LIFELONG LEARNING
SE FORMER TOUT AU LONG DE SA VIE PROFESSIONNELLE

Table of Contents / Contenu

Introduction

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In this edition of the *Research Journal: International Education Theory and Practice* we continue to reflect explicitly and implicitly on the interconnectedness of educational theory, research and practice and to promote RIPE (Research Informed Practice in Education).

The purpose of the RIPE network is to bring researchers and classroom practitioners into a space of collaboration and exchange with the aim of promoting robust research-informed practice in international education and collectively to construct a deep understanding of dialogic teaching and learning in a plurilingual and pluricultural context.

The contributions to this journal fall into three categories:

- Two MA module essays by classroom practitioners
- Collaborative school-based research in China, and
- Two reflections on the nature and purpose of education past and present.

Together they support the fundamental aim of the RIPE network, to develop deeply engaged international "networked learning communities" whose work will ultimately have a positive impact on student learning.

Can critical and creative thinking complement each other in making purposeful thought productive?

Patrick Jefford explores the complementarity of creative and critical thinking in the context of 21st-century learning and teaching for children in the primary years. Drawing from his experience working with students in an international school in Switzerland, Jefford suggests that the inherently transdisciplinary nature of creative thinking lends itself to concept-based, problem-based and inquiry-based learning. Jefford reminds us that, as educators, we should be purposeful ourselves in determining the balance between teaching for creative and productive thought and traditional learning objectives. Equally important is our reexamination of appropriate tools for assessing creative thought and our stance as reflective practitioners.

Teaching Language across the curriculum

Cris Delataro Barabas' essay takes us across the globe and into the classrooms of an "internationalised" school in mainland China catering principally to Chinese nationals. Whilst the overall aim of the essay is to underline the importance of content and language integrated learning for English language learners, Barabas raises important questions that echo themes in Jefford's piece: the relationship of surface to deep learning, the collaborative nature of learning in a social constructivist space, and the challenges this may pose to teacher identity and beliefs.

A public-private school partnership in China as a model for delivery of educational reform

The fascinating dynamic of intercultural learning and teaching is likewise at the heart of the research by Zhao and Hussain on the integration of formative assessment practices in a remarkable collaborative project blending public and private, East and West, to assess the impact of learning objectives and success criteria on primary maths students. While deepening our understanding of success criteria as a contributing factor to student attainment and motivation, this research project equally opens the way for innovative collaborative partnerships that may enhance the student learning experience in any pluricultural context.

Reaching Beyond Traditional Schema for Professional Learning

Alexander and Perche offer us a new approach to professional learning with an emphasis on creating a space of deep engagement with and questioning of the nature and purpose of education. Breaking with a common thread found so often in current discourse that focuses on providing a toolkit for classroom practitioners, Alexander and Perche suggest that educators should rather engage in "the act of calling forth courage to take heart, to resist, to reassess and to rethink." Their work calls into question the political economy of education and urges us to recognize the broader ethical and political implications of our practice.

Plus ça change…

In the final article, I engage in a historically based reflection on some of the key notions we tend to associate with the current discourse on education: autonomy, agency and the importance of the affective in the learning environment to argue that these have long been present in the heart and aims of educators. Drawing from my research in eighteenth-century French education, I explore the historical origins of the modern concept of childhood as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and suggest that the notion of childhood as a separate stage of development during which families and institutions should encourage the development of the child as a full, autonomous individual was born in the eighteenth century if not before.

If you would like to submit an article to the next edition of the Research Journal: International Education Theory and Practice, we invite you to submit your work to <u>karen.taylor@ecolint.ch</u> by October 15th, 2022.

Can teaching for Creative Thinking and Critical Thinking enhance Productive Thought in Primary Education?

Patrick Jefford, International School of Geneva

Abstract

Creativity and *Critical Thinking* are two micro-competences that fall under the macro competence of lifelong learning. UNESCO's IBE[1] considers them essential skills for 21st-century learning (Marope, Griffin, & Gallagher, 2019). They are also at the core of our Universal Learning Programme (Hughes, 2020) at the International School of Geneva.

Although our Primary school has been using P4C to teach critical thinking skills to our young learners for many years, its place in our success criteria is limited. Even if we give great attention to the importance of Creative Thinking when writing our Transdisciplinary Units of Inquiry, creativity is seldomly considered a learning outcome. Creative and Critical Thinking appears in every domain of learning in the school, yet they are usually undermined when it comes to specific goals or outcomes for learning. Our curriculum and reports still give the impression that our school only values factual knowledge and scaffolded learning outcomes that lead towards middle school baseline requirements.

This paper will attempt to define the concepts of Creative Thinking and Critical Thinking, analyze how they can take their legitimate place in our primary curriculum and learning standards, and how we could assess them at the same level as traditional strands and standards. We will also look at how these thinking skills can "encourage deep vs surface learning strategies" (Ritchhart, 2015, p. 50), how they can complement rather than oppose each other, and how by "making the assessment of creativity and critical thinking valuable, we make these concepts real rather than rhetorical" (Carlile & Jordan, 2012, p. 122)

Keywords: Creativity – Critical Thinking – Productive Thought – Primary Education

Part I
What is creative thinking?

Creative Thinking can be defined by *Imaginative Thinking directed towards innovation. It is based on questions that ask "what if," and "why not"; "how" and "how else"? Creative Thinking is grounded in consideration of alternative possibilities, other ways of imagining and doing things.* (DiYanni, 2016). In Education, we encounter hundreds of books and articles that praise the value of creativity in the classroom, Creative Learning or Creative Thinking. Ted talks on creativity have also flooded the internet over the years. Sir Ken Robinson's TED talk "Do schools kill creativity?[2]" has been viewed over 20 million times over the years. The importance of fostering creativity seems to be undoubtedly crucial in Western culture.
In the book Approaches to Creativity (Carlile & Jordan, 2012), the authors remind us that the definition or the understanding of what being creative means has drastically changed over time. The most ancient views on creativity defined it as being a divine inspiration. In the medieval age, Creative Thinking was not welcomed by religious and political authorities. It was usually seen as a sign of possession or demonic attributes that was feared and stigmatized. During the renaissance (and still today in some spheres of society), creativity is the rightful belonging of people considered "geniuses" and usually limited to the Arts field. Fortunately, the Renaissance vision has evolved over time to a more holistic and inclusive approach. Modern western societies usually define creativity as a transdisciplinary attribute

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to any individual or group of people that succeed in being innovative and coming up with new and purposeful ideas and solutions.

HOW CAN creative thinking integrate the curriculum in the learning domains?

In most national curriculum, creativity is not a requirement for succeeding at school. A good understanding of "non-creative" disciplinary learning will provide children with sufficient knowledge to "pass", as said commonly. Still, to teach solely for knowledge would be insufficient to foster a deep understanding of concepts. (Hughes, 2020) Teaching and learning without giving the possibility of exploring one's imagination tend to limit the depth of learning. *Surface strategies focus on memory and knowledge gathering, whereas deep strategies are those that help students develop understanding* (Ritchhart, 2015, p. 52)*.* Micheal Fullan defines *deep learning* with these characteristics:

- *Learning that sticks with you the rest of your life*
- *Learning that connects with passion*
- *Learning that is team related*
- *Learning that has significance for the world, and*
- *Learning that involves higher-order skills*
    (Fullan, 2020)

To reach this high level of understanding, today's educators are becoming increasingly aware that teaching complicated concepts require more than traditional worksheets. Progressive primary teachers are now changing the way they communicate with their students. *Creative teachers teach in creative ways in order to make learning more interesting and effective.* (Carlile & Jordan, 2012, p. 187)

In **STEM[3] learning**, we can encourage Creative Thinking simply by asking the children to find multiple solutions to one single problem. We value the importance of learning through our mistakes and praise the children who experience different methods and procedures. *At the heart of Creative Thinking is the ability to come up with imaginative solutions and possibilities. This involves developing an idea by manipulating it, trying it out and improving it.* (Lucas & Spencer, 2017). "Providing proof" in Math, Technology, Engineering, and Sciences is an essential part of how these disciplines have evolved over time. Unfortunately, many tests in schools still exclusively value the capacities of children to follow procedures and mechanically end up with the correct answers. A Creative Thinking approach to STEM learning should be an essential part of any efficient curriculum. Although schools sometimes tend to associate creativity exclusively with artists, it's undeniable that most major historical innovations in STEM domains have involved a high level of creative thinking skills. We can think of Marie Curie's research on radioactivity (**S**), Mark Zuckerberg's creation of global social media (**T**), Ustad Ahmad Lahauri's conception of the Taj Mahal (**E**), or Maryam Mirzakhani's exceptional contributions to the study of the dynamics and geometry of mathematics (**M**). All of them are significant STEM contributors and Creative Thinkers.

Developing **Reading and Writing** skills could seem like the most non-creative essential learning in Primary Education. Children must grasp complex concepts of phonetic awareness; they slowly understand how to blend sounds and letters and make sense of sentences. Learning to read and write is at the core of Primary Education. The progressive access to literacy is undoubtedly the most significant *threshold concept* (Meyer, Land, & Baillie, 2010) in a young child's learning journey. Reading opens the doors to an endless source of knowledge, and **becoming a fluent reader can be facilitated by Creative Thinking strategies**.

[3] STEM (Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematic)

The **<u>Centre for Literacy in Primary Education</u>**[4] provides, through powerful professional development for teachers, strategies of reading that provokes the children's imagination and guides them through stories with an inquiry-based approach. Children are required to find alternative endings, reflect on the author's intention, identify new words, imagine different ways to phrase the stories and debate how the illustrations represent the narrative. Younger children are asked to invent the story by simply looking at the pictures and then see if their words and ideas match the ones of the author. These strategies of *forced prediction* (Newton & Newton, 2018, p. 66) push the children beyond the comfort of passive listening and storytelling. It also gives an alternative to laborious and confusing phonetic decoding that, when used constantly, tend to discourage emergent readers.

Professor Marie-France Morin from Sherbrooke University in Canada developed a method to stimulate Creative Thinking when developing spelling strategies. "Les orthographes approchées" (Morin & Montésinos-Gelet, 2006) which can be translated from French by "Invented Spellings" invites children to come up with a hypothesis of the proper spelling of a word in small groups and then interview different adults (teachers, administrators, or any other employee) in the school to share their ideas. The strategy stimulates the "learning by your mistakes" method. The children must try innovative and creative ways of using their knowledge to blend significantly more complex words than the ones they already know. The teachers can differentiate the challenges so that every child inquires on words above their level of understanding. When they have finished the interviews, they come together and share their new insights with the rest of their classmates. During that process, where creative spelling was encouraged, the children went from a limited towards a deeper understanding of phonics and grammar. When the program was tested, the results indicate that *those at-risk students who participated in the program showed significantly higher level performance in a task of writing words at the end of kindergarten and at the end of first grade compared with those productions of subjects in a control group* (Morin & Montésinos-Gelet, Effet d'un programme d'orthographes approchées en maternelle sur les performances ultérieures en lecture et en écriture d'élèves à risque, 2017).

Visual arts and music are the domains where most people expect to see Creative Thinking in the curriculum. Nonetheless, these domains also have their share of non-creative outcomes and skill-based standards of success. The reproductive strategies seen in other domains are often visible in how the Arts are presented and communicated. Standard reproductions of images or sounds or overly guided procedures can potentially negatively affect children's creativity (Lucas & Spencer, 2017).

In this example of "*How to draw a simple tree in 12 steps"*, the children are in the same non-creative pattern frame of mind as they would be when completing a multiplication table worksheet. Nonetheless, these skill-based technics are often presented as creative artwork, although they do not involve any significant creative thinking skills.

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[4] https://clpe.org.uk/about-us (The CLPE is a UK based children's literacy charity working with primary schools. Our work raises the achievement of children's reading and writing by helping schools to teach literacy creatively and effectively, putting quality children's books at the heart of all learning)

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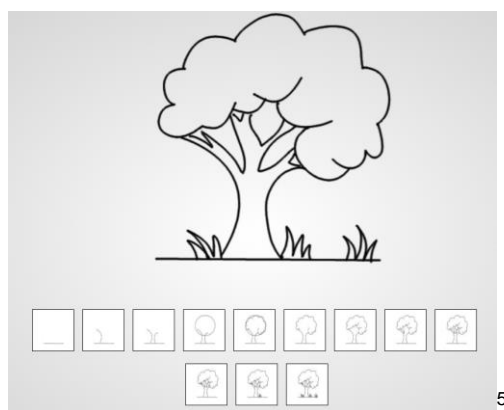
The arts, like different domains, can only foster Creative Thinking by giving time, space and importance to the learning process. The learner's success should depend on the creative process over the end product. Harvard's Project Zero suggests the *Artful Thinking Palette* (see image below) *to help teachers create connections between works of art and the curriculum and to help teachers use art as a force for developing students' thinking disposition* (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2016)*.*

The Art palette framework is presented in the way of an artist's palette of colours. Each colour represents a different "thinking routine". They suggest ways of exploring work of art and invites us to review our curriculum focus through the lens of higher-order thinking.

ARTFUL THINKING PALETTE

REASONING

QUESTIONING & INVESTIGATING

OBSERVING & DESCRIBING

EXPLORING VIEWPOINTS

FINDING COMPLEXITY

COMPARING & CONNECTING

6

How can teachers implement creative thinking in their teaching?

Primary teachers need to balance joy-of-learning and class management. These two realities can sometimes seem to be in opposition. Opening the doors to Creative Thinking can sometimes feel overwhelming and destabilizing. What if I lose control of my class? What if the students lead me on a troublesome path that I am not ready for? In his book *Critical and Creative Thinking,* author Robert DiYanni suggests *to be patient with chaos; don't begin imposing order until order begins to show hints of emerging without being forced. Watch and wait patiently and persistently* (DiYanni, 2016, p. 126)*.*

Nonetheless, watching and waiting patiently doesn't always seem acceptable when following a programme filled with multiple learning outcomes, often written with a focus on skills and knowledge. In some schools, the move towards acknowledging the importance of Productive Thinking may have to start with revising the curriculum standards and learning outcomes.

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5 https://www.bforball.com/drawing-lessons-simple-tree.php

6 http://pzartfulthinking.org/?page_id=2

In schools where the curriculum gives scope for Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, and other thinking skills, these can be woven into teaching and learning strategies. When preparing a lesson, teachers should focus on concepts over skills and drive the lessons in the direction of a deeper understanding of these concepts rather than aiming only for access to knowledge. The *Guide for Universal Understandings* relates this reality by stating: "*One can have knowledge and skills without understanding but not vice versa. And yet so often, when filling out curriculum maps, teachers begin with knowledge and skills, (…) Surely, we as educators are not responsible for keeping students in the world of knowledge but, instead, are facilitating their learning into the realm of ideas, pattern recognition and transferable conceptual relationships.*" (Hughes, 2020)

Can and should we assess Creative Thinking?

Any experienced primary teacher will admit that their students are usually praised for using Creative Thinking and innovative ideas. The complexity lies more in appropriately linking it to the traditional learning outcomes and giving value to these skills when evaluating the children. It also supposes the ability to avoid the trap of comparing students through the lens of subjectivity and individual talents. Successful assessments must remain a fair, equitable, and achievable process for all children.

