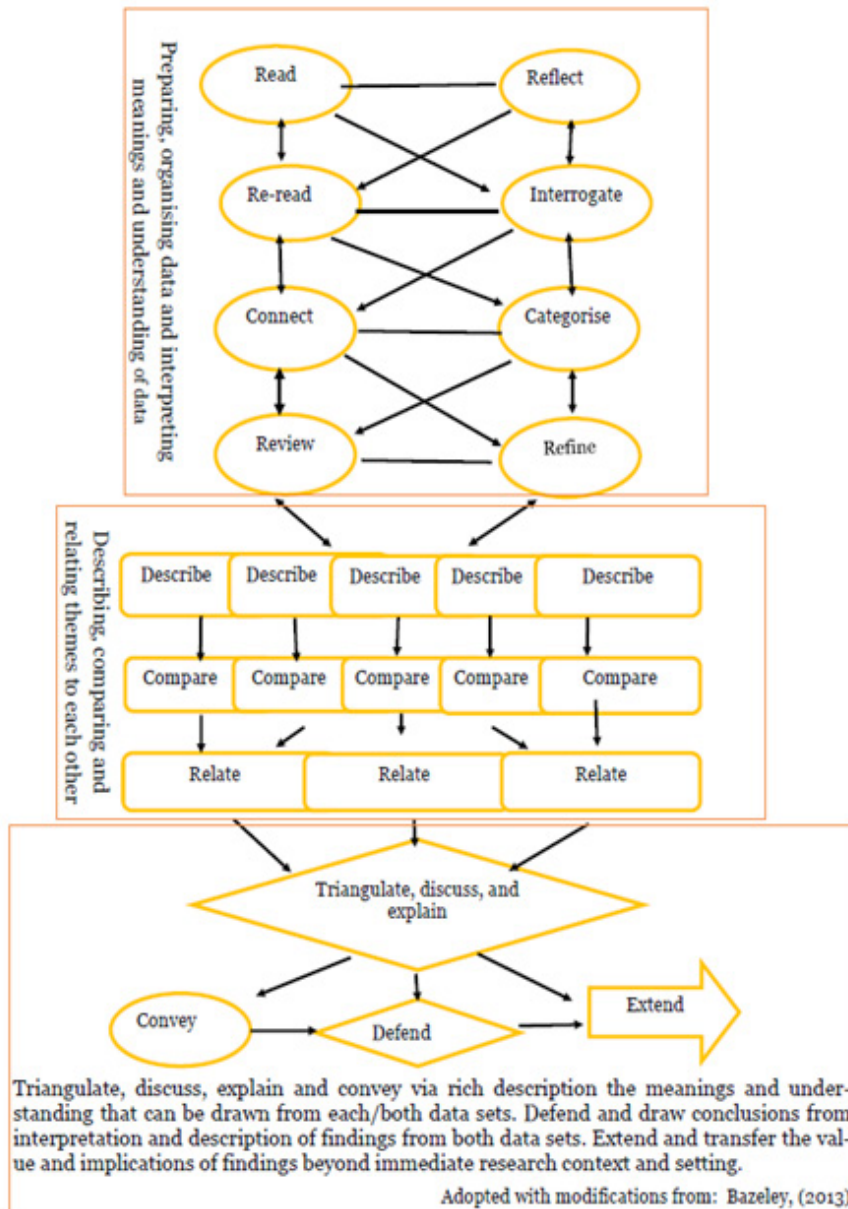


Figure 3: An illustration of the specific steps that were followed during the interpretive descriptive data analysis

In addition, both Figures 2 and 3 serve the same purpose as audit trails which is commonly used in case studies

### **Ensuring confirmability**

The dimension of confirmability is the equivalent of objectivity in quantitative research. Confirmability in this study, with regard to rigour and trustworthiness involved ensuring that findings of the study reflect what social workers accurately described and what was observed at child protection meetings, rather than what was already known from experience. In that respect, managing and balancing the dilemmas and tensions of the insider-outsider perspective facilitated the increase in confirmability of this study (Allen, 2004). As alluded to above, both Figures 2 and 3 above provided a trail of the inductive logic of the research process in order to complement transparency, integrity and confirmability of this study (Akkerman et al, 2006; Carcary, 2009; Seale, 1999; Shenton, 2004; Yin, 2009). Key to confirmability is the open and transparent nature of the research processes and procedures, and the leaving a clear audit trail as a guarantor of the integrity and trustworthiness (Smith, 2003; Yin, 2009).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this reflective account has demonstrated how a range of strategies were employed at different stages and throughout the study to reduce biases and subjectivity and to ensure rigor and trustworthiness. These strategies included the application of the ethics approval for the study; use of reflection and reflexivity involving use of Peshkin I's model of reflection and the insider-outsider perspective; saturation during sampling; member checking during data collection; use of triangulation protocol to establish convergence or divergence as well as Lincoln and Guba, (1985) criteria for ensuring rigor and trustworthiness. Ultimately, this reflective account adds value by demonstrating that the combination of a range strategies are able to reduce biases and subjectivity as well as ensure rigour and trustworthiness of a qualitative study and its findings, hence overall quality of the study.

