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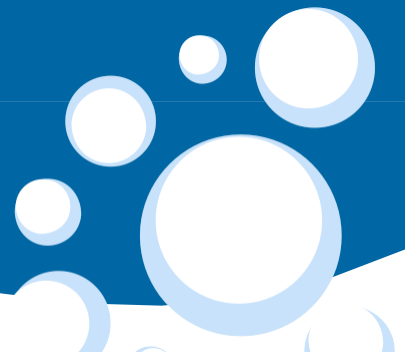
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Editorial

Welcome to this ‘Theory and Philosophy Network’ issue of the SERA Researching Education Bulletin. As network convenors we were keen to encourage educationalists from Scotland and beyond to share their ideas, interests, and recent work in the Theory and Philosophy of Education so that we could give readers a taste of the diverse interests represented in the field today.

Our hope is to stimulate fresh conversations about the importance of theory and philosophy to education globally. So, we invited contributors to respond to the broad provocation: ‘What’s the use of the philosophy of education?’ Of course, questions are never neutral. While many readers might be intrigued to know how educationalists attempt to justify theoretical and philosophical reflections, others will wonder how the form of the question frames the responses. For a start, why should philosophy be ‘useful’? (Is art useful? Can we put love to use?) Some of the most important and profound of human experiences seem to exist outside the utilitarian economy. But is education such a thing? It seemed to us that these questions are as compelling as ever perhaps gaining a new urgency insofar as we consider this a, “utilitarian age”.

Some authors address the provocation of the question head on. Kenklies queries the ‘use’ in the question, exploring the roots of ‘theory’, and showing that there is no option but to engage with theory in life: it seems to be part and parcel of our mode of being. I’Anson and Jasper call for a re-understanding of education itself as part of the contribution of theory. Tempting as it is to define education in terms of other disciplines, to present education not as a discipline, but as a field which other disciplines (psychology; sociology; history) occupy: it is whether Philosophy vis-à-vis the philosophy of education draws us away from an ‘educational’ approach in itself that is an interesting question. Other authors saw in the question, an invitation to make theory and philosophy impactful: that theoretically and/or philosophically engaged education could serve the fight against injustice, for example. Echoing Marx, Walsh worries that theory and philosophy of education have been too concerned about conceptualisation and not enough on action.

Theory and philosophy could also provide resistance to our increasingly technicised educational culture, thus authors examine the influence of a narrow view of education on the psychology of human development (Bates) and call for broadening the space for the theoretical analysis of learning (Firth) and for the complex engagements of teaching practice (Furman and Cammarano). Here we see welcome attempts to bridge theory and practice, and/or to show that the dichotomy is a false one. Schooling is a typical site for examining educational practice and raises a host of ethical and philosophical issues, one of which being ‘Trust’

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(Haynes). But school is not the only site for educational practice, of course. The study of education is the study of those many places in which educational influences are in effect: school, the home, the park, the theatre, the shopping mall, even the self. Frimberger offers a somewhat personal account of the role philosophy of education has in helping to explore the dynamics of self-understanding, a context of deep and complex educational practice. Choi also explores identity formation, but that of the international student. At a slightly more abstract level, theory and philosophy is inevitably expressed within policy, and the complex interactions between our theoretical and policy framings are discussed by two contributors, Adams (policy staging) and Spicksley (performative speech).

This short introduction gives a glimpse into the briefings that follow. We invite the readers to cast their eyes across the theoretical and philosophical vistas of these authors, to take up the spectacles that theoretical and philosophical reflection offer in the hope that we may catch sight of education with new eyes.

David Lewin (University of Strathclyde) & Philip Tonner (University of Glasgow)
SERA Theory & Philosophy Network

Education policy: theory, action and all that jazz

Paul Adams (University of Strathclyde)

Much has been written over the last thirty years about policy sociology from musings on how policy might be ‘implemented’ to narratives on matters such as policy ‘enactment’ (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2011) and policy positioning (Adams, 2016). Policy sociology has developed systematic ways of theorising policy that contrast with previously held policy science narratives (Fay, 1975). These approaches question the ways by which individuals and groups live with policy and emphasise engagement with ‘action’. This theorising conjoins policy *to* theory and shifts thinking on the former away from simple implementation. That the above is deemed ‘sociological’ is probably a moot point. Indeed, we may ask how philosophy might

‘...illuminate the adequacy or otherwise of what we think we are trying to achieve and why we wish to accomplish it [to] help us grasp the significance or otherwise of our undertakings’.

Thus, the reasons we have,

‘...can help us establish the wisdom or foolishness of our policy endeavours’ (Fielding, 2000: 377).

However, *in practice* theorising is not always enlightening for there are occasions when theory is used to dominate; by reducing autonomy, eliding agency, or emboldening autocracy. Calls for evidence-informed-policy for example, can be as much a reinforcement of dominant research and political narratives as they are a support for shifts in the circulation of power away from elites. There is a need to acknowledge that often evidence-informed-policy is in fact policy-informed-evidence.