In their work, Making Purposeful Thought Productive (Newton & Newton, 2018, p. 94), the authors remind us that: "*The aim is not to say that someone is more creative than another, but to seek evidence of the mental process underpinning the creative act to inform feedback to the student, and the construction of subsequent activities to support competence development in a given domain.*"

The authors then suggest five specific on-task behaviours that can be used as markers when evaluating the children's learning process:

1. *Creative seeds:* Can the student ask "what if" questions?
2. *Developing ideas:* Does the student explore ideas, add to them, make links? Does he/she risk trying unusual ideas?
3. *Moving towards realisations:* Does the student seek or supplement prior knowledge for the task at hand?
4. *Bringing the product into the world:* Does the student test ideas in simplified forms, drafts, or models? Does he or she reflect on the quality of the work?
5. *Tendencies and dispositions:* Do the students show persistence yet know when to abandon an unproductive approach?

These markers give specific guidelines to the evaluation process and can help when creating teaching sequences. They become a powerful tool for teachers who need to demonstrate proof of learning and give factual evidence of success.

Creativity can also be assessed by using a self-evaluative process that includes the children's metacognitive abilities. In 2020 a group of curriculum coordinators at the International School of Geneva prepared a reflection tool for teachers who wish to include the students in the evaluation process. This tool was created as part of broader reflections on the evaluation of all 52 Macro Competences from UNESCO's IBE guide for *Future Competences and the Future of Curriculum* (Marope, Griffin, & Gallagher, 2019)*.*

CREATIVITY

<u>DOMAINE</u>: Character

<u>MACRO-COMPÉTENCE</u>: Life-long learning

CONCERNS Suggestions to improve	STANDARDS Meets the standards	ADVANCED Above-standard evidences
	ORIGINALITY - I choose how to communicate my learning using adapted tools. - I generate new ideas or reorganize existing ideas in a new way.	
	INSPIRATION - Faced with the questions asked, I envisage different perspectives and original scenarios. - I explore a range of suggested or personal ideas. - I am open to new ideas and actively seek them out.	
	REFLEXION - I try things out when I don't know how to proceed, viewing my mistake as an opportunity to learn. - I make sure that my work is original and free of plagiarism.	

[7]

Efficiently embedding Creative Thinking in the curriculum also involves a reflective and structural procedure. A research-based approach will undoubtedly give value and credibility to the assessment process while reassuring and guiding the teachers and curriculum coordinators.

The Creative Habits of Mind (Lucas & Spencer, 2017) suggest five essential creative Habits that then subdivide into 15 other Habits. This five-dimensional model is the result of a long-term review of research and field trials with teachers. It brings together a vast panel of skills and competencies that can be used to design and conceive a curriculum for any school. The model involves higher-order thinking skills[8](HOTS) presented in a way that can be embedded in all learning domains.
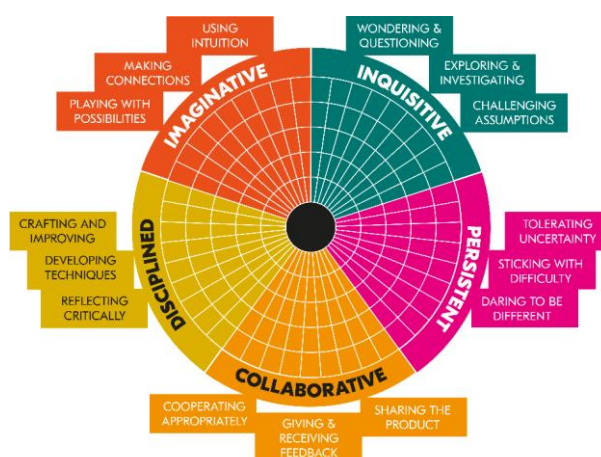
[9]

We can find in the above examples interesting strategies and tools to include Creative Thinking in the children's evaluation process. The difficulty will continue to depend on the

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[7] Casanova, C., Chamberlain, D., Gaillard, C., Jefford, P. (2020) *Rubrics for Micro-Competences Evaluation*, Internal Publishing for La Grande Boissière Campus teachers at Ecolint, Geneva.

[8] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Higher-order_thinking

[9] https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/what-we-do/schools/teaching-for-creativity

importance of including different thinking processes in the standards that compose a school's curriculum. The teacher's ability to teach creatively will also be a factor in the successful integration of new evaluation guidelines. Most of the recent undergraduate degrees in Primary Education delivered in universities include the didactics of different thinking skills. Nevertheless, many senior teachers would require guidance and professional development opportunities to understand how and why they should move in this direction. Combining an open and flexible curriculum with inspiring teacher training is always a key component for a successful implementation of pedagogical innovations.

Part II
What is critical thinking?

In a world of disinformation and overabundance of media, our capacities of thinking critically or making our own opinion are highly challenged. Never in the history of humanity did a generation of young learners make their way through school with such vast access to knowledge. If UNESCO's IBE presents Critical Thinking as one of the top competences in the domain of lifelong learning for 21st-century learning (Marope, Griffin, & Gallagher, 2019), it certainly comes from the societal disasters that have resulted from disinformation throughout history. Educating children with thinking dispositions for doubting, judging, comparing, analyzing, and understanding information could potentially be the key to humanities' survival.

Critical Thinking is based on problem-solving through the lens of logic and careful reasoning. It does not necessarily involve criticism negatively. Thinking critically can be used for multiple subjects, going from the most complex situations to simple questions. Critical Thinking leads to answers for open-ended questions that can't be answered in a "Yes or No" fashion. The **Institute for Habits of Mind** [10] identifies six guiding critical thinking habits: (1) applying past knowledge to new situations; (2) remaining open to continued learning; (3) posing questions and identifying problems; (4) taking intellectual risks; (5) developing and sustaining curiosity; (6) thinking independently and interdependently (DiYanni, 2016) . I different research, Critical Thinking is also referred to as Flexible Thinking (Fletcher N. M., 2019) or Evaluative Thinking (Newton & Newton, 2018).

In the context of Primary Education, mostly in international schools using inquiry-based learning as a core component of the curriculum, Critical Thinking is the pathway to deep and conceptual understandings. In many schools, it is taught through the concept of a Community of Philosophical Inquiry (CPI) and Philosophy for Children, inspired by the work of Professor Matthew Lipman from the **Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children**[11]. Nonetheless, Critical Thinking does not exclusively belong to the field of philosophy. Like Creative Thinking and other kinds of purposeful Thinking, Critical Thinking can and should be part of meaningful teaching and learning in all domains of Education.

HOW does critical thinking integrate the curriculum in the learning domains?

When looking at all domains of learning in Primary Education, it seems unavoidable that teachers will use questions to help children process their understandings. Critical Thinking is the pivoting point between skill-based learning and conceptual understanding. In **Mathematics,** for example, a child could ask if it is essential to memorize all the multiplication tables. By asking the right questions, analyzing the answers, and observing patterns, children can realize that half the rote learning becomes useless after understanding

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[10] https://www.habitsofmindinstitute.org/articles-research-blogs/
[11] https://www.montclair.edu/iapc/what-is-philosophy-for-children/

commutative properties. When given proper thinking time, children increase their speculative thinking capacities and learn to explore new possibilities. (Ritchhart, 2015)

Humanities in an inquiry-based learning context is a powerful vector for Critical Thinking. Exploration questions linked with society, the environment, natural resources, the universe, health, and wellbeing all open doors to deep and conceptual understandings. Children can explore complex inquiries at a very young age by using multiple thinking habits such as seeking previous knowledge, being open-minded, curious, sharing understandings with peers, and identifying problems and possible solutions. In a school where humanities are taught with a transdisciplinary approach, opportunities for thinking critically will increase exponentially. If asked the right questions, the children will learn to link previous knowledge with new situations; they will bridge concepts and acquire understandings that will potentially stick with them for the rest of their lives (Fullan, 2020).

Another essential part of Primary Education is **social-emotional learning**. In this domain, being critical is crucial to the understandings of social interactions. Children must understand and define friendships and fellowship. We ask the children to recognize cultural differences, acknowledge gender equity, understand the importance of empathy, break linguistic barriers, and open their minds to unfamiliar and non-stereotypical lifestyles. All these discoveries are life-changing experiences that can also be considered as "threshold concepts" that define who the children are today and what kind of citizen they will become (Meyer, Land, & Baillie, 2010). The importance of giving time and value to this kind of learning is central at this young age and essential in the prevention of violence, prejudice, and discrimination (Fletcher N. M., 2019). Reflecting critically and collectively on these issues will purposefully enhance the understanding of peaceful relationships.

In the arts and literacy domains, a child who develops the ability to be a Critical Thinker could understand and recognize social stereotypes and distinguish reality from fiction at an early age. These distinctions exist in many learning outcomes from different primary programs. At the International School of Geneva [12] children in Year 2 must *demonstrate the ability to read different text genres (e.g., fairy tales, nursery rhymes, picture books, how-to books) and begin to identify the basic characteristics of these*. This outcome requires the child to demonstrate evaluative and Critical thinking skills. In the Arts curriculum, the children will use deductive and comparative reasoning to *demonstrate knowledge that artists from different times and cultures have made images and objects for many different purposes.*

These are only a few examples of how Critical Thinking can serve curriculum standards. The possibilities to help children develop this thinking skill are countless. Nonetheless, it remains the responsibility of the teachers to enforce and give value to this thinking process.

How can teachers implement and evaluate critical thinking in their teaching?

Although Critical Thinking appears unavoidable to bring children at a high level of understanding in the curriculum, the possibilities to stay at lower-order thinking level (see Bloom's Taxonomy) are also abundant. It is easier to guide children towards remembering and understanding, than engaging them in analyzing information, evaluating concepts, and creating new understandings (Wilson, 2016). It is also easier to demonstrate proof of learning when using standardized testing and normative criteria.

To help children become Critical thinkers, they need Critical Thinking teachers; teachers who ask open-ended questions and challenge the learners to reflect on process over knowledge. For example, in a class of 24 Eight-year-old children, the teacher could ask how many fingers they have as a group. The expected answer would be 240. An attentive child might

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[12] https://www.ecolint.ch/programmes-results/programmes/curriculum-overview

say 250 by adding the teacher's two hands. Another way of asking the question could be by giving the answer: "I think that all together you kids have 240 fingers. Am I right? How did I get this answer? Can you image different ways of proving this? How can this answer be wrong?" In this example, the teacher is still working on the mathematical learning outcome of multiplication and groupings by tens, but he or she is opening the door to higher-order thinker strategies that involve Critical and Evaluative Thinking.

By creating a Culture of Thinking in the classroom (Ritchhart, 2015) the teacher can implement Critical Thinking opportunities in academic learnings, social interactions, class management, and even in the way they structure the learning environment.

The flip side of Evaluative or Critical Thinking relies in its nature of overarching other kinds of purposeful thought with the intention of improving them (Newton & Newton, 2018, p. 98). This could potentially become a thinking habit that limits the development and the open-mindedness required for other purposeful thinking skills such as Creative Thinking. If this is the case, we would be opposing two core competences of 21st-century lifelong learning skills. In this regard, it seems natural that we look at ways and strategies to avoid the confrontation of a critical and creative mind.

Part III
Can critical and creative thinking complement each other in making pURPOSEful thought productive?

Becoming a Critical and Creative Thinker
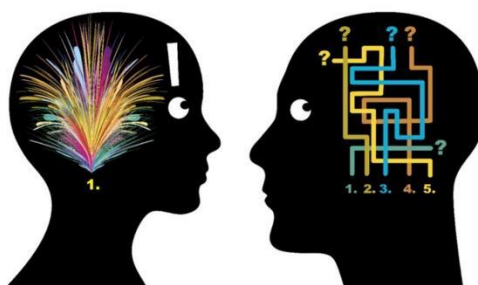
Facing heads. © Sangoiri/Shutterstock [13]

Critical and Creative Thinking can have counterproductive effects on young children's cognitive learning and thinking process. Although Creative Thinking can open the mind, it can also give a false impression of greatness and grandeur. Using the concept of "combinational creativity" involves combining familiar ideas to form a new one (Boden, 1998). the person creating is only rearranging ideas in a way that only seems innovative to the mind of the person concerned. In this circumstance, creativity is not at the top of the HOT level[14] it is merely a shallow understanding and simplified attempt to demonstrate knowledge. In an article The Dark Side of Creativity: Original Thinkers Can be more Dishonest (Gino & Ariely, 2015). The authors even state that creative individuals are also more morally flexible and continue their analysis by providing evidence that there can be a cognitive association between creativity and dishonesty.

We can also argue that Critical Thinking could potentially bring creativity to a juddering halt. If every new idea immediately falls under the lens of logic, judgment, and evidence, the scope for experimenting by trial and error becomes limited. Young learners could, in time, restrain themselves from the embarrassment of suggesting an idea that results from the co-construction of knowledge and imagination. To avoid this, creative teachers need to invite

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[13] (DiYanni, 2016, p. 83)
[14] Higher Order Thinking - See Bloom's taxonomy

curiosity in the classroom to build up the learners' self-belief and intrinsic motivation. (Carlile & Jordan, 2012, p. 233)

Nonetheless, most research demonstrates the opposite point of view. Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking can work together in a productive and constructive matter. In recent research (Hidayati, Zubaidah, Suarsini, & Praherdhiono, 2019) the authors demonstrate how students that have a high level of both creative and critical thinking skills can more efficiently solve complex problems. The study results showed that: "*There is a significant correlation between Critical Thinking and creativity because creativity contains the elements of Critical Thinking. These two variables support each other. Critical Thinking is used in evaluation and creativity is used in information synthesis.*"

In primary Education, the teaching of Philosophy for Children (P4C) constantly bridges the gap between Critical and Creative Thinking. The organization Brila.org [15] in Montreal, Canada, invites children to challenge their assumptions so they can better "*Think+Create+Engage*". At Brila, the learning takes place in Communities of Philosophical Inquiry (CPI) called "Philocreation" (Fletcher N., n.d.). In these CPIs the children can use both their imagination and powerful thinking routines to co-construct new understandings of the world they live in and the people they live with.

Both Critical and Creative Thinking rely more on how they complement each other than on their potential dichotomies. The success of their combination could depend on the way it is implemented in the teaching and learning strategies. We could imagine a five-step cycle to an inquiry question that leads from "open and unfiltered imagination" to "deep and innovative learning outcomes".
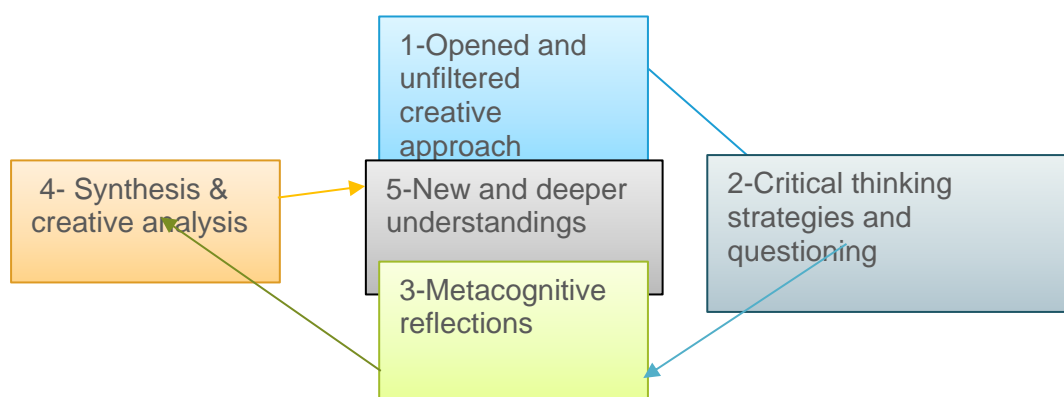
Conclusion

As schools and their curriculum evolve through the twenty-first century, the importance of fostering purposeful thinking skills become essential for the wellbeing of humanity's present and future. Children need to develop powerful Critical Thinking skills to overcome the dangers of mass media disinformation and the repetition of historical disasters, injustice, and ignorance. At the same time, the children must be curious and creative in order to find solutions for a world that continues to learn how to live in peace with its people and the environment. The challenges for a better tomorrow are gigantesque and time is not always on our side.