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## **PUNITIVE HETEROTOPIA IN ANN TURNER'S CELIA (1988)**

A quarry, in the sense of a pit for splitting rocks, derives from the Latin *quadra*, a square. A square, having a dihedral symmetry of four, order eight, is a shape of balance, stability and order. However, a quarry is also a site of violence – a place where the natural world is systematically gutted and emptied-out through drilling and explosion. Such a location provides a dangerous though exciting location for children to play, as they do in Ann Turner's coming-of-age directorial debut *Celia* (1988).

This paper itself is split into two parts. The first part charts how the children (and camera) of *Celia* transform an Australian quarry into the kind of phantasmal, non-hegemonic space which Foucault (1986) refers to as a 'heterotopia'. The second part charts how the heterotopia of the quarry is corrupted through *Celia*'s imitation of an adult model of retributive justice. As such this paper has a two-fold purpose: Firstly, to illustrate how editing and cinematography can spatially re-configure a real off-screen place as heterotopic on-screen, giving external expression to a phenomenon experienced by children as part-imaginary; secondly, to argue that because the child's heterotopia is fundamentally other to adult systems of law and order, it is ethically and ontologically wrong to submit children to adult systems of justice.

In *Celia*, the titular 9-year-old (Rebecca Smart) and her friends spend their evenings play fighting in an abandoned quarry outside a suburb of Melbourne, Victoria in the months of December 1957 to February 1958. The quarry in *Celia* is a space of violent disorder, a stage upon which stones are hurled and holes filled with rotten meat for other children to fall into – actions in a tit-for-tat cycle of gang warfare that escalates to the mutilation of *Celia*'s beloved pet rabbit Murgatroyd by her rival Stephanie (Amelia Frid). The quarry is transformed from a rational, rectilinear site of

work to a gutted, irrational space of violent play. Damousi (2009) reads a psychological dimension to this violence, asserting that '[t]he oppressive restraints of suburban life are relinquished in the quarry [...] where the tensions, fears and heightened anxieties of the children are played out and ritualized.' The quarry is therefore a space outside of the social order of the adult world, encapsulating 'the vast expanse of the unconscious' (ibid.).

Damousi divulges the symbolic function of the film's quarry scenes without explaining how this unruly space is created cinematically. By contrast, in a paper on film space and the world of childhood, Annette Kuhn (2010) demonstrates how cinematography maps out space in the films *Where is the Friend's Home?* (Abbas Kiarostami, 1990), *Mandy* (Alexander Mackendrick, 1952) and *Ratcatcher* (Lynne Ramsay, 1999). She argues of film that 'through its organization within the frame of spatiality, liminality and motion, the medium is capable of replaying or invoking states of being that are commonly experienced as inner' (p.95). So, following Kuhn, we should ask how Turner, cinematographer Geoffrey Simpson and editor Ken Sallows, use 'spatiality, liminality and motion' (ibid.) to establish that the quarry in *Celia* is, far from being just a square in which stones are squared, a semi-phantasmal space; a make-believe frontier situated midway between a tangible wasteland and a child's unconscious.

The quarry is introduced on-screen eleven-and-a-half minutes into the film after a scene in which Celia attends a church service with her family. Celia wheels her bicycle out of frame to the left; the film then cuts to Celia cycling in the opposite direction, entering frame left at the edge of the quarry. Since the viewer is given no indication as to the geographical location of the quarry in relation to the church and Celia enters at the same side of the frame she left, a temporal-spatial ellipsis is created, as though Celia has just materialised at the site of the quarry. The camera then pans across with Celia as she runs down the path leading to the pit. This movement is in lieu of an establishing shot, so that the viewer's movement into the space of the quarry is closely matched with Celia's own. Furthermore, the diegetic sound of the bike's wheels upon gravel blends almost imperceptibly with the non-diegetic soundtrack. Consequently, the auditory space of the film world and the outer world of the

cinema/viewing space are experientially blurred in a way analogous to how the liminal space of the quarry blurs Celia's phenomenological world with her unconscious.