Implicit above is a case for a recognition of policy heuristics to generate discussion of policy forms and functions, and the clarification of possible ways of being and knowing, methodology and intent. Historically, ‘policy implementation’ revolved around identifying a problem implementing a solution, and subsequent evaluation. Such, ‘Stagist,’ perspectives, delineated and ordered issues deemed susceptible to policy involvement through the identification and creation of solutions, their implementation and outcome evaluation (Adams, 2014). Such heuristics promote historical (and contemporary) rational and linear observations both of and for human nature. While they provide comforting formational mechanisms for ‘policy implementation’, problematically empirical research often draws attention to their failings, illuminating instead the contextual situatedness of policy.

Challenging policy heuristics (e.g. Ball et al., 2011) denotes the contingent inherent in and through ‘policy’ and the ‘policy process’. Such theorising promotes ways of ‘thinking and doing policy’ that question the simple

linearity of Stagist approaches in favour of perspectives borne of a circulatory appreciation of agency, autonomy, and power. Such ‘situated’ methods confer on actors therein ways of realising policy as both intellectual and practical. The former is clear; indeed, the latter stems from such theoretical offerings in that they realise the circulatory nature of human life.

It might be observed here that lines can be drawn between a belief in rationality, linearity, and procedure (Stagism) on the one hand, and a desire to import into policy understanding, messiness, flexibility, and contingency on the other. We might further note such counterpoints as ‘attempts to maximise probability’ in the former and ‘attempts to realise possibilities’ in the latter.

Problematically, though, the choice here is not a simple matter: Stagist approaches seemingly offer social and political surety while the latter social and political complication. Here theorising is not a neutral act for it signals intent both by those theorising and those receiving theory. The adoption of mechanisms to engage with and ‘enact’ policy (Ball et. al., 2011) are socio-political endeavours for they mark out ways of seeing the world. Thus, Stagism offers the surety of rational-empirical methodology while enactment offers the messiness of (perhaps) social constructionist perspectives (Adams, 2014).

Theory offers insights into more than just policy action: it moves debate away from simple ‘think, do, review’ approaches towards ways of understanding policy ontology and policy epistemology. However, enactment theories still bind onto preconceived ideas about the primacy of ‘the policy’. They start from ‘tangible form’ resultant from leadership or elite perspectives.

For sure, those ‘in power’ have always offered ‘us’ social, economic, cultural and political frames as ways of seeing the world (Adams, 2016). These in turn are ‘explained’ (Adams, 2016) to ‘us’ through missive, communication, pleading or even coercion. These offer ‘positions’ (Harré, 2004) crafted by such frames and explanations, but which also in turn craft the frames and explanations themselves anew. We do not encounter these positions statically; we ‘are them’ daily in the way we conduct our lives. Accordingly, the Big-D/Discourses (Gee, 2012) offered by frames and explanations (the ways we come to enact specific socially recognizable identities engaged in specific socially recognizable activities (Gee 2012, 152)) shift and turn; they shape and reshape themselves and ‘us’, and the very frames and explanations they seek to note. What was ‘said’ before does not always equate with what is ‘said’ now or what will be ‘said’ in the future.

Specifically, within such positionings are ‘professionals’, the ones tasked with sense-making into action and

here policy-theory offers another view that realises the interconnectedness of humankind and the moment-by-moment shifting little-d/discourses (Gee, 2012) (discursive or conversational moments) that form and reform policy anew, as local position, via attempts to understand that which is, seemingly, given. This latter perspective, ‘policy as positioning’ is embedded in the possibly fleeting, often changing existence that is professional deliberation and action. While it might seem to bestow unending levels of agency on professionals, it should be remembered that the positions offered by frames and explanations can be constraining or open; the positions Discourses offer may in fact seek to, and be successful in, reducing response. Similarly, the positions offered by the discursive moment can be liberating or constraining. What this approach does do, however, is locate theory *as formed in discourse*: it is through human interaction in an attempt to understand that policy is *locally* formed. Policy ontology and epistemology are considered as necessary to policy formation.

Theory, then, offers policy much. On the one hand it extols ways of understanding processes that can seek to deny or elevate agency, etc. On the other, it offers ways of understanding the formational processes at the heart of human action. In short it asks us ‘does policy speak to us, or do we speak to policy’?

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Trust in schooling

Bruce Haynes

Past efforts to improve schooling have tended to focus on more funding to improve teachers' conditions and facilities and more empirical research to create a science of teaching. Half a century of the former and a century of the latter, have failed to produce satisfactory results. The various stakeholders in schooling do not seem to be more satisfied now than they have been in the past. So what would it take to make trust an important notion in the conception and conduct of schooling?

Peter Baker (2020), Chief White House Correspondent for the NY Times, wrote before the November 2020 US election "Mr. Trump's successor ... could face a broader crisis in faith, challenged to re-establish credibility with overseas allies and adversaries, while presiding over a country where truth has been broken down into tribes and much of the public has been conditioned to distrust institutions of all sorts."