The need to make Purposeful Though productive has long passed ideological points of view in pedagogy. It has become essential to create social impact, give value to the public good, and be the only way to successful sustainable development (United Nations, 2021).

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[15] http://brila.org/about.html

Schools and governments are accountable for the ongoing implementation of these essential competences. Nevertheless, the key to success can only come from inside the classrooms. We must depend on Creative and Critical Thinking teachers to inspire and facilitate the emergence of Critical and Creative Learners.

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Espousing Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) to Support English as Additional Language Learners in an Internationalised High School

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Abstract
This paper attempts to explore ways to support learners and learning particularly in the acquisition of literacy skills in the target language in an internationalised education setting. In this paper, I argue for the necessity of the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) approach in the teaching of content areas to promote whole school support for second language learners of English. The first section of the paper provides a brief description of my setting, the rationale for the exploration and its intended objectives and outcomes. The second section takes a look at literacy skills in general and how this can support UNESCO's 4 Pillars of Education. The third section specifically talks about content and language integrated learning (CLIL). Findings revealed three themes in order to effect change in the teaching and learning practice- teacher identity and beliefs about teaching and learning, collaboration, and offering opportunities to change learner behaviour.

Keywords: content and language integrated learning, high school education, International Baccalaureate, internationalised school

Context and Rationale

Many local schools in East Asia, particularly in Mainland China, have opened international education sections to cater to the educational needs of Chinese nationals who want to pursue higher education overseas. Most of these schools market themselves as teaching in English primarily because the main curricular offerings are adopted from international curriculum providers and students mainly want to move to Anglophone countries for university education. I head the English Department of one of these internationalised schools located in southern China. Our school is a 7-12 institution mainly catering to Chinese learners who intend to pursue higher education outside of the country. While the Cambridge IGCSE curriculum is delivered in junior high school and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme for the senior high, Grades 7-8 programmes are developed internally. All of the Grade 7 students come from the Chinese National Education (locally called PRC) system and thus have exposure to quite different methods of teaching, and expectedly the general English language proficiency is relatively low. This poses major problems to the school because 1) the general education curriculum in the national education system is very different to that of the international education, 2) the teaching style in the Chinese national schools is geared towards rote memorization and is very exam-oriented (Wright & Lee, 2014), and 3) parents' pre-conceived notions about the local education in China may influence what they want to demand from the international education system. For example, they expect children to have more homework and less time for co-curricular activities, as these are the common practices in the local schooling system.

Understanding that the amount of contact time in the subjects taught in English are not sufficient enough to expose learners to the language of schooling, initiatives to introduce the

integration of English language skills in the content areas have been taken. Grade 7 is one of the crucial stages because this is an entry point of the learners who are still adjusting to the international education setting. Moreover, there exists the belief that the basic concepts in most of the examinable subjects need to be mastered at this level. It is obvious that if learners have not gained strong foundations of subject areas concepts, they will struggle in the succeeding years given the rigour of the project works and other assessment components in both Cambridge and IB programmes. Lastly, it is necessary that principles of international education and 21ˢᵗ century learning are introduced and gradually embraced by Grade 7 learners. Due to the nature of the mainstream Chinese education system, these students got used to the passive acquisition of knowledge. As previously reported, they are somehow used to drilling, partly because of the importance of national examinations and the big class sizes in China.

Carnell and Lodge (2002) made an exposition on some of the learning models and I thought this was a good starting point in my exploration. The assumption that there are good models of learning is significantly embraced by the education community and is reinforced by various curriculum providers, for instance the Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE) and the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). The concept of constructivism as a model of learning is also made explicit by the IBO (2015) as the preferred way in delivering their programmes whereas CAIE also advocates for active learning which is very similar in concept to constructivism.

This paper then will attempt to explore the concept of supporting learners and learning in the literacy and content language-integrated learning (CLIL) contexts. This will be further deepened with my argument for self-directed learning especially in the acquisition of English language and how non-standardised and learner-centred assessments can enhance motivation and learning. Lastly, drawing on the arguments in these sections, I will attempt to make a case on how all teachers, especially those in the internationalised school contexts, are English literacy teachers.

Literacy Skills: Starting Point for UNESCO's 4 Pillars of Education

The Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2006) opined that 'the most common understanding of literacy is that it is a set of tangible skills- particularly the cognitive skills of reading and writing- that are independent of the context in which they are acquired and the background of the person who acquires them' (p. 149). While this definition was an attempt to attain a consensus on the various interpretations of what literacy is, I find this problematic in the context of second language acquisition where learners have already developed mastery of literacy skills in their native language but are still struggling with literacy skills in the target language. In school contexts where the language of instruction is not the native language of the learners, I argue that the acquisition of reading and writing skills, much more oracy and the acquisition of vocabulary in order to successfully make use of these skills, are influenced by the school setting and the learners' language background.

Carnell and Lodge (2002) suggested that in terms of learning, the ultimate goal is to change as a person with respect to cognitive, social or emotional states. While they further referenced the UNESCO's *4 Pillars of Education* (i.e. learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to be), they also argued that a paradigm shift is needed. Focusing more on learning rather than teaching and highlighting learner responsibility is for them an essential change. If this then is the ultimate aim, it is important that learners are equipped with the basic facilities, such as literacy skills, in order to thrive in this present and future society.

In their book Visible Learning for Literacy, Fisher, Frey and Hattie (2016) argued that in order for literacy learning to be meaningful and effective, teachers should be able to critically

decide on what strategies and instructional practices are to be employed. This is closely linked to Askew & Carnell's (1998) work on *transformatory approach* to learning in which they argued that 'it is a humanistic view that incorporates the belief that self-actualization is the goal of human development' (p. 23). They further went on to describe the self-actualised person as being self-aware and self-reflective, have control over what is learned, take risks, and interact with others. Indeed, the transformatory approach fits well with that of the UNESCO's pillars of education and the undeniable benefits of mastering literacy skills. However, I find it again necessary to situate this in one of the emerging micro-societies today such as schools whose students are second or foreign language learners in the language of instruction.

Black and Allen (2017) posited that learning is a social act because 'much of the student's academic learning occurs through reading and social interactions' (p. 76). They referred to Bandura's (1989) social cognitive theory and the socio-cultural theory proposed by Vygotsky et. al. (1980) to elucidate that learners bring both cognitive and affective characteristics to the learning spaces. While I firmly support this argument, I question how learners who have previously acquired knowledge in their native language are able to make use of these in a new environment where the language of instruction is totally foreign. For example, Black and Allen made a sound claim that these things that learners <a+0 bring into the new environment include previous content knowledge, literacy skills, self-efficacy beliefs, motivational levels, attitudes, values, and emotions. While the rest of these attributes definitely have to be considered, I particularly find language skills as the urgent issue to be addressed in my school setting because lack of such would demotivate learners.

Black and Allen (2017) further explained that language allows for collective interpersonal cognitive activity and that interpersonal thinking and communication leads to individual intellectual development learning. The implication for this especially in my context is that all teachers must work together to ensure that development of target language skills are being addressed not only in language-oriented subjects but also in the content areas. The modern education systems have been espousing for collaborative learning because according to Mercer (2013) it leads to individual cognitive development. If my school wants to strengthen and further the use of collaborative learning, students must be equipped with the required language facility.

Fisher, Frey and Hattie (2016) argued that classrooms should be filled with dialogue rather than monologues because 'if students are not using language-speaking, listening, reading, and writing- they are not likely to excel in those areas' (p. 23). Drawing on this comment, I argue that there is a necessity to incorporate language skills across the curriculum even in the surface level only. Fisher, Frey and Hattie previously supported the use of surface level literacy teaching strategies. They argued that learners would not be able to accomplish higher-level tasks such as problem-based learning because the students do not yet possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to engage an inquiry-driven investigation about a topic. I have to reflect back to my context and I would firmly argue that the lack of English language skills restricts the learners and even the teachers in aiming to accomplish higher-level tasks. According to Hattie (2012), surface and deep learning consists of two sub-phases. The acquisition phase has the pedagogical goal of helping students summarize and outline the topic of the study. As a language teacher, I have noticed that summarizing is already a complex task that language learners are struggling to perform. Even the basic outlining itself is already difficult for these learners. Hence, these skills must be introduced and strengthened not only in the English subject but also in the content areas. Hattie also goes on to explain that the consolidation phase leads to a second facet of learning that is accomplished through practice testing and receiving feedback. I deduce that this can now be utilized with the subject specific requirements in mind.

In the next section, I will explore how constructivism and co-constructivism can be espoused to support English language learners in the content areas.

Weaving Concepts of Learning and CLIL

Definition of Learning

In recent years, there have been some major additions to the definition of learning. De Houwer, Barnes-Holmes and Moors (2013) proposed that learning has three components. In their first definition, they retained the common assumption that learning entails changes in the behavior of the organism. They attempted to expand this definition by adding that learning involves regularity in the environment of the organism and that there is a presence of a causal relation between the regularity in the environment and the changes in behavior of the organism. In the formal schooling context, more particularly in learning content areas while also acquiring the language, I find the additional definition relevant because it emphasizes on practices that eventually would become a routine not only for the learners but also for the facilitators of learning. De Houwer et. al. (2013) also proposed the concept of moderated learning or 'learning of learning' (p. 3) which refers to the effects of regularities in the environment on how other regularities in the environment influences behavior. This, I believe, echoes Askew and Carnell's (1998) idea of 'learning about learning' which allows students to recognize their own particular approach to learning.

Models of Learning

Askew and Carnell (1998) mentioned that learning is essential for human development and that the self is central in the learning process. While it is assumed that everyone wants to learn, the way learning activities or situations are facilitated have a direct impact on learner development itself. These known models of learning as elaborated by Carnell and Lodge (2002) are vital to how we practice teaching and support learners and learning.

Reading the explications of various learning models, I surmise that the reception model is not really an ideal one especially in the present social context. In the reception model, Carnell and Lodge pointed out that the learner is viewed as a passive recipient of knowledge being transmitted by the teacher. This model of learning is prevalent in China largely because the national examinations put emphasis on memorization. Accordingly, the reception model does not emphasize emotional and social aspects of learning and teaching in this model relies heavily on 'transmission and stresses cognitive learning and logical, objective, abstract, sequential thinking'. This definitely is not the model that we want for our school since as a Cambridge and International Baccalaureate accredited school, we want to promote critical thinking, healthy discourse, and global citizenship.

Of the three models, constructivism and co-constructivism are presumably the most desirable models not only because the International Baccalaureate promotes this but also years of research have shown that active engagement of the learners promotes active learning that would help them acquire skills to thrive in the 21st century society. Carnell and Lodge reasoned out that constructivism is ideal because learners are involved in the construction of meaning. Moreover, the curriculum, in addition to cognitive development, also puts premium on social and emotional factors. Another thing is the development of the ability to process, acquire and relate information to the learner's own experiences.

Probably the most ideal model of learning is co-constructivism which according to Carnell and Lodge relies on dialogue and emphasize collaboration in order for learners to work together in order to construct knowledge. While this model also emphasizes social and emotional engagement, what I find appealing in this model is that learning involves

collaboration by learners in critical investigation, analysis, interpretation and reorganization of knowledge, and there is an emphasis on the reflective process.

The CLIL Approach

According to Cambridge English Language Assessment (2015) content and language integrated learning (CLIL) describes an evolving approach to teaching and learning where subjects are taught and studied through the medium of a non-native language. According to researches cited in the handbook, the CLIL approach allows learners to become more sensitive to vocabulary and ideas presented in their first language as well as in the target language and they gain more extensive and varied vocabulary (Johnstone & McKinstry, 2008). However, in my context, most foreign teachers do not have proficiency in the first language of the students and are therefore not able to tackle these ideas in the learners' mother tongue. Coleman (2006), however, noted that while CLIL leads to better English proficiency, it has no negative effect on L1 proficiency nor on the pupils' subject knowledge. Based on this argument, it is fair to assume that embracing this approach is not detrimental to learners' mother tongue development. In my school context, our learners still study Chinese on the first language level and this is also the language spoken in the community. Lastly, Van de Craen et. al. (2008) reported that the use of this approach induces the learner to be more cognitively active during the learning process. Therefore, I surmise that even if the language ability of the students is still developing, teachers can still employ active learning strategies and this supports constructivism as a learning model.

In their report, the European Commission for Education and Training (2014) summarized the advantages of the CLIL approach in 4Cs, as previously proposed by Meyer (2010) and Ruiz De Zarobe (2013). The figure below indicates these features.

Figure 1. 4Cs of CLIL
Source: Beaco, J. et. al. (2015) The language dimension in all subjects. Council of Europe.

Looking at the overall goals of CLIL in the figure above, I find it very related to constructivism and to some extent co-constructivism as the preferred models of learning. It can be recalled that at the heart of these models is the learner actively constructing meaning and engaging in dialogue with both the teachers and fellow learners in order to construct knowledge. These are closely linked to CLIL because according to Dalton-Puffer (2007), this approach does not only develop oral communication and intercultural communication skills, it also provides opportunities to study content through various perspectives and push teachers to

diversify methods and forms of classroom practice. But most importantly, it increases learner motivation and prepares them for internationalism.

Although previous studies reported positive results of the CLIL approach, my survey of literature revealed some salient critical points for consideration. Wang (2016) reported that CLIL learners immediately recognize words when re-encountering them and frequently demonstrated stronger gains and retention of recall knowledge. However, this research did not clearly report in what context these words were re-encountered, how knowledge recall was conducted, and whether or not there were varying contexts in the usage of the lexis being used in the experiment. In researching reading, Chostelidou and Griva (2014) claimed that CLIL teaching intervention is highly valued. They failed to report though whether the same reading materials were used by the learners and how reading skills gains were measured. Moghadam and Fatemipour (2014) also reported that their experimental group has the ability to develop and retain vocabulary better than ordinary school students because of the CLIL approach. However, they failed to take into consideration that their experimental group were actually learning the subjects (Science and Mathematics) in English whereas the control group was studying the subject in the mother tongue.

While reading skills, vocabulary development, and to some extent writing skills are evident in CLIL literature, I discovered that there are gaps when it comes to investigating its effectiveness in speaking skills. Perhaps this can be an area of exploration in future research. What is essential is that the literature reveals what Temirova and Westall (2015) proposed that with the CLIL approach, it is the teachers who set the trend for L1 or L2 use during lessons. This cannot be realistic, however, in international school settings where most of the teachers do not have skills in students' L1. Thus, this calls for collaborative effort where teachers have to plan the input they want to teach, the amount of knowledge, and how this information will be presented and introduced in the CLIL class (Perez & Malagom, 2017).