Seemingly from Celia's POV we see the figure of her grandma (Margaret Ricketts) appear from behind a mound of rubble in extreme long shot. However, the audience knows that Celia's grandma was discovered dead by Celia at the beginning of the film, and so "granny" must be a spectre of her granddaughter's imagination. As Celia walks towards this vision of her grandma, the camera clings in close-up to Short's face in a tracking shot. As with much of this primary quarry sequence, the view of the camera is not identical to Celia's point-of-view, but in sympathetic collusion with her emotional and psychological experience of the film world.

Of course, when Celia reaches the bottom of the slope there is no grandmother in sight. The soundtrack cuts abruptly with Celia's recognition, the bittersweet piano music replaced by the buzz of cicadas, embodying the return of the real. Celia's gaze lingers momentarily upon a hut, before the film cuts to a mid-shot of Celia and then – in a moment of spatial bewilderment – an upwards tilting shot of Celia and her grandmother picnicking on a boat in the middle of a lake. The eagle-eyed viewer might recognise that the lake is one of the quarry's pits filled with water, but failing that, the shot appears utterly incongruous with those that have preceded it. Only the continued soundtrack of cicadas ensures the viewer's sense of continuity. It is not signalled whether this shot represents a memory, dream or hallucination. As such, by the end of this first quarry sequence we have reached a point at which the real landscape has been subsumed by the imagination of the child.

The second quarry sequence further defines the setting as a phantasmal space structured by the child's imagination. Again with no establishing shot, we cut abruptly from a suburban garden to a low-angle shot of Celia stood upon a rocky outcrop, head framed against the blue sky. The simple, uniform colour tonalities of the shot make the location seem abstracted, iconic. However, the spatial uniformity of the quarry is blasted as Celia raises her arms before her, points her hands in the shape of a gun and shouts 'bang!' Celia shoots at a 45° angle from the camera, her line of sight



cutting across the quarry diagonally. The shot-reverse-shot edit between her and the two children she shoots draws an invisible line between them, yet without an establishing or long shot to put their relative positions in context, we do not know the distance between them, so the pit below becomes an unknown expanse, a void magically bridged.

After another child is shown pretending to be shot by Celia, the cutting rate decreases as the game winds down. The camera tilts and pans slightly up-left, showing children at various levels along the banks, stratifying the landscape. Then, mirroring the camera's movement, Stephanie's gang are shown running down a slope of the quarry diagonally from the top-left of the frame to the bottom-right. Celia's gang runs away up the slope, the train of children snaking in a clockwise direction, no longer moving in a straight line.

One can thus see how the rectilinear space of the quarry is sequentially disrupted – at first cut through its horizontal axis with diagonals and then stratified vertically, before finally being all but scribbled upon as the children leave their weaving trail through the sandy dirt (see Fig. 1).

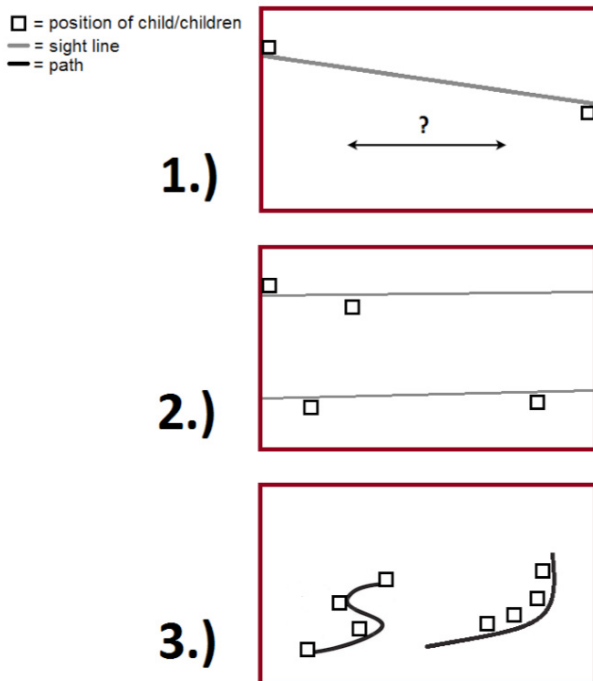


Fig. 1

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The chaotic disturbance of the quarry as a stable place is both a product of the children's games and reflective of the violence of their play. Damousi and McCalmont both point out that the children's games draw from, mirror and distort the social games, politics and popular culture of the adult milieu which their play provides a (partial) respite from (Damousi, op cit. and McCalmont, 2009). Celia visits the cinema on two separate occasions with her parents where she watches a newsreel depicting the 'great rabbit muster' of Henry Bolte, the conservative Victorian premier from 1955 to 1972 who, in an attempt to control the "plague" of rabbits decimating Victoria's farmland, authorised myxomatosis to be introduced to the state's rabbit population and decreed that pet rabbits be exterminated or else relocated to Melbourne Zoo. It is this policy which apparently inspires Stephanie's branding of Celia's rabbit. Likewise, we see Celia and her friends watching a heist movie at the cinema, in which an armed assailant shoots a woman dead – likely the kind of picture the gang are imitating when they pretend to shoot one other at the quarry.

The idea of children drawing inspiration from the culture they consume, restaging scenes from television and films, is common to "moral panic" arguments about children's viewing habits, as Craig Martin commented to Ann Turner in a 2016 interview with her for *Senses of Cinema*. Debates pertaining to the potential impact of violent media upon children are variably supported or disputed by research within the disciplines of sociology and psychology, with some studies (Boyatzis, et al., 1995; Groebel, 1998; Anderson and Dill, 2000; McHan, 2010) concluding that children's behaviour is negatively impacted by exposure to such media and others (Kaplan and Singer, 1976; Gunter, et al., 2000; Fleming and Rickwood, 2001; Freedman, 2002) reviewing the evidence to find little to no causal link. However, despite differing conclusions, all such research tends to start from the a-priori assumption that children consume popular media (television; film; games) and that such media is – to some degree or other – important to them.

Indeed, in the conclusions from a piece of ethnographic research carried out in two Sheffield and London primary school playgrounds, Chris Richards remarks that 'popular media' was 'among the most available and enjoyable resources' for children to draw upon in their playground games.

However, he also notes that such texts were 'not simply followed as pre-determined templates for play' (2013, p.395), implicitly disputing the most literal-minded social learning accounts. The children he studied were able to engage imaginatively with the media they consumed, re-combining tropes, characters and motifs in a loose, non-dogmatic *bricolage* of fun.

Yet, the inspirations children draw from the adult world may not be only fictional. McCalmont (op cit.) notes that when Stephanie's gang hurl rocks at Celia's gang 'she uses not the language of the child's world but that of the adult's', shouting 'Dirty Reds! Dirty Reds!' at them.

McCalmont (ibid.) summaries the film's portrayal of the 'world of adults' thus:

[A] claustrophobic and brutally unfair place governed by incomprehensible rules and statements of fact that [...] seem strangely distant and unreal due to the fact that they mostly issue forth from the same cinema screen as the detective stories the family pay to see for fun.

McCalmont's description is somewhat reductive since it reduces the 'world of adults' to the patriarchal figures and systems exhibited in Celia, neglecting the more positive, nurturing representations of adulthood in the film, such as Celia's grandmother. However, McCalmont is astute in recognising that for Celia and her friends the adult realm is just as alien and incomprehensible as the movies they inattentively watch – both offer semantic systems which they incorporate piecemeal into their own ontological paradigms. It is as though they scavenge for symbols amongst the world of the adults which they bring home with them to the world of children and make use of as and when.

Several writers (McNamee, 2000; Johnson, 2006; Richards, 2013; Chang-Kredl and Wilkie, 2016), recognising the existence of a separate child's realm constructed through the rituals of play, turn to Michel Foucault's concept of 'heterotopia' (1986) in order to theorise this phantasmal space.

'Heterotopia' perhaps remains more productively perverse if it remains

undefined – the danger being that soon as you define a heterotopia within certain parameters; it becomes a utopia, doomed to ossification or failure. For Foucault there is no especial relationship between heterotopias and hope. The heterotopia is, to quote Johnson, ‘about conceiving space outside, or against, any utopian impulse or framework’ (p.84). That is to say, heterotopias upset stable, clearly defined spatial boundaries. They do this through treating such boundaries as though they were eminently permeable and open to radical reconfigurations. If you take, for example, a child in a school playground, they might only be allowed to play within certain parameters, yet these are superseded in the child’s imagination. So, the tarmac of the playground becomes lava and the monkey bars swinging vines etc.