Supporting English Language Learners Across the Curriculum

Previous studies have reported on the role of vocabulary in effective reading (Alessi & Dwyer, 2008; Kilian et al., 1995; Wang, 2016) and Fisher et. al. (2016) recently reported in their meta-analysis that the effect size for vocabulary instruction is a high 0.67 which is in the zone of desired effects. They argued that vocabulary instruction, similar to the other features of curriculum, must be taught for depth and transfer. Kenna et. al. (2018) investigated how secondary social studies teachers define literacy and implement literacy teaching strategies and reported that the teachers involved in their study are in agreement that lack of vocabulary hindered reading comprehension, writing fluidity, and even participation in lectures and discussions. Their study however centered on teacher beliefs and they did not offer practical techniques to address the issue.

Fisher et. al. proposed that vocabulary instruction could be addressed within the context of surface acquisition, knowing that teachers should never stop at simply exposing students to vocabulary. Although they seem to propose that direct instruction will effectively work, I think that teachers should go beyond simply directly instructing students which vocabulary to focus on. In my context, although the learners are all Chinese, they have varying levels of English language proficiency. I argue that subject teachers can still give them a choice during vocabulary decoding activities by allowing them for example to select contents words that they are not familiar with. I believe that this would promote learner agency, after all Hattie and Zierer (2018) mentioned that 'aiming for students to have agency in their learning is indeed a major aim in learning' (p. 15). I think that even in the simple task of vocabulary decoding students and teachers are already embracing the constructivist model of learning.

One practice that I think works well in my school is the English Department's collaboration with the Science Department. The Science teachers provide the English teachers with reading materials and these are same materials that are used in the teaching of English language skills, especially when it comes to vocabulary usage, focusing in both the function and content words. In English classes, there are more avenues to utilize these materials for communication purposes and thus learners are able to relate these to their own experiences. In the constructivist model, the ability to acquire and relate information is vital to the learning experience.

I also argue that whatever the subject being taught is, it is fundamental that teachers are aware of the various ways in which vocabulary teaching can be emphasized. Fisher et al proposed a decision-making model for selecting vocabulary for direct instruction. The first condition is on whether the word or words being representative, the second refers to the word's transportability, the third refers to the frequency of occurrence, fourth is contextual analysis, and lastly structural analysis. Again, while they did advocate for direct instruction, I find it necessary for teachers to make conscious effort to allow learners to explore the other contexts in which the words can be used, including references to other subjects and even text types.

Wilson (2009) argued that 'secondary students have under-developed reading skills and could benefit from direct reading instruction in the content classroom' (p. 2). He further cited Kintsch (1986) who suggested that students learn best when they employ their own knowledge, rearrange ideas, comment, and evaluate by retaining or discarding the content of the text. While these experts have supported the importance of reading in the content areas, it is quite disappointing that this seems to be neglected in my context. My conversation with colleagues also supported this observation with them agreeing that they would rather focus on teaching the content and leave reading to the students alone. Recently, my colleagues have reported that students are not anymore reading their materials during independent study periods but are relying on PowerPoint slides and condensed materials readily prepared for them. Teachers are even reporting that students are not annotating their texts, a skill that according to Fisher et. al. (2016) is vital because 'it can improve student understanding of new knowledge and builds the capacity of students to better engage in study skill' (p. 58). If the constructivist and co-constructivist models want learners to critically investigate, analyze, interpret, and reorganize knowledge and in the process reflect on these activities, they need to read the materials provided and I argue that content area teachers should not neglect reading in the process of exploring subject specific knowledge.

As a language teacher and administrator, I understand that there is always some form of resistance whenever teachers are asked to integrate language skills in their classes, especially reading. Hence, I think that it is necessary to look for reading model to easily communicate the intentions. Smith (2018) proposed a simple view of meaningful reading model, which basically integrates word recognition processes and language comprehension processes. Although the model is originally developed in the British context, I am convinced that this can be used even in the Chinese context's middle and high school levels. Aspects such as active search for information and integration of information are indicated. The implication of this model in facilitating reading activities in content areas is explained by Smith (2018) as 'the necessity of facilitating ways to use information in order to construct the reading comprehension product' (p. 71).

Repeated reading as proposed by Fisher et. al. (2016) is also ideal especially in my context. However, if this is constantly employed in the content areas, teachers may find it difficult to finish the required content of the syllabus. I would suggest that for lower grades, which have more flexibility in their curriculum, a close reading approach would be integrated. Fisher and Frey (2012, 2014 cited in Fisher et al., 2016) proposed that learners engage in repeated

reading of a short passage, annotate the text to mark their thinking, the teacher then guides discussion and analyzing through questioning, and then learners engage in extended discussion and analysis with teacher. I think that this routine captures well the idea of co-constructivism because there is the presence of dialogue as extension of reading activities.

According to Askew and Carnell (1998), capacity for learning is not fixed and can be increased, it increases as learning increases, and there is further increase when learners understand themselves as learners. Drawing on these propositions, I argue that in terms of English language learning, students need to constantly progress and apply prior skills learned into a new vital skill. For example, it is not enough that learners acquire vocabulary from reading texts from various content areas, it is also necessary that they are able to communicate and manifest their learning in another skill, such as writing. Massler (2011) posited that often, CLIL learners have learned the new content taught but have difficulty expressing their understanding in the L2. Writing is an activity that students constantly engage with in school but I have noticed that there is little support provided for the learners knowing that they are mostly learning English in a second language level.

The US Department of Education (2014) published a teaching guide in supporting English language learners in content areas and recommended that teachers provide regular, structured, opportunities to develop written language skills. They also suggested that writing assignments be anchored in content and focused on developing academic language and writing skills. The provision for the development of writing skills is indeed indispensable across subjects. However, I think that it is necessary for teachers to understand how writing will be approached in their content. A simple task such as writing a thesis statement in the content area is necessary and even ways of dealing with details is also needed. While the use of transition devices may be something that is emphasized in English subjects, there is also a need for content area teachers to explicitly teach their students how to use these devices. Writing frames can also be introduced to support learners, with starting phrases in each paragraph to guide them in the development of their ideas.

Lastly, to truly embrace constructivism and co-constructivism in content language integrated learning, I argue that speaking skills should be incorporated across the curriculum in order to promote dialogue, argumentation, and collaboration.

Reflections on Ways Forward: We Are All English Teachers

Reflecting on some of the topics that I have explored in the preceding sections, I have identified some themes that I think are essential in order to move forward and effect changes in the teaching practice.

The first theme that emerged is on clarifying teacher identity and beliefs about learning. Graham and Phelps (2002) argued for the emphasis on reflection and the development of reflective practice. Whilst I think it is a common expectation that teachers arrive in schools with beliefs on how learning processes work, it is also imperative that we continuously reconstruct our knowledge to respond to the immediate needs of the learners or the school context in general. In my school context, the vision, mission, and philosophy are always communicated and they are clearly in line with that of the curriculum providers (CAIE & IBO). In order to at least align both constructivist and co-constructivist teaching practices with these aims, there is a need for teachers to regularly have professional conversations. Vokatis and Zhang (2016) also pointed out that 'diffusing inquiry-based pedagogy in schools for deep learning and lasting change requires teacher transformation and capacity building' (p. 58). Klimova (2012), in the context of CLIL, previously asserted that one of the hindrances in its implementation is insufficient number of teachers who are both competent linguists and experts in content subjects. I disagree with this proposition knowing that by simply acknowledging that learners have limited linguistic resources in the language of

instruction, reflective teachers are bound to work together in order to make language learning more conscious in some content areas. I also believe that teacher transformation and capacity building can be best addressed and fulfilled in CLIL through collaboration, which is the second theme that I have identified.

Acknowledging that every teaching staff needs to have language awareness in their lessons is perhaps the starting point for collaboration. Vokatiz and Zhang (2016) argued that teachers as members of a professional community must seek collaboration, innovation, and continual improvement. To situate this in my context, I would propose that horizontal articulation be conducted in order for teachers to see connections of the topics that are taught across subjects and in this case, they are able to plan the learning activities that would connect each discipline. This, I believe, would also make learning visible for the students as they see the connections of the topics. Through this, there is an emphasis on the contextualization of instruction, which is one essential point in supporting additional language learners (Miller, 2016; Bicaku, 2011). Focusing on language learning in each subject, teachers may be able to identify the content vocabulary needed and the functional linguistic devices to enhance learners' language skills. Scaffolding, which is very social constructivist in nature (Cambridge, 2019) should be employed. For instance, in order to promote language awareness, learners should be made aware of the difference between conversational and academic language (Cummins, 2000 cited in Cambridge, 2019). This is also an opportunity for English teachers to work closely with content area teachers. Bonces (2012) postulated that English teachers are in the position to ensure that language development is appropriately addressed in the integrated approach.

The final theme and probably the most challenging is exploring opportunities for change. The main aim of this paper was to explore how CLIL approach can effectively enhance learning especially in the context of second language instruction. By advocating for the constructivist and co-constructivist models, it is my desire to see positive changes in learners' behaviour both inside and outside the learning spaces. As learners become more conscious in acquiring target language in the content areas and as they see the connections of the subject matters across the curriculum, I would like to see how they slowly embrace self-directed learning. This needs whole school support, for instance, the learners will make it a point to search for multimedia resources in the library to enhance their language skills (watching TedTalks, listening to podcasts, reading magazines, journals, etc.). Also, Sherris (2008) opined that teacher evaluation of student language and content knowledge along with self and peer assessments would help students become self-regulated learners. Its implication is to make all these teaching and learning processes visible to the learners, with appropriate feedbacking strategies.

I also see this a good area for differentiated learning, allowing learners to have a voice in the additional materials that they may need to reinforce learning outside the classroom. Additionally, this may also call for varying assessment measures in order to truly advocate for assessment for learning and not just simply rely on standardized testing which may not truly evaluate learners' performance. By considering these elements, I hope that teachers would see each learner as inherently unique with his or her own pace, thereby promoting an inclusive learning environment.

In conclusion, to refer back to the learning outcomes of this module, this paper exhibits my contextualization of a particular learning support issue which I see is urgent in my school. The theories and frameworks that I discussed in this paper also provide some strategies and techniques to further support learners and learning and I aim to utilize these as springboards for curricular collaboration and professional development. At the end of the day, we are all English literacy teachers.

Acknowledgment

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The impact of learning objectives and success criteria on students in primary schools in Shanghai, China

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Abstract

The use of learning objectives and success criteria has been reported to have a positive impact on student achievement and attitudes to learning (Clarke, 2008,2013; Lenor e*t al.*, 2014; Mansell *et al.*, 2009). However, the consistent use of specific learning objectives and success criteria is not established in schools in Shanghai and there exist few studies that investigate their influence on learning and attitudes despite national education reform placing an emphasis on formative assessment (Zhao, 2020).

This study explores the impact of learning objectives and success criteria on pupil achievement and attitudes to learning in primary school mathematics lessons. The findings indicate that the use of learning objectives and success criteria is associated with an increase in student achievement in a paper and pencil test (effect size 0.6). An exploration of student perceptions of learning objectives and success criteria revealed that both motivation and attitudes towards learning were reportedly increased (P<0.001) in primary school mathematics lessons. It was observed that success criteria were more strongly correlated with higher motivation and attitudes towards learning than learning objectives. This indicates that the use of success criteria; and lesser extent learning objectives, associated with higher levels of pupil achievement could be influenced by higher levels of student motivation and more positive attitudes towards learning.

Furthermore, this study provides evidence of the successful integration of formative assessment practices into primary schools in Shanghai through collaboration between state education and a private education group.

Key words: learning objectives; success criteria; pupil perceptions and attitudes, education reform in China

Introduction

Education in China is being transformed, there are more international schools than any other country and there exists rapidly growing Chinese private school market (ISA, 2019). State education is also undergoing deepening reform that includes integrating philosophy and practice from international education (MOE, 2010). One aspect of the Ministry of Education reforms re-emphasises the importance of formative assessment. Curriculum, assessment and reform are executed at province and municipality level by an education commission (SHMEC, 2013). At district level, national and local educational initiatives are led by a research and training institute and its team of trainers, researchers and inspectors, responsible for developing teacher practice and curriculum. Working with researchers and education leaders from a private education group, Pudong District research and training institute planned and implemented training on assessment for learning (AfL) practices for a sample of selected schools and their teachers as part of a municipality level initiative aligned to MoE reforms. This public-private school partnership represents a novel approach to delivering education reform.

There are four main practices commonly associated with AfL (Black and Wiliam, 1998):

1. establishing clear learning objectives and success criteria

2. eliciting and interpreting learning evidence for example through questioning

3. providing effective feedback to close the gap in learning

4. encouraging peer and self-assessment

AfL has long been linked with a positive impact on student learning (Florez and Sammons, 2013; Hodgson and Pyle,2010; Tierney and Charland,2007). The seminal work of Wiliam and Black (1998; 2009) found that formative assessment can significantly improve student academic achievement. Since, John Hattie (2008), found that formative assessment in the classroom had a significant impact on student academic achievement, ranking fifth among all factors.

AfL is also reported to have an impact on student attitudes to learning; for instance, motivation, self-efficacy and metacognition all of which may be factors in reported increases in student academic achievement (Stiggins, 2006; MacPhail and Halbert 2010; OECD,2008). Moreover, it has been shown that the use of formative assessment can also promote the development of student self-regulation (Lenor *et al.*,2014; Assessment Reform Group, 1999; Mansell et al. 2009; Clark, 2015). A number of research articles claim that self-regulation raises levels of focus, flexibility, confidence and achievement and includes core elements such as setting goals, planning, monitoring progress and adjusting learning methods (Bandura 1986, 1997; Zimmerman 2002; Pintrich 1999, 2004; Black and Wiliam, 2009). No doubt these research findings underpinned the re-emphasis of formative assessment in education reform in China which is placing increasing emphasis on student personal, social and emotional development (MOE, 2021).

Whilst AfL is an established feature of education in many parts of the world (OECD, 2008), it is not a feature of education in Shanghai, China (Zhao, 2020). However, curriculum and education reform for basic education across China places emphasis on the application of formative assessment practices to reduce the pressures associated with summative methods that are a feature of current systems, especially in primary schools. Shanghai Municipality Education Commission implemented "standards-based teaching and assessment" for elementary school from 2013, requiring elementary school teachers to base assessment on curriculum standards and using multiple assessment approaches that support academic achievement and student personal development. However, there has been limited impact on teacher practice because the policy lacks specific instructional and operational guidance on the implementation of formative and performance assessment (Zhao, 2020). Lack of effective teacher training is also another reason for limited application of formative assessment (Zhao, 2020). The predominant curriculum and pedagogical model used by elementary teachers in Shanghai is the "Mastery Model for Teaching and Learning" that places emphasis on teaching rather than assessment, which is typically paper-and-pencil test-based and summative in approach. Consequently, there are few studies on the use of formative assessment in China but there exists a significant interest.

This study reports on how a partnership public schools and private international schools provided training on AfL and studied the impact on student learning and importantly on student attitudes to learning in primary school mathematics. It is concerned only with AfL practice: establishing clear learning objectives and success criteria. This decision was made because effective application of the other three aspects of AfL are dependent on effective learning objectives and success criteria (Crichton and McDaid,2016; Hanover Research,2014). Primary school mathematics teachers in one district of Shanghai, Pudong District, were:

● Initially trained in the implementation of learning objectives and success criteria through a series of training sessions from researchers in the private international school group, observed practice in a private international school and exchanged ideas with teachers from the UK followed by further training by Pudong research and training

- Teachers were then observed by authors and feedback provided to strengthen practice

This design allowed teachers to gain confidence in effectively using learning objectives and success criteria.

The sole focus on one aspect of AfL presented an opportunity to study the impact of learning objectives and success criteria on student achievement and fundamentally attitudes to learning in primary schools in Shanghai.

Research Design and methodology

This study involves the research and training centre in Pudong, Shanghai, training a sample of teachers to implement learning objectives and success criteria in primary school mathematics lessons over a semester (5 months). The subsequent impact on student achievement in a paper and pencil test along with student reported perceptions on learning were recorded.

As the research team comprised researchers from China and the United Kingdom, it was necessary to establish consistency in understanding of the variables within the study. Below are the definitions agreed prior to the work undertaken across primary schools in Shanghai, China.

> *Learning objective*: The skills and knowledge that a student should possess on successful completion of a lesson or phase of study

> *Success criteria*: The measures used to determine whether, and how well, learners have met the learning objectives.

In creating the questionnaire to evaluate student attitudes to learning, previously reported attitudinal factors influenced by AfL were considered: motivation and self-efficacy Stiggins, 2006; MacPhail and Halbert 2010; OECD,2008) along with self-regulation (Lenor *et al.*,2014; Assessment Reform Group, 1999; Mansell et al. 2009; Clark, 2015).

Training teachers
Five teachers from three schools were selected to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. All teachers were responsible for teaching Grade 4 students (9 to 10 years old) mathematics. The teachers, with similar levels of experience, experienced the same training programme. Through a series of workshops seminars and demonstration classes teachers were introduced to and applied AfL strategies, with specific emphasis on the use of learning objectives and success criteria.

Prior to formally commencing the study, an initial meeting was also held, during which the participating teachers were briefed on the design of the research project. Teachers worked collaboratively to determine learning objectives and success criteria for lessons. During the study, as an inspector, one of the authors visited the schools twice a week, during which the teachers would be observed teaching, gather feedback progress in the implementation of learning objectives and success criteria and to share ideas on developing practice.

Sample group
The sample involved 187 students in Grade 4 (9-10 years old) in primary schools across Pudong, a district in Shanghai. The schools have similar socio-economic contexts and are all located in similar residential areas within the city. Five mathematics classes in Grade 4 were selected randomly in three schools. Pre-test conditions were determined by administering the questionnaire described above prior to commencing the introduction of learning

objectives and success criteria. ANOVA was carried out which showed that there was no significant difference between all classes and schools (F=1.848, p=0.140) at the outset of the study. The control group was made up of all other Grade 4 pupils in the same three schools.

Research approach
This study adopts a quasi-experimental design. Pre and post-intervention tests with 194 and 187 students respectively which comprised paper and pencil mathematics test, questionnaire and interviews with a sample of students. The number and gender of students in the five classes were similar. During the study, all students in the sample were taught the unit of "understanding of decimals". This topic was selected as it was scheduled to be covered in all primary schools in Pudong during the study. This article does not attempt explore any relationship between content and AfL. All classes experienced four hours of mathematics every week during the study. Learning objectives and success criteria for the unit were jointly determined through collective lesson preparation by teachers. The study lasted eight weeks.

Pre and post measures comprised capturing student achievement in pre and post mathematics tests and gathered student attitudes through a questionnaire that contained items focusing on learning objectives, success criteria, motivation, self-efficacy and self-regulation followed by structured interviews with a sub-sample of students who were asked similar questions to those on the questionnaire.

Paper and pencil test
The test undertaken was consistent for all students in both the control and treatment cohorts. The test items were developed by inspectors at the Pudong research and training centre and were consistent with tests typically used across the district for primary school mathematics. The test items were produced objectively by researchers responsible for assessing student attainment against the curriculum framework for Shanghai and was ultimately approved by the education bureau for use across the district. The content focused on the topic "understanding decimals" and followed guidance from the curriculum content and textbook used extensively across the municipality of Shanghai. Thus, it is assumed that the test is valid and reliable. The test was conducted in consistent controlled conditions.

Questionnaire
Student attitudes on the use of learning objectives and success criteria were ascertained using a questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised eight items designed to explore student attitudes to learning by focusing on three general themes; Questions 1-4 motivation and engagement in learning (Gredler, Broussard and Garrison, 2004), question 5 perceptions on success and self-efficacy (Akhtar, 2008) and questions 6-8 focusing on reflection and review of learning (Pintrich and Zusho,2002). Student responses were recorded using a likert-scale; "strongly disagree", "disagree", "uncertain", "agree" and "totally agree" with the following values applied: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively. Factor analysis carried out on responses to the questionnaire indicated that the KMO value is 0.862, and the coefficient of internal consistency was 0.812, indicating that the questionnaire displayed adequate reliability and validity.

Structured interview
Structured interviews were conducted with a sample of students in the study through a stratified random sampling approach. The questions posed by the researchers were structured around those in the questionnaire with the aim of triangulating the quantitative findings from the questionnaire feedback.
Data analysis
For comparison of paper and test outcomes between the control and intervention group, effect size was calculated between the two samples. SPSS 20.0 statistical software was

used for statistical analysis of the obtained data from the questionnaire. Correlation analysis and regression analysis were used to explore the relationship between learning objectives and success criteria on pupil perception on learning.

Results

Analysis of test outcomes
Student performance in a paper and pencil mathematics test undertaken post intervention was compared between the control group and intervention group (appendix 1). Data indicates that sustained use of learning objectives and success criteria was associated with higher achievement in the test. Effect size analysis revealed an effect size of 0.36 across the entire cohort. To limit the impact of variation associated with different teachers, analysis was undertaken of a single teacher who taught students in both the control and treatment group. The effect size of the intervention, for the single teacher, was 0.6 indicating a relatively high effect size. This suggests that students in the intervention group performed significantly better in the mathematics test. However, it is acknowledged that a more comprehensive study would be required to unequivocally support this claim.

Questionnaire
Data from the questionnaire is reported in Table 2 (appendix 2). The aim of the questionnaire was to explore student attitudes to learning before and after the intervention. Analysis indicates that student responses to the first 4 questions, referring to motivation, display an increase in agreement post intervention (10.3%). This observation is supported by an increase (9%) in students reporting that they respond to teacher questions and participation in class discussion (8.2%). A small increase (2.6%) was recorded in students committed to completing homework post intervention.

Student agreement increased post intervention for question 5 (8.2%), which indicated that students perceived themselves to be more confident in achieving success.
There was an increase in students frequently self-reflecting (7,4%) and previewing or reviewing work (9.6%) but only a minor increase (1.2%) in the proportion of students who reported changing their approach to learning schedule.

Overall, student attitudes to learning were more positive post intervention. This is supported in student interview responses (see appendix 2)

To further assess the impact of learning objectives and success criteria on student attitudes of learning, correlation analysis was undertaken between student responses to specific questions and a. learning objectives and b. success criteria. Furthermore, regression analysis was undertaken on c. learning objectives and d. success criteria with student attitudes to learning. The questions were grouped into:

- Questions 1 to 4 relating to enjoyment, motivation and engagement

- Question 5 relating to student perceptions on success as a learner

- Questions 6-8 relating to reflection, review and adjusting their work and learning in mathematics

a. Learning objectives

Correlation analysis for learning objectives is presented in tables 3 to 5 (appendix 1). Analysis reveals that:

- Learning objectives displayed a correlation with questions 1-4 (p<0.01) with a slight correlation coefficient increase of 0.02 post intervention

- Learning objectives displayed a greater positive correlation with question 5 (<0.05 pre and <0.01 post intervention respectively) with a larger correlation coefficient increase of 0.112 post intervention

- Learning objectives are positively correlated with questions 6-8 (P<0.01) with an increase in correlation coefficient of 0.036 post intervention

b. Correlation analysis of success criteria

Correlation analysis for success criteria is presented in tables 6 to 8 (appendix 1). Analysis reveals that:

- Success criteria displayed a positive correlation with question 1-4 (P<0.01) with an increase in correlation coefficient of 0.62 post intervention;

- Success criteria displayed a positive correlation with question 5 (<0.05 pre and <0.01 post intervention respectively) with a larger correlation coefficient increase of 0.211 post intervention;

- Success criteria displayed a positive correlation with question 6-8 (P<0.01) with an increase in correlation coefficient of 0.17 post intervention.

The analysis suggests that success criteria has a stronger correlation with student responses than learning objectives. This is most marked in the increases post intervention for questions 1-4 and question 5.

c. Regression analysis learning objectives

Regression analysis for learning objectives is presented in tables 9 (appendix 1). Analysis reveals that:

- In general, there is a positive regression between learning objectives and student responses both pre and post intervention;

- Learning objectives displayed a positive regression with questions 1-4; 17.9% (adjusted $R^2=0.179$) pre intervention and 19.7% (adjusted $R^2=0.197$) post intervention;

- Learning objectives displayed a lower regression with question 5; 2.4% (adjusted $R^2=0.024$) pre intervention and 7.6% (adjusted $R^2=0.076$) post intervention;

- Learning objectives displayed a positive regression with questions 6-8: 14.1% (adjusted $R^2=0.141$) pre intervention and 17% (adjusted 0.17) post intervention.

d. Regression analysis of success criteria

Regression analysis for success criteria and student attitudes on learning is presented in tables 10 (appendix 1). Analysis reveals that:

- In general, there is a positive regression between succession criteria and student questionnaire responses both pre and post intervention;

- Success criteria displayed a positive regression with questions 1-4; 15.4% (adjusted $R^2=0.154$) pre intervention and 20.8% (adjusted $R^2=0.208$) post intervention;

- Success criteria displayed a lower regression with question 5; 2.1% (adjusted $R^2=0.021$) pre intervention and 13.6% (adjusted $R^2=0.136$) post intervention;

- Success criteria displayed a positive regression with questions 6-8: 16.2% (adjusted R2=0.162) pre intervention and 17.6% (adjusted 0.176) post intervention.

It is evident that learning objectives and success criteria have a varied but positive correlation with three elements of the questionnaire, but that there is a stronger correlation for success criteria.

Discussion

This study has demonstrated that AfL practices can be developed and applied in primary schools in Shanghai, were such practices are less well developed (Cui Yunhuo,2010; Zhong Qiquan, 2012; Yang Xiangdong, 2009). The actions of the research and training institute in Pudong, Shanghai, resulted in primary school mathematics teachers consistently and effectively using learning objectives and success criteria.

Teachers who took part in the study reported that they previously focused 'what and how' to teach and less on 'how' to assess. After participating in the study, teachers reported that assessment is fundamental to learning mathematics and serves as a process for reflecting on evidence.

The use of learning objectives and success criteria was associated with higher levels of student performance in a paper and pencil test relative to students in the control group. These findings are congruent with other work in this field (Reed,2012; Lenor *et al.*, 2014; Mansell *et al.*, 2009), though they contribute to the relative minor body of work in in China. Possible reasons for higher student performance were revealed through student perceptions on learning.

Students from the intervention group reported that learning objectives and specifically success criteria are important in assisting learning in mathematics. The use of both learning objectives and success criteria are correlated with higher levels of student motivation and engagement, self-efficacy and self-regulation. This is consistent with findings of Locke and Latham (1990) who showed that goal setting has a positive impact on student performance. Martin (2006) found that 'personal bests' had a positive impact on educational aspirations, love for school, participation in class and persistence in tasks. This study indicates that after the intervention, student understanding of learning objectives is positively correlated with motivation and self-regulation to a moderate degree, although the correlation between self-efficacy is very weak.

John Hattie (2009) found that success criteria had a positive impact on student learning. This indicates that making explicit what success entails provides students clarity on what successful performance involves is important for learners. This study demonstrates that success criteria is correlated to a greater degree than learning objectives with motivation, self-efficacy and self-regulation. This may be because success criteria provide students with a clear understanding of what is required and what successful performance entails and this clarity, in turn, raises levels of motivation to learn. Moreover, success criteria provide a reference for students to evaluate their own performance and as such adjust their behaviours and thinking in order to improve performance or overcome misconceptions and challenges.

Importantly, this study also demonstrated that collaboration between international and state education entities successfully resulted in teachers in Pudong successfully implementing AfL practices and influencing student attitudes and personal development aligned to some objectives of education reform in China.

Whilst it is recognised there is need for more comprehensive exploration of any relationship between learning objectives and success criteria on student attitudes and attainment, this paper introduces how international schools can play a role in education reform.

Conclusion

The use of learning objectives and success criteria is associated with increased student performance in a paper and pencil test for primary school students studying mathematics in Pudong. Success criteria, and lesser extent learning objectives, are positively correlated with increased self-reported motivation and attitudes to learning by students. This may be because success criteria allowed students to establish a clear appreciation of what success entails and what actions are needed to achieve learning objectives more explicit (Shirley Clarke, 2004). This study suggests that success criteria have a higher correlation with learning motivation and attitudes than learning objectives. Further studies that more deeply explore student motivation and attitudes is warranted.

Importantly, this study has demonstrated the successful integration into primary school in Shanghai of formative assessment practices. Therefore, it is proposed that further research on the influence of learning objectives and success criteria may assist in contributing to one element of educational reform in Shanghai and beyond. Furthermore, this study demonstrates the effective collaboration between the state education system in Shanghai with the private international education sector. Such partnerships may serve as an effective means of delivering the desired education reform across China and beyond.

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Principles of Practice: Confidence and Courage in the pursuit of what it means to be a teacher

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Abstract

In this theoretical and reflexive article, we explore the process of developing *principles of practice*, the concept behind a different approach to professional learning for teachers at international schools. The concept of principles of practice was developed in the context of a year-long professional learning programme offering a small group of teachers (25) a space for depth-engagement with research and encouraging radical thinking about the nature of schooling. Engaging seriously with the principles of practice obliges teachers to embrace lack of consensus as a profoundly positive aspect of professional practice, and it demands that teachers rethink schooling, often in ways that are disruptive to received wisdom about what 'works' or what is 'good' about it. Challenge and resistance are important parts of this process, and there is perhaps no better time to be asking uncomfortable questions about the future of international schooling. However, asking such questions is no easy task, which leads to a further pragmatic question: how can such a programme be made sustainable in the broader ecosystem of an international school organisation? Exploring this question reveals the radical promise of the concept underpinning this particular example of professional learning.