In their piece on childhood subjectivity and heterotopia, Chang-Kredl and Wilkie describe the heterotopia simply as ‘a site that juxtaposes incompatible spaces’ (p.308). Arguably this definition is too broad as one can expand or contract the boundaries of a theorised site as one sees fit in order to allow juxtapositions that would render non-heterotopic sites heterotopic.

It is instructive therefore to return to Foucault in order to sharpen and clarify our understanding of heterotopia. For Foucault, ‘A heterotopia is, unlike a utopia, a real place, but a place which functions as a self-contained microcosm, containing, testing, or inverting other real places within it’ (p.3). Academics cited by Arun Saldanha (2008, p. 2083) who provide examples of heterotopias, including: Vancouver’s public library (Lees, 1997), ethnography exhibits (Kahn, 1995) and Main St. in Disneyland (Philips, 2002), focus on the latter part of Foucault’s statement (i.e. the fact that the heterotopia contains, tests and inverts other places) to the neglect of the fact that a heterotopia must also function as ‘a self contained microcosm’ (op cit.). That is to say, the heterotopia must not only hold fragments and reflections of other societies within itself, but must simultaneously function as an autonomous space within mainstream society. It must be of a larger society and also other to it.

It is this indeterminacy which allows the heterotopia to be mapped onto the cinematic imaginary since films are simultaneously phantasmal projections

upon a screen and documents of the real, material locations and objects the camera was pointed towards. Indeed, in Foucault's published lecture he refers to cinema as an example of heterotopic space, remarking that 'the cinema is a very odd rectangular room, at the end of which, on a two-dimensional screen, one sees the projection of a three-dimensional space' (p.8). Previous academics (Kuhn, op cit. and Powrie, 2005) have specifically related the concept of heterotopia to films with child protagonists on the grounds that such films suture their adult viewers into a child's world, furthering the pre-existing dislocation between the space of the cinema and the space of the film.

Turner, in interview, makes it clear that she deliberately wrote and directed *Celia* in such a way as to suspend adult judgement upon her child protagonist's behaviour (Turner and Martin, op cit.). Peter Shelley explains that Turner endeavoured not to label the adversarial, even violent behaviour of the children in the film as 'cruelty' because 'she didn't perceive it as such when it was occurring with her as a child' (2012, p.117). Turner is thus united with Powrie and the other listed academics as seeing the realm of childhood as a world apart. She recognises that her experience and moral understanding of the world was profoundly different as a child than as an adult. To honour a child's perception of reality, we must consider labelling aspects of reality in their own terms, not ours. As adults we should not merely state authoritatively that our adult perception of the world is "true", while a child's perception of reality is distorted through immaturity – that the labels adults put on things have epistemological weight while the labels children put on things, don't. This position is upheld by academics/researchers working within the so-called "new sociology of childhood", such as Boocock and Scott (2005), Kallio (2008), Bolin (2014) and Barnikis (2015).

We can see therefore how the quarry in *Celia* would not be a heterotopic space when, say, occupied by adults squaring stones, but becomes heterotopic through the rituals (both violent and playful) enacted by the children within it. The quarry is possessed of inherent qualities (vastness; openness) which makes it an ideal candidate for such transformation, being unbounded enough that the children are able to successfully impose their imaginations upon it; but it is the fact that the children within it construct

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their own counter society with their own rules and rituals which ensures its heterotopic status.

However, such a counter society can never be utopian, since the heterotopia is never “outside” of mainstream society, but always exists in conversation with it. This means, to quote Jason Dodge, there can never be a ‘wholesale negation’ (2015, p.323) of the values of mainstream society within the heterotopia. Power always creeps back in.

Reviewers (Maslin, 1990; French, date unknown; Damousi, op cit.) and Ann Turner herself note that by the end of *Celia* the title character’s behaviour has become inextricably bound up with the playing through and, ultimately, replication of, adult power games. This consensus is likely influenced by *Celia*’s actions in the last third of the film, in which judging her uncle John (William Zappa) guilty for the death of her rabbit and believing him to be an evil fairytale monster called a hobyah, she fatally shoots him with her father’s shotgun. She then uses the quarry at the site for a mock trial in which her friend Heather (Clair Couttie), who was in the house when *Celia* shot John, is made to play the role of the accused and is almost hung to death.