Keywords: theory, practice, praxis, criticality, confidence; courage

Introduction

The challenge of reconciling the relationship between theory and practice is central to the field of teacher professional learning (Mutton et al, 2021). Historically, this challenge has centred on redressing in one direction or another the balance between practical wisdom, technique or technical skill, and one's ability to articulate what is known about any specific domain (Oancea and Furlong, 2007). Held in the subtle balance between techne, episteme, and phronesis, what counts as 'knowledge' for teachers remains contested and shaped by the practical constraints of everyday life in the classroom – constraints of time, curriculum, career, and the wider demands of audit cultures, 'client' expectations, assessment regimes, and policy shifts. The answer to the corollary question of what it means to be a 'good' teacher is inevitably shaped by how teacher 'knowledge' is conceived and shaped in practice. With these questions in mind, in this theoretical and reflexive paper we explore the process of developing *principles of practice*, the concept behind a programme professional learning by the same name for teachers at English Schools Foundation (ESF) international schools in Hong Kong. The ESF is a well-established, fee-paying group of international schools based solely in Hong Kong and with a long history in the territory, stretching back to 1967. Originally emerging from a government recognition of the need for quality English-language provision in Hong Kong, the ESF has historically catered to a large non-Chinese demographic of 'expatriate' families and students. More recently, this demographic has changed significantly in line with other international school organisations in the region, and now approximately 80% of ESF intake is Hong Kong Chinese. Schools overwhelmingly follow the IB curriculum and across the Foundation academic achievement is considerable, meaning that many students gravitate towards elite university destinations in the UK, US, Canada, and Australia. ESF schools are home to staff from a diversity of backgrounds, but the majority are recruited from Euro-American and Australasian contexts. Because of its history, record of academic success, continued growth, and favourable employment terms (including its professional learning offer), the ESF represents a desirable destination for

teachers seeking to work in the Hong Kong international school sector. The concept of principles of practice was developed in the context of a year-long professional learning programme offering teachers a space for depth-engagement with research and encouraging radical thinking about the nature of schooling. Engaging seriously with principles of practice obliges teachers to embrace lack of consensus as a profoundly positive aspect of professional practice (MacIntyre, 1995), and it demands that teachers rethink schooling, often in ways that are disruptive to received wisdom about what 'works' or what is 'good' about teaching. Challenge and resistance are important parts of this process, and in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic there is perhaps no better time to be asking uncomfortable questions about the future of international schooling. However, asking such questions is no easy task, which leads to a further pragmatic question: how can such a programme can be made sustainable in the broader ecosystem of an international school organisation? Exploring this question reveals the radical promise of the concept underpinning this particular example of professional learning. This paper draws heavily on the work of selected principles of practice programme speakers, including Etienne Wenger (1998), Gert Biesta (2005), Trevor Mutton and Katherine Burn (2021), Helen Gunter, (1997) and others.

The Challenge: Reaching Beyond Traditional Schema for Professional Learning

We would like to begin with a story. I[16] was falling asleep on a tram heading for Quarry Bay, on the north side of Hong Kong Island, towards the end of the afternoon on a sunny day in October, 2018. As a lingering vestige of Hong Kong's rickety industrial past, the tram trundled along its slender tracks, shunting at intersections welded by long-forgotten hands. The tram was packed and humid even at this time of year, and I was dozing to the occasional lull of the tram's movement, interspersed by the ding of old-fashioned bell that signalled to the driver of a passenger's intention to alight. Jetlag was taking its toll. With my colleague Roger Dalrymple, I was on my way to a final meeting of the day on a university junket to drum up business for continuing professional development programming. We had just a few days in Hong Kong to justify our limited expenses and complete on some deals. For academics trained respectively in medieval literature and social anthropology, for Roger and me this kind of consultancy work offered a surreal and oddly comforting experience in overlap between the simple rationality of its anticipation (getting the deal), and the complexity of how one navigates to a point of shared intention with relative strangers (the client, and/or their human representative) in the process. These ideas were circulating, inchoate, as we waited in large leather armchairs in the downstairs lobby of the building that housed the offices of the English Schools Foundation (ESF). We were early.

An hour later, we had met with Jacques-Olivier Perche, an ebullient, vital person in charge of professional learning, among other things, at the ESF. We discussed potential programmes, 'easy wins' in terms of collaboration, and next steps towards delivering a traditional suite of CPD sessions. We seemed to have reached, in our vanishingly short meeting, a gathering of intention that would allow me to return to the UK quietly triumphant that the long journey to Hong Kong had been worthwhile, an anticipated deal sealed in lieu of future work agreed. What *actually* transpired in that meeting, however, was much more significant, and far less predictable, than what we may have anticipated as that tram lumbered down old tracks towards Quarry Bay. The meeting was in fact a coming together of intentions that over the next two years would develop into a novel way of conceptualising professional learning for international schoolteachers. Principles of Practice emerged, therefore, first as a concept derived from an unintended exercise in professional anticipation. As the philosopher Jay Lampert (2018) among others (Alexander, 2020) have argued, the predominant cultural orientation towards the future in contemporary late capitalist societies is one framed by the ideology of rational choice: that is, we anticipate future outcomes based on decisions in the present that are oriented towards certainty. This same orientation underpins the inclination,

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[16] The first-person pronoun in this article refers to Patrick Alexander.

in current educational discourse as elsewhere, towards evidence-based practice (Nelson and Campbell 2017), or the notion that practice underpinned by previous action proving an outcome (as in some empirical research) will produce, *a priori*, the very same outcome as that previously recorded elsewhere. Past action becomes a still pool mirroring the future, as much in the identification of 'best practice' in classroom pedagogy as in the profane business of devising professional learning that will inculcate said 'best practice'. The framing of 'what works' (Davis, 2017) in education becomes in this sense a question of anticipating a taken-for-granted or doxic (Zipin et al, 2015) relationship between intended activity and intended outcome. Broadly speaking, this logic underpins a traditional approach to professional *development*, whereby skills are honed through discrete sessions – skills, for example, for mastering behaviour management, for inculcating growth mindset, for managing meetings, and so on – in linear anticipation of future contexts where these skills may be applied or reproduced. While such a proposition is increasingly difficult to sustain in a world characterised principally by rapacious future uncertainty (Facer 2013), the logic of future certainty prevails in many professional domains, not least education, and certainly not least in professional learning for teachers.

In our conversations between 2018 and 2020, we slowly circled this paradox in our discussions about what work we should do together, all the while watching the world around us change in strange, unexpected, and disturbing ways. Ultimately, it was through an engagement with the foundational proposition of the *principles of practice* – through engagement with trust, risk, uncertainty, and judgement– that the concept itself was derived. In our conversations, in partial, incomplete ways, we eventually asked the important questions: what, together, do we really want to do? What do we stand for? What is our professional judgement about what counts as worthy professional learning, and how, in practice, do we make this happen beyond existing schema for what professional development looks like and produces? What, to paraphrase Biesta (2013), might be the beautiful or productive risk in our approach to professional learning? The fact that these questions were only partially articulated, and still only remain partially answered, was part of the way forward: finding a way, in a world of presumed certainty, to champion the value of a lack of consensus as central to principled professional judgement (MacIntyre 1993; 1995). Principles of practice, in this sense, is not an easily packageable concept because is not a thing to do or an approach to adopt – it is emphatically not a schema for practice - and therefore not a product easily marketed. It is, rather – and perhaps quite simply – a disposition, or a restatement of a commitment to attentiveness of action, and an interrogation of action in dialogue with theory. As we argue later, in the process of enacting principles of practice we would find that this also required a critical framing of the tension between *confidence* – the process of becoming 'literate' and feeling 'agentic' in the world of educational research and educational theory - and *encouragement* – the act of calling forth courage to take heart, to resist, to re-assess, rethink and to refuse ideas and practices that may otherwise seem 'good', including those most deeply held, and including those most deeply held about educational research.

The Proposition: Interrogating the Principles of Teaching Practice

The challenge of engaging teachers in the ethical and theoretical aspects of their working lives is not a new one (Alexander, 1984; Ellis 2010). A recent renewal of interest in MacIntyre's (1995) concept of practical theorizing, for example (Mutton et al 2021), demonstrates the continued importance of interrogating the relationship between research, theory, and practice in teacher professional learning. MacIntyre's original conceptualising of practical theorizing was to champion the importance of theory in the nascent professional lives of initial teachers, so that they might continue to engage with theory and theorization not as supplementary to but rather as an essential part of everyday practice in the classroom. Others have proposed different ways of illuminating the interplay between theory

and practice in the professional lives of teachers, from calls to research literacy (BERA-RSA 2014), to calls to enact critical praxis (Francisco et al 2021), to the less wieldy but increasingly popular domain of the 'pracademic' (Posner 2009), to the broader, more pragmatic (and problematic) teacher-led ResearchEd movement in countries like the United Kingdom.

In many ways, the balancing of theory and practice in teacher professional learning is linked to even older questions about how knowledge production has been shaped as an aspect of schooling for students and teachers alike over the last 150 years. The broad history of mass state education reflects a drive towards standardisation and a technical framing of teaching as the means by which society can achieve an increasingly predictable outcome from the input of time and resources that shape schooling. Imagining teachers as the transmitters of knowledge casts teachers as the guardians of the light, the technicians who maintain the machinery, but not the light itself. A focus on the techne of teaching is evident in the trajectory of education policy where significance is placed on education as the engine for other areas of future economic and political change. Education remains, for example, at the very centre of the neoliberal public policy agenda because education allegedly represents one of the main indicators of future economic growth and individual well-being. Education, as Stephen Ball accentuates, has become 'a crucial factor in ensuring economic productivity and competitiveness in the context of "informational capitalism"' (Ball, 2008:1). In this somewhat dystopian but accurate vision of education as an investment based on the [deterministic] assumption that 'better educational outcomes are a strong predictor of economic growth' (OECD, 2010: 3), pupils' achievements are said to represent an indicator of 'future talent pools' (OECD, 2012: 26) and should therefore be a valid indicator of one's future [economic] success. This assumption of the translatability of learning achievements into economic performance – most visible in studies discussing international large-scale student assessments such as PISA – places the teacher in the difficult position of attending to just and ethical practice for the children and young people in front of her at any given time, while always feeling the chill of a long and looming shadow of expectation to yield some greater political or economic harvest.

The framing of schooling as the nurturing or 'banking' (Freire 2000 [1970]) of future human capital is certainly familiar also in the history of international schooling. Bunnell and Poole (2021), among others, have pointed to the ways in which historically international schools have served to reproduce forms of capital that privilege the interests of elite global communities already in positions of economic and political power and privilege. In the present, fee-paying international schools are regularly marketed, whether implicitly or explicitly, on the promise of the high quality of their educational provision, on the socially exclusive nature of their intake, and on the future returns on family investment in education. Bunnell and Poole (2021) argue that there is a well-established discourse across the sector that the project of schooling is oriented towards future gain in the form of attendance at elite universities and the concurrent benefits that this may confer on students in terms of future employment and new or continued membership as part of a global elite. This discourse is underpinned by a neoliberal framing of aspiration towards individual success through competition in a way that tragically and ironically reveals how the success of the view reproduces inequity for many. In the crudest logic of such discourse, the mark of a 'good' teacher is one's capacity to deliver the highest return on investment in the form of success in high stakes summative assessments that represent the access point to elite Higher Education. It is not surprising, therefore, that professional learning for teachers in international schools is at times framed also in relation to 'transmission', or the nurturing of the kinds of skills that will allow teachers to maximise strategies for student success at examination – and often provided by the very same organisations that produce and reproduce regimes of examination, such as the International Baccalaureate Organisation.

The underpinning logic of this transmission discourse is familiar across most forms of mass schooling, and relates directly to the orientation of school practice towards a particular modernist imagining of the future (Facer 2013). Facer (2013; 2016; see also Alexander 2020) suggests that schooling is profoundly oriented towards a modernist future in its very structure and organisation. Much activity in schools (even activities that are explicitly focused on the present, such as mindfulness) is oriented towards future outcomes, as in the neoliberal logic of transmission outlined above. This applies as much to student experiences of high stakes assessment as it does to teacher professional learning oriented towards 'good' teaching evidenced through student success. The logic of action in the present conducted methodically in relation to clear and inevitable outcomes in the future is challenged directly by the rapacious uncertainty of the present where we regularly see shocks and unpredictable events as part of a 'new normal' – from economic and political upheaval, to climate crisis, pandemic, and all of the concurrent disturbances wrought during Pandemic Times. Schools may socialise both teachers and students into practices that privilege the certainty of future outcomes, but teachers and students are living, like the rest of us, in times where such certainty rarely occurs, whether in the present or in the swiftly unravelling future. This raises an obvious and pressing question about how professional learning may in some way account for the fluid, uncertain nature of the present in a way that is productive and emancipatory for both teachers and students alike.

A historical view of teaching as the 'transmission' of educational capital to other forms of capital rests, then, in tension with the broader progressive tradition in the philosophy of education, seen in the work of Dewey (1910) and others (for example, Freire, 2000 [1970]), which instead focuses on transmission as a fundamentally communal and humanistic pursuit that in its emancipatory power is much more than the sum of its parts. Dewey's notion of transmission, not unlike Friere's concept of *conscientização,* draws our attention to educative practice better seen as praxis, as a process of recognising existing schema or ways of ordering the world, of recognising their ethical and political implications, and in so doing to transcend said schema by creating new knowledge and understanding that can only emerge, often fleetingly, in the conversation *between* student and teacher. Through this process, all actors are changed. In a fundamentally relational reckoning of the role of the teacher, knowledge is shaped in the process of *trans*mission; and yet schooling is a context that at the same time requires that knowledge be *schooled,* disciplined, categorised, and made tractable through a more clinical, technical mode of transmission (Foucault 1975; Alexander 2020). Our intention was to progress to a position where teachers were not only aware of this distinction, through developing a confident, critical praxis, but also had the will to take courageous steps to act on this knowledge. Principles of practice was to be a space in which teachers could remain attentive to the light and shade of the broader political economy of education, and in so doing to see it, to recognise themselves as part of it, and to change it, in small ways, in their own classrooms.

The Risk: Nurturing Critical Habitual Dispositions

Having established a shared intention in this call to praxis, our next challenge was to devise a practical means through which this conceptual position could be articulated in a way that would make it practicable. Fortunately, Jacques was successful in proving that the ESF demonstrated the organisational foresight to facilitate a programme of professional learning that would privilege a challenging, depth engagement with educational research and engagement with the more troubling, exciting theoretical and philosophical questions of what it means to be a teacher. This was, and remains, the unsurprising key ingredient in the success of this kind of programme: the ability of senior management to also engage to some degree in the risk of professional learning that is not only not tied to discrete, prescribed measures of value or impact, but which promotes as its principle (and principled) outcome a benefit to the organisation that is lasting partly because it is largely intangible and unpredictable. More fortunate still, we were able to find a cohort of teachers who were willing

to take on the intellectual and professional challenge of the programme in spite of the mounting complexities of the global pandemic and concurrent economic and political changes troubling the fabric of Hong Kong society.

Once assembled, we aimed from the outset to create a promise of uncomfortable challenge in the programme – to engage in what Ball (2019) and others, channelling Foucault, have articulated as a 'pedagogy of discomfort'. This was achieved partly through a direct engagement with this and similarly unsettling framings of the educative process, as in Biesta's articulation of the 'transcendental violence' in education (2005). Biesta's argument, in crude summary, is that transactional models of learning are particularly limited where the assumption is made that the student exists in a customer-provider relationship with the teacher, and where the correlative assumption is made that the customer has not only a clear sense of what they demand from their education but also that this demand is an accurate reflection of what they need. The initial point made in this article about the limits of certain anticipation in professional practice echo Biesta's concern that a rational-choice, neoliberal framing of learning, particularly in schools, runs the serious risk of eliding the most important aspects of education in its pursuit of consensus about what is transacted between teachers and students. By establishing learning objectives at the start of a lesson, for example, teachers may clearly define what is expected of students, invoking the distant but persistent shadows of summative assessment, associated curricula, and the association, via parental investment, with future success articulated, for example, in university attendance. However, in the process this action may be limiting the articulation of learning within a simplistic (and often unrealistic) framing of objectives that lead, without distraction, to anticipated outcomes. There is a symbolic violence (Bourdieu 1990 [1970]) in this broader strategic approach to learning principally because it encourages a conflation between a rational choice mode of learning through schooling, and education: it becomes easy to assume that schooling *is* education. This involves a distortion, to use Biesta's term (2005), of the neoliberal business of schooling and the more radical promise for unpredictable enchantment and encouragement that education might offer (Ingold 2018). An alternative is an approach to education that instead privileges risk, uncertainty, uncomfortable or even transcendentally violent moments of discovery (Biesta 2005) that are valuable partly because they are jarring to one's taken for granted or doxic assumptions (Zipin 2015) about how the world works -including assumptions about learning. Dividing things into parts, to paraphrase Bateson (1972), is largely a practice of convenience, or at its worst, a practice of obfuscation, of masking what are the implications of the whole - in this case, the limiting of the educational prospect of schooling and teacher professional learning through the rhetoric of objectives, outcomes, and outputs.

Our intention with *principles of practice,* then, was to encourage uncertainty, undoing, transgression, critique, resistance, vulnerability, lack of consensus, attention to practice, sensibility, and humility. This was not a simple task that occurred overnight but rather required the nurturing of a community of practice (Wenger 1998) quietly committed to these goals. In practice, the pedagogy was not radical: we met regularly to speak with invited speakers who were also often the authors of the reading that teachers were encouraged to engage with. The programme was organised around three core themes: practical theorizing, communities of practice, and cultural complexity. The remaining talks focused in turn on: the concept of the future in education; the political economy of education; nurturing cultures of research; teacher agency; academic knowledge production; and critical perspectives on educational research in schools. The process of normalising the voices of academics helped to create a more even footing for teachers to engage critically with texts not as 'sacred' offerings from an abstracted academic world, but as 'profane' products of the messy process of academic knowledge production, typed into computers by the hands of the people they were talking to. Seminars were followed up with small group tutorial discussions where teachers could share thoughts and reflections in more intimate groupings. Online forum discussions kept the discussion moving in between sessions. Teachers were encouraged to

pen and share short ethnographic self-portraits that would reveal the relevance of theoretical discussions to their own past narratives or present practice as teachers. At the same time, we challenged one another to critique the framing of these narratives and to evade simple stories of 'redemption' or unproblematic professional 'growth' through engagement with research (and linking to the critical points made above about the future-orientation of schooling).

It would be unrealistic and unhelpful to the argument of this article to suggest that engagement and participation in the programme was without its issues. This is, of course, part of the risk of deploying principles of practice in the first place. Participation was eager but not always consistent, and regularly interrupted by the realities of life as a teacher. Not all felt comfortable or able to engage in as much depth as others with the process, and the divide between academic and professional knowledge production proved at times as difficult as it has always been to bridge. Others articulated disquiet where the programme content appeared to diverge from institutional positions about pedagogy or curriculum; and again, this was partly our intention. However, the net impact was considerable, and as the programme developed we saw evidence that participants were gathering confidence about their engagement with research. In tutorial discussions in particular, participants began to signal that yet-smaller, teacher-led pockets of dialogue were emerging about research, beyond the limits of the programme. Taxi rides to school, for example, proved an unexpected context where fellow participants would reflect on our more formal discussions and link more viscerally back to the realities of life in their particular settings. Participants who were friends and colleagues were starting to talk and debate how they would take their experience of the programme into their practice beyond it. Following Bourdieu (1970), this signalled an emerging professional capital leading to a more confident engagement with the discourse of research – or an easier disposition to navigate the field of educational research as part of the broader professional portfolio of the teacher. In framing research 'literacy' as a form of capital here, however, we are also signalling the risk that, when re-articulated in formal contexts, research knowledge can be deployed as a means of reinforcing the doxa of schooling as an educational field. By engaging with research, teachers and leaders could be encouraged simply to adopt a kind of connoissieurship of research and its representations – the archetypal 'well-read' bookshelf in the principal's office, for example – as a means of establishing one's capacity to act strategically and to the benefit of one's own interests by demonstrating one's research credentials. Or, at a more complex level, the net result of this kind of programme could be simply to reproduce the established academic wisdom about what kinds of educational research are valuable for teachers to engage with. While it is perhaps impossible not to reproduce some existing doxic understandings of the value of educational research, our intention was to transcend this limiting engagement through the facilitation of 'critical habitual dispositions'. This rather unwieldy term we devised to articulate the ideal position of having as one's starting point a critical stance that is confident in its constructive scepticism about research knowledge even when one is not necessarily well-versed in the theoretical positions underpinning this knowledge. This is the critical confidence of the experienced teacher presented with a 'new' way of doing things, and the confidence of the experienced researcher presented with a 'new' theory the proposes to replace those that have come before it. That is, it is a critical confidence brought about through habituated experience. However, in the absence of said experience (for example, experience of engaging with a specific writer or field of research), how does one establish this stance of confidence? Through regular engagement with academics and their ideas – and with each other – the programme sought to overcome the temporal tension between practice and theory (that one must always precede or come after the other, in terms of experience) through engagement with both as inextricable parts of the same whole. The expectation for engagement with speakers, texts, and one another was high, but this did not mean that we were privileging a polished rehearsal of the ideas being explored. Rather, we aimed to emphasise contention, to draw out competing or conflicting points of theoretical development, and to lay bare as much as possible the process of academic knowledge

production. We hoped that by the end of the process, this would lead to teachers feeling not only confident in their engagement with research but also confident in their position as experienced, intellectual practitioners more than capable of initiating engagement with research with a critical disposition. For some, but not all, this process was transformational. As one participant suggested, *"the course has fundamentally changed how I view the purpose of education and therefore has had an impact on most areas of my practice"*. Another participant put it this way: *"I really enjoyed the change in thinking that I experienced. It was very significant in helping me to see the bigger picture of what I do every day"*. Others were less sure of the impact of the programme on them, and to an extent this was also the point. As the programme leaders, the process of pursuing this approach required confidence of a similar kind, as it demanded of us the cultivating of a willingness to be more vulnerable, to tread uncarefully outside of established boundaries, and to be attentive to moments when necessary to admit shortcomings or dead ends of discussion in the immediate and unforgiving light of a Zoom call. This was a humanising process that requited humility and honesty. Years of carefully practiced and performed boundary-keeping, of due attention to meeting 'client needs' and presentation or representation of established knowledge makes such work difficult, but extremely rewarding.

The Challenge of Encouragement

But was this enough? As suggested above, we reflected during the programme on the risk that we would simply reproduce forms of professional capital that would reproduce research discourse as a means of effectively 'working' the field of schooling. In encouraging the critical habitual dispositions of participants, we were obliged to think again about the importance not only of the confidence to move in the field of educational research – of what might be termed 'research literacy' – but also of the *courage* required to remain critical and reflexive in this process. To return to Biesta, we were reminded of the need to seek out moments of transcendental violence (2005), to create opportunities for productive dissent, and to lay ourselves open to critique in the process. The practice of *encouragement* – in the literal (and French) sense of creating the space where courage can grow – required a re-engagement with the programme's foundational interest in the relationship between principles and practice. In giving heart, and hope, the process of encouragement involved recognising the participants' confidence or literacy in the field of research, their capacity to productively resist and adopt a critical, principled stance, and, crucially, to do so from a hopeful position about the possibility for positive, productive change (Tillich 2000 [1952]; Nixon 2017; hooks xxx). Courage, as the willingness to challenge, be honest, open, willing to fail to succeed in the pursuit of something more meaningful, comes with considerable risk, especially within the architecture of a system where success and failure are so clearly demarcated and so highly valued in more concrete terms linked to performance. The act of encouragement therefore demands courage on the part of those with systemic power. A serious engagement with notions of cultural complexity (Hannerz 1992; Dervin 2016) also demanded challenge on the part of invited speakers and facilitators attentive to the changing sands in Hong Kong. Engagement with research or calls to resistance can themselves represent a form of disciplining or even disempowerment when such calls are made from the safe distance of what passes for liberal democracy in, for example, contemporary Britain. It is much less easy, and indeed perhaps even less productive, to hammer one's colours to the mast in the context of creeping authoritarianism and the growth of explicit state surveillance cultures. Participants engaged in the difficult process of exploring politically complex questions while doing so in a way that spoke to the realities of their experiences in a rapidly changing context. A nuanced and respectful approach to local context was important to the encouragement of participants. This focus on courage and encouragement may also be considered a complication of what counts as 'agency' in the professional lives of teachers - that is, an understanding of agency that is not only linked to the greater self-efficacy borne of research literacy, but also agency as a process of heartfelt ethical practice in the present that may also involve productive dissent, critique, and dissonance.

Conclusions

We would like to conclude by returning to our story – or rather, to the admission that the story itself is an artifice of temporal coherence. The details likely never happened as we have said so here. There is no clear starting point or statement of intention that established the parameters of what would become principles of practice. To suggest this would be to negate the central value of a dialogue about the ethical and theoretical parameters of educative practice that is useful so long as it is never finished (Ingold 2018). Somewhere, presumably, the tram to Quarry Bay trundles on, shunting along a line, collecting fares and distributing people to known locations, places they knew they were going to. While we continue to hear and response to the fond and certain ringing of a bell that signals the certain and inevitable counterpoint of departure and destination, fortunately, a principles of practice approach to professional learning does not encourage us to imagine that we are currently on that tram, or that the tramlines are the only means of travel through the landscape.

To resist a coherent sense of theoretical boundary, or of a simple articulation of the usefulness in application of this approach to professional learning, is in itself an articulation of the approach adopted in the programme. That said, some conceptual, ethical, and practical steps proved productive in allowing principles of practice to serve as a thinking space for teachers. We recognise the importance of creating time for initial dialogue about what really matters about a professional learning experience. We emphasise the importance of institutional vision and a willingness to embrace the risk of professional learning that privileges uncertain outcomes through certain and unchanging intentions. Such vision also needs to be sustained, to allow the fruits of encouragement to emerge, slowly. We celebrate the value of engaging directly with scholars and authors as a way of diffusing the boundary between the seemingly discrete worlds of practice and research. However, we also recognise that it is all well and good making a bold statement to resistance against consensus; it is entirely another challenge to do so while dwelling in contexts that tend towards order and taxonomy. In the more extreme of such settings, essentially moral judgements about whether or not one is a 'good' teacher will be framed in ways incommensurate with a theoretically or philosophically more complex reckoning of teaching practice. Technical knowledge may lead to an effective management of assessment in the context of a prescriptive curriculum, and in this frame a 'good' teacher would *only ever* be one who is able to harness her technical knowledge to shepherd the best results in examination. Theoretical knowledge is less valuable, and therefore less valued. The theoretically disposed teacher, in such a context, may even become a 'bad' teacher. How then, do we reconcile this call to courage with the everyday challenges of doing so in a system that is fundamentally organised around certainty? In the current ordering of things, this may simply be about establishing the demand for a different kind of schooling that champions the value of teachers as public intellectuals who inspire children and young people to think in the same quietly radical ways that they do. A first step towards this may be the process of encouragement – of providing simple spaces for dialogue and dissonance that recognise teachers as empowered intellectuals who shape and wield knowledge in ways that change lives, often in unpredictable and wonderful ways.

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The "Discovery" of Childhood?

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to explore the historical origins of the modern concept of childhood as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and to argue that the notion of childhood as a separate stage of development during which families and institutions should encourage the development of the child as a full, autonomous individual was born in the eighteenth century. It will outline the historiography of childhood while drawing on evidence from pedagogical and children's literature of the period to argue that the 'discovery' of childhood was largely an eighteenth-century phenomenon and one that is inherently connected to Enlightenment thought.

There are a few key words that permeate the discourse on education today. Among them are autonomy, agency, and the importance of the affective in the learning environment. School mission and policy statements constantly refer to the aim of developing young people as life-long learners. In fact, it is difficult to imagine how anyone could be anything less than this. It is, perhaps, one thing if we are considering only academic or formal learning. Still, it is in the very nature of humans, as conscious, sentient beings, to process experience and to assimilate new knowledge.

While the notion of experiential learning is often associated with progressive pedagogues of the early twentieth century, one might equally refer to the eighteenth-century during which the primacy of sense experience in philosophy and pedagogical theory was prevalent. One could go even further back in time if one wished, to Aristotle, as just one example. My particular interest lies in the eighteenth century. Occasionally, educational research will refer to Rousseau as a point of distant origin particularly in relation to experiential, child-centred or play-based learning. However, the connection between 21st century child-centred pedagogy and the pedagogical literature of the eighteenth-century merits more than a passing mention of Émile.

The underlying questions I seek to answer remain essentially the same, whether my focus is on education in eighteenth-century France or the education of children in international schools today. In both instances, I acknowledge that I am considering a privileged group of children. Inclusion, whether in terms of gender, ethnicity or socio-economic status, was and continues to be a troubling challenge. Literacy and access to formal education has never been uniform. It was not in the eighteenth-century; nor is it today. Armed conflict has resulted in millions of refugee children being denied access to education. Among myriad other grave problems, the Covid pandemic and the resulting transition to distance learning has highlighted the inequity of access to quality learning and teaching in the Global North as well as the Global South. Although literacy rates had risen considerably in Northern, urban Europe by the eighteenth century, literacy and access to basic schooling were not available to all. The nature of schooling depended then, as it does today, on wealth, poverty, social status, gender and geographical location.

Let me return to my key words, however. Contemporary educators promote autonomy, agency (which I translate here as the capacity to exercise faculties of reason and judgement), and the affective as essential to a quality learning environment. Are we so sure that it is only in the 21st century that such concepts lie at the heart of education? Even today I am far from convinced that the notions of autonomy and agency are understood or defined in the same way in various parts of the globe even if educational discourse from China to

North America makes mention of them, usually in the context of the 21ˢᵗ-century global competencies to which we so frequently and sometimes cavalierly refer. If we, as educators, assert that learner autonomy, agency and well-being are our aims, what does that mean in terms of our conceptualization of childhood? Are children to be viewed in terms of cognitive and developmental stages of becoming? Are they simply adults in the making? Or are children rights-bearing individuals as claimed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

To what degree do we engage in a pedagogy that truly nurtures autonomy and agency? Despite our claims, do we remain limited in our understanding of the capacity of children for empathetic, ethical, and rational thinking because we secretly still think of them as deficient adults? Do we see children as they are? Or through the lens of our adult selves? The latter question is rhetorical. It could hardly be otherwise. What strikes me as important, however, is that we, the adult educators, consciously and deliberately question underlying assumptions, be they contemporary or historical, about both the limits and extent of children's capacities, competencies and affective needs.

The Discovery of Childhood

In one of Arnaud Berquin's stories (1782-83) Amand, the eldest child of a poor man with seven children, decides he will not eat so that the others will have more. When the doctor tells him he will die without food, Amand states that this is all right because, from heaven, he will look down on his siblings knowing that they have a bit more for themselves. Amand's selfless gesture is rewarded and the family receives succour.[1] It is to be hoped that children would not themselves in such a position. Nonetheless, when children are depicted as possessing agency in literature, it may also be a means of *giving* them agency. Rather than portraying childhood as a period of powerlessness, children's stories may indicate to the child reader that children, too, are capable of acting virtuously either independent from or with the support of adults. This is one of the most notable aspects of children's literature in the eighteenth century. It is in this period that we begin to see child protagonists such as Amand, who exercise their faculties of reason and judgement as relatively independent and autonomous beings. This autonomy could translate into real life. As one mother wrote of her daughters, '[They] were always allowed and even encouraged by me to reason *their own way*, and not suffer their Respect or Affection for me to mislead their Judgement.'[2]

My aim here is to explore the historical origins of the modern concept of childhood as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and to argue that the notion of childhood as a separate stage of development during which families and institutions should encourage the development of the child as a full, autonomous individual was born in the eighteenth century if not before. I will outline the historiography of childhood while drawing on evidence from pedagogical and children's literature of the period to argue that the 'discovery' of childhood was largely an eighteenth-century phenomenon and one that is inherently connected to Enlightenment thought. As more adults began to acquire rights in this period, it is perhaps not surprising that children did as well.