If the heterotopia serves a function, that role is, according to Foucault, to ‘create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory’ (p.8). At the end of the show trial *Celia* pronounces: ‘Justice has been done and the case rests forever.’ Clearly, the ritual that has taken place has not provided justice in the sense of true retribution since *Celia* herself remains unpunished. *Celia*’s words highlight here that the judicial system’s smooth operation is not whatsoever dependent upon the correct allocation of blame. There merely has to be somebody to fill the role of the guilty party. Justice within the world of adults, *Celia* has cynically realised at the end of the film, is often little more than a hollow ritual composed of signs and symbols ossified through tradition. From having experienced the injustice(s) of the adult world, she now introduces this same injustice to the realm of childhood represented by the quarry.

As such, the mock trial signifies the moment at which heterotopia becomes dystopia. In the place of imaginative games which transformed the landscape of the quarry through play, we are left with the grotesque mimicry of an adult institution. Perhaps most grotesque is the fact that Celia, in saying 'justice has been done and the case rests forever' frames retributive as restorative justice. While Celia, as the perpetrator, has received closure, Stephanie, daughter of the victim, has not. Under a true system of restorative justice, the needs of Stephanie as a victim would be addressed and Celia would be required to make amends in a way appropriate to her position as a 9-year-old girl. Throughout the film Celia has been 'the hapless victim of trauma, betrayal and systematic oppression' (Martin, op cit.) and found that responding to these experiences with compassion and integrity just left her more abused. So, at the end of the film, she has decided to join the ranks of the abusers, rather than be encouraged through adult supervision to deconstruct the whole paradigm of abuse.

It is hinted at the end of the film that Celia's mother suspects that it was Celia who killed her brother-in-law, yet chooses not to do anything with this information. Martin condemns Celia's mother for this, comparing her to the mother of the murderous Rhoda Penmark in *The Bad Seed* (Mervyn LeRoy, 1956); he writes: 'Both mothers learn that their prepubescent daughters are killers and rather than seek justice, step into the role of accomplice.' Martins' words here suggest that justice could only look like Celia's punishment under the law – perhaps imprisonment; maybe worse. However, I submit that the film might be presenting Pat Carmichael's unconditional love for her daughter as potentially redemptive and offering a different model of parenting to the corporal punishment provided by Celia's father. Sandra Bloom (2001, pp.89-90), in arguing for a societal shift towards restorative justice, draws a parallel between retributive systems of justice and the way in which parents sometimes punish children; she reflects:

The justice system reflects a fundamental imbalance of power between administrators of justice and those under its purview, just as a fundamental power imbalance exists between parents and children. The primary questions to be answered under the present

rules are, “What laws were broken?,” “Who broke them?” and “What punishment do they deserve?” Not surprisingly these are also the typical questions addressed towards children by authority figures.

To sentence a 9-year-old child through an adult court is to apply an adult paradigm to a social order that is fundamentally alien to it. After all, in terms of rights and privileges, children are not full political subjects in the eyes of the law. The semi-mythic realm of childhood has its own systems and rules. To quote Blake Morrison’s provocative and sometimes unsettling book on the murder of James Bulger: ‘Wouldn’t it be more appropriate for T & V [Thompson and Venables] to be tried by ten-year-olds, rather than adults, since this would mean, as juries are supposed to mean, judgement by one’s peers?’ (2011, p.100). Morrison’s question is rhetorical, but it expertly problematises the “commonsensical” view that adults should have the right to condemn children according to an adult system to laws. While Celia’s mock trial is a sad corruption of the games she played earlier in the film, it contains a kernel of emotion logic, which a real courtroom trial would have lacked. While Celia shooting her uncle was real (both for John Burke and his daughter Stephanie); in intent, it was a crime of the imagination (shooting a hobyah); as such, the crime is punished with an execution that likewise belongs to the realm of myth and ritual.

Complicity or indifference when faced with the crimes of children like Celia is not acceptable; but neither is the pretence that children occupy spaces governed by the same rules as adults. The games and rituals of childhood may sometimes resemble those of the adult world, but they are fundamentally “other” to them.

In *Celia*, the activities of Celia and her gang transform the quarry into a heterotopic space. It is a space quite apart from the adult realm. The games and rituals of childhood may sometimes resemble those of the adult world, but they are fundamentally “other” to them. This is not to argue that the heterotopias of childhood are innocent or free of cruelty and violence, merely that they be recognised as *different* to the everyday world of adults and that this fact must always be considered when society is confronted with a child who has broken the law.



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