To define childhood precisely is challenging. As anthropologist Heather Montgomery has noted, 'There is no universal child and… the concept of the child is one that must be defined internally and in its own context.'[3] Is childhood a natural phenomenon or a social construction?[4] In many respects, the notion of childhood is amorphous: dependent on time, place, gender and class. Even within a given society, the understanding of what it means to be a child may change over time. Yet in the twentieth century, the UNCRC determined universal rights based on a particular conception of childhood. A child, while requiring "special care and assistance…, should be fully prepared to live an individual life… and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity."[5]

In 1960, Philippe Ariès published *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime* and with it initiated an ongoing historiographical debate about the nature of childhood. According to Ariès, it was not until the seventeenth century that one began to see an appreciation of childhood as a distinct period in life and perhaps most importantly, a period of innocence.[6] He essentially argued that, until the seventeenth century, there was no clear understanding of childhood and/or adolescence and that, furthermore, in an age when infant mortality was high 'people could not allow themselves to become too attached to something that was regarded as a probable loss.'[7]

In the 1970s, historians such as Edward Shorter, Lloyd de Mause and Lawrence Stone built on Ariès's thesis as well as continuing in the tradition of viewing childhood in the past as essentially 'nasty, brutish and short.' At the very least, the conditions of everyday life made it such that children lived precarious lives devoid of the sort of happy, innocent experiences implied by the UNCRC and that we like to associate with childhood today even as we know that across the globe, millions of children experience something altogether different.

Significant change in the historiography of childhood came in the 1980s and the work of subsequent scholars has demonstrated that the historical timing of the emergence of the concept of childhood as a particular stage of cognitive and physiological development took place earlier than Ariès envisaged. Drawing from other social science disciplines as well as sociobiology, Linda Pollock, for example, effectively challenged the traditional view of childhood by focusing on 'universal goals' of parenting.[8] Given the current state of research and perhaps just common sense, it would appear logical to accept the fact that parents have, for all time, recognized childhood as distinct from adulthood and children requiring special care. Evidence from a wide range of historical sources spanning several centuries indicates that most parents took their responsibilities towards their children seriously and raised them, to the best of their ability, with love and affection. One need only read Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's magistral work *Montaillou, village occitan* to realise that parents in the thirteenth century were as affectionate and concerned with their children's well-being as any parent in the present.[9]

The historiography on childhood today is interdisciplinary in its approach and sensitive to the need to uncover, wherever possible, the muted voices of children of the past. It is generally accepted that parents have always recognized childhood, regardless of how it may have been precisely defined, as different from adulthood. As Dekker and Groenendijk asserted, "the outcome of most research in the last decade can be summarised as the discovery of the continuity of basic human attitudes and emotion."[10] However, to move from recognizing childhood as a distinct period in life to recognizing the inherent and inalienable rights of a child is a significant shift. If, according to the UNCRC, the child is considered to some degree to be an 'autonomous, rights-bearing citizen,'[11] then it is only natural to turn to the origins of modern thinking about universal rights. The innovations in political and philosophical thought of the eighteenth century provide us with the genesis of the modern discourse on individual rights and freedoms.

When the newly conceived National Assembly in France drafted its Declaration on the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789), this act would serve as a watershed. It is undeniable that the limitations to citizenship would continue to affect many in society: the poor, women Jews, slaves… Still, the existence of a self-appointed body that, by its very nature, challenged the contemporary concept of sovereignty, was truly revolutionary in the context of Old Regime society. But it was not only in the context of political revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, be they British, French or American, that an increasing emphasis on the individual and his or her rights was to be found. Enlightenment thought, with its focus on the application of human reason to determine truth, inherently underscores the role of the individual in that process. Equally important in this period was the debate on education as

the means to promote the development of rational, autonomous and virtuous beings, the ideal citizens of a future republic.

In his preface to *Children and Childhood in Western Society,* Hugh Cunningham explains that he is seeking 'to identify when and how childhood began to be seen as a formative influence in the construction of self-identity, rather than as a period of life marked in many ways by its deficiencies.'[12] Philosophers and pedagogues of the eighteenth century produced a body of literature that had a significant impact on the reading public, parents in particular. Within this body of literature, it is evident that Enlightenment epistemology informed the manner in which pedagogues invited parents to treat their children. Implicit in it is a recognition that childhood is, indeed, a significant influence in the construction of identity and, as such, should be approached in a deliberate and thoughtful manner. The eighteenth century thus witnessed the development of children's literature as a separate genre and pedagogical tool, as well as the emergence of a consumer culture that provided children with toys and games specifically designed for their amusement and development.[13]

John Locke in England and Jean-Jacques Rousseau in France were arguably two of the most important philosophers of the period to confront the nature of childhood and children's needs. Certainly, their writings did not reach everyone. But the educated, reading public devoured their works and there is significant evidence that contemporaries consciously followed Locke and/or Rousseau's advice on child-rearing (to varying degrees of success). In his diary, Thomas Cobden-Sanderson wrote that he and his wife were reading Locke and were guided by these writings in the raising of their son.[14] In another instance, an American asked a friend in England to buy for her son 'the new toy, the description of which I enclose, to teach him according to Mr. Locke's methods – which I have carefully studied – to play himself into learning.'[15] Robert Darnton's research shows that almost a third of the books the merchant Jean Ranson of La Rochelle ordered from the Société Typographique de Neuchâtel were children's literature or pedagogical works.[16] Ranson was especially eager to acquire Rousseau's works as 'Everything that l'Ami Jean-Jacques has written about the duties of husbands and wives, of mothers and fathers, has had a profound effect on me; and I confess to you that it will serve me as a rule in any of those estates that I should occupy.'[17]

There are both similarities and differences in Locke and Rousseau's approach to education. Locke views the child, in his famous term, as a *tabula rasa.* Controlling the environment and experiences of the child, according to Locke, allows the adult to shape the child's character and 'plant what habits you please.'[18] Rousseau, in contrast, argued against instilling habits into children: 'The only habit the child should be allowed to contract is that of having no habits,' he states in *Émile.* 'Prepare the way for his control of his liberty and the use of his strength by leaving his body its natural habit, by making him capable of lasting self-control, of doing all that he wills when his will is formed.'[19] At the same time, like Locke, Rousseau, too, emphasised the necessity of carefully shaping the environment in which the child would learn, initially and principally, through experience.

Even if Locke and Rousseau believed that controlling the environment was the way to 'mould' the child, it does not mean that the child is solely a passive recipient of (sense) experience. Perhaps part of the emphasis on shaping the child's experiences and thereby his or her acquisition of knowledge is an implicit reflection of the understanding that the child, left to his or her own devices, might interpret or assimilate experience differently from what the adult would desire. Linda Pollock's evidence indicates that parents were well 'aware that children possessed minds of their own and were not always willing to conform to parental expectations of conduct.'[20] It is in recognizing the child's intrinsic agency that the pedagogue or parent seeks to channel that force. Some parents, of course, were harsher than others in matters of discipline. Nonetheless, what is striking in literature of the period is parents' recognition of their children's autonomy. Often, this caused a great deal of worry on the part of parents (and still does…). There is much evidence that parents wished to advise their

children, knowing full well that they did not have full control over their offspring. One parent wrote that she disliked physical punishment except as a 'last resort… I should rather aim to cherish feelings of conscious rectitude, and the pleasure of being beloved. I would have a child consider his parents' declaration that he is not good, his worst punishment.'[21]

Locke urged parents to treat their children from early on as rational beings. 'It will perhaps be wondered,' he writes, 'that I mention *reasoning* with children and yet I cannot but think that the true way of dealing with them… they love to be treated as rational creatures sooner than is imagined… But when I talk of *reasoning* I do not intend any other but such as is suited to the child's capacity and apprehension.'[22] Rousseau's understanding of the role of reason in the human experience is more ambiguous generally and certainly less of a point of emphasis in the upbringing of Émile. 'Childhood is the sleep of reason,' he says.[23] Yet what is perhaps most important is that both Locke and Rousseau manifest a profound appreciation for childhood as a distinct period in the human life cycle and one that should be nurtured. 'Hold childhood in reverence,' Rousseau asserts, 'and do not be in any hurry to judge it for good or for ill… You are afraid to see him spending his early years doing nothing. What! Is it nothing to be happy, to run and jump all day?'[24] Ultimately, the aim of parenting is to raise a child capable of living in the world as a virtuous citizen whose reason and judgement are sufficiently developed to supersede desire.

Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* and Rousseau's *Émile* were written for adults. Other contemporary pedagogical writers produced works for children and it is in the eighteenth century that a market for children's literature developed, in England with John Newberry's publications as of the 1740s. In France, works such as Mme Le Prince de Beaumont's *Magasin des enfants* (1750s) and Arnaud Berquin's *L'Ami des enfants* (1780s) were particularly popular and underwent numerous reprintings. By the second half of the eighteenth century, a market for literature specifically for girls emerged.[25] What these works share in common is a recognition of the child's capacity to reason, the very byword of the Enlightenment. 'Enseignez-moi comment il faut faire pour apprendre à penser,' begs Eugénie in *Le Magasin des enfants.*[26] Of course, one must approach these sources with caution. Even if designed for children, this literature was written by adults. It reflects a kind of 'language of socialisation,' whereby 'social relationships are shaped and negotiated through the processes of language learning.'[27]

Much has been said to dispute Ariès's thesis in regard to childhood. However, in arguing that it is in the seventeenth century that one sees an appreciation of childhood as a period of innocence, he brings us to another important point. In much of the literature of the eighteenth century, the innocent is naturally, or at least potentially, virtuous. Visual imagery of the period similarly reflects this appreciation of the innocence of childhood, something in which the adult may shamelessly take delight. Emma Barker uses Greuze's painting 'Little Girl with the Dog' as indicative of this 'new set of ideas about childhood.'[28] Greuze's little girl apparently comes from a family of some means. In contrast, Chardin's 'Laundress' (1733) shows us a poor child, his pants torn at the knees, yet he peacefully blows a bubble while seated next to a young woman washing clothes over a tub. In the more sombre 'Prayer before the Meal? (before 1740) Chardin depicts a suitably grave child given the title of the painting, but we know that she is not always so serious as a toy drum hangs on the back of her chair.[29]

One of the rights guaranteed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is to experience childhood as a happy time in which the child may develop to his or her fullest potential in an environment of love and understanding. Parents throughout time have undoubtedly sought to provide their children with such an environment. What distinguished the eighteenth century was the very public and animated discourse on childhood and education that was, in some respects, not so different from that of today. The emergence of children's literature in this period testifies to, if not a new appreciation of childhood, then a

new emphasis on childhood ideally as a time of delight, but also as a moment of potential for the individual to acquire the knowledge and sentiments necessary to live a life of virtue.

Eighteenth-century Enlightenment thought emphasised the individual who inherently possesses certain inalienable rights. As a virtuous citizen, such an individual would contribute to the well-being of the republic. As political and pedagogical theorists considered the role of education in the future of the republic, their attention naturally turned to the child. Eighteenth-century pedagogues certainly viewed children in terms of their potential. At the same time, pedagogical texts of the period reflect an inherent respect for the child as an individual in her or his own right. In this period of intellectual transition associated with Enlightenment thought, we see increasing emphasis on education as the means to transform both the individual and society by promoting the development of autonomous individuals capable of living virtuous lives through the exercise of reason. In the end, how very different is this from what we often state to be the aims of education today?

[1] Berquin, Arnaud *L'Ami des enfants et des adolescents.* Limoge : E. Ardant [1782-83], 1884. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département littérature et art, 8-Y2-15638, accessed April 200, 2014, http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb37290865b.

[2] Cited in Pollock, Linda. *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900.* Cambridge University Press, 1983. 158.

[3] Montgomery, Heather. *An Introduction to Childhood: Anthropological Perspectives on Children's Lives.* Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. 3.

[4] See, for example Ryan, Patrick J. "How New Is the 'New' Social Study of Childhood? The Myth of a Paradigm Shift." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 38, no. 4 (2008): 553–76. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20143705.

[5] United Nations, 'Declaration on the Rights of the Child,' *UN General Assembly Resolution 1386 (XIV) of December 1959.*

[6] Ariès, Philippe, and Robert Baldick. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life.* Vintage Books, 1962.44.

[7] Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood,* 38.

[8] Pollock, *Forgotten Children,* 38.

[9] Le Roy Ladurie, Emmanuel. *Montaillou, village occitan : de 1294 à 1324* Paris : Gallimard, 1975). See also Fass, Paula S. (ed.). *The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World.* Routledge. 2013. 4

[10] Jeroen J. H. Dekker, and Leendert F. Groenendijk. "The Republic of God or the Republic of Children? Childhood and Child-Rearing after the Reformation: An Appraisal of Simon Schama's Thesis about the Uniqueness of the Dutch Case." *Oxford Review of Education* 17, no. 3 (1991): 317–35. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4618596.

[11] Montgomery, *Introduction to Childhood,* 8.

[12] Cunningham, Hugh. *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500.* Longman, 1995. ix.

[13] See Calvert, Karin. *Children in the House : The Material Culture of Early Childhood, 1600-1900.* Northeastern University Press, 1992.

[14] 'Our anxiety for his future makes us careful in ridding him of bad habits and making his will 'supple' as Locke, whom we are now reading – would say.' Cited in Pollock, *Forgotten Children*, 122.

[15] Cited in Cunningham, *Children and Childhood,* 67.

[16] Darnton, Robert. *The Great Cat Massacre: And Other Episodes in French Cultural History.* Vintage, 1985. 221.

[17] Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre,* 236.

[18] Locke, John. *Some Thoughts Concerning Education; And, Of the Conduct of Understanding.* Hackett Pub., 1996. 40.

[19] Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Émile.* Trans. Barbara Foxley. (London: Everyman, 1993), 34.

[20] Pollock, *Forgotten Children,* 107.

[21] Cited in Pollock, *Forgotten Children,* 162-163.

[22] Locke, *Thoughts Concerning Education,* 58.

[23] Rousseau, *Émile,* 84.

[24] Ibid., 84.

[25] Brown, Penny. *A Critical History of French Children's Literature.* Routledge, 2008. 3. Kindle Edition.

[26] Leprince de Beaumont, Jeanne-Marie. *Le Magasin des enfants* (Paris : Delarue [1757] 1859). http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb30796044h.

[27] Montgomery, *Introduction to Childhood,* 134. See also,

[28] Barker, Emma.'Imaging Childhood in Eighteenth-Century France: Greuze's Little Girl with a Dog,' *The Art Bulletin* 91 no. 4(2009): 426-445. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27801639.

[29] Barker, '*Imaging Childhood.'*

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