In a post-truth world of a kind identified by Baker, where knowledge based on truth is suspect, where policy is more often based on populist assertion than on trusted expertise, and where generalised trust in institutions is diminished, we are faced with a situation where current ways of thinking about schooling seems to have failed and shows little prospect of turning things around. In order to rethink schooling, and its relation with society more generally, useful work needs to be done by those interested in theory and philosophy of education.

Lee McIntyre (2018, back cover advertisement), a Boston University philosopher, "argues provocatively that the right wing borrowed from postmodernism—specifically, the idea that there is no such thing as objective truth—in its attacks on science and facts. McIntyre argues that we can fight post-truth, and that the first step in fighting post-truth is to understand it."

However it is not enough to identify the distortions of postmodernism by a former US President who is pathologically incapable of acting within the constraints of truth or consideration of other people, or the ideological frameworks of 74 million Americans who voted for him, or the political and social views of many around the world who likewise have abandoned democracy, liberalism, globalisation, science, education, and the like. While it is a useful step, fighting post-truth may be something of a Tar-Baby (Wikipedia) in which the more one engages the more one is mired in fruitless activity. After two millennia of philosophising on knowledge and truth, and particularly after the work of such as Nietzsche, Dewey, Wittgenstein and the postmoderns, there seems no immediate prospect of making sufficient progress

establishing a working consensus about knowledge and truth upon which to base a reconception of self, school and society.

Rather than reworking the established conceptual frameworks that have failed to stem various problems besetting schooling, such as accountability as performativity, STEM, relativism, vocationalism and the like, it may be a better bet to look at schooling quite differently. Instead of looking at knowledge based on truth, inquiry as the pursuit of truth, logic grounded in truth, it may be more useful to look at trust relations more generally to see how schooling may look from that perspective. A reconceptualization of self, schooling and society in terms of trust relations would serve as a basis for different empirical research into the workings of schooling and recommendations for improvement.

One of the great attractions of truth as a concept on which to base judgements and actions is that, once established, it endures without need for reconsideration. One of the obvious limitations of trust-based judgements and actions is that it is contingent and subject to reconsideration. Trust, unlike truth, admits of degree (sufficient unto the need thereof) and can be established in a timely fashion suited to the existing conditions. For those who embrace change as the condition of life, trust is a more amenable notion than truth. For those who seek perfection and the eternal verities as a basis for life, trust is likely to be a more problematic notion.

In the past 25 years there has been significant work done by philosophers on the concept of trust and it could be useful if this were taken seriously in theory and philosophy of education. Initially, trust was seen as a moral notion and, in many cases, it is. Recent work has extended consideration of trust to matters such as self-trust, trust-based knowledge, trust in testimony, and generalised social trust (see, for instance, recent publications edited by Haynes, B. and by Simon, J.).

To get some idea of the magnitude of the task confronting theorists and philosophers of education, what would the educated person look like if conceived of in terms of trust relations? That requires both an account of a person in terms of trust and an account of education in terms of trust relations. What trust relations are important if schooling is to facilitate the production of such educated persons? What would a teacher do in a classroom that is seen as a complex network of trust relations within and outside the classroom? What would a trust-based curriculum look like and its attendant conception of knowledge and skill? What account of society can be given both with trust relations with specific institutions and generalised trust as a condition for a person operating in a functioning economy and society?

Many contemporary societies (but not all) noted a marked decline in trust in recent decades only to see something of a recovery of generalised social trust in the face of the COVID 19 Pandemic. I believe that we cannot rely on this benefit of the Pandemic alone to bring about desirable change in schooling and the society it serves. Substantial work by theorists and philosophers of education is needed to clarify and elaborate the ways in which trust works in our society and to indicate how research might enlighten us as to how we may improve trust-based schooling.

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The ‘magic’ of grandmother’s spectacles: how philosophy can help us to see children with new eyes

Agnieszka Bates

So much of our educational practice has been influenced by the work of developmental psychologists. Lesson plans and whole syllabi are still infused with Piagetian thinking about children’s age-related *readiness* to learn. For example, children are considered ‘intellectually ready’ to learn to read (Roberts, 1976: 246) when they demonstrate knowledge of letters and sounds, as well as an interest in books and the ability to retell simple stories and play with sounds. To ‘compute’ meaning from print, children then have to master a range of skills: ‘decoding, word identification, meaning retrieval, sentence parsing, inferring, and comprehension monitoring, along with the interaction of these processes with each other, and with knowledge and cognitive resources such as memory’ (Castles et al., 2015: 28). This understanding is modelled on Piagetian notions of structured stages in child development: from early childhood, which Piaget saw as lacking in ‘systematisation’ and ‘coherence’ (1929: 25), to the mature stage characterised by the sophisticated cognitive capabilities of adults.

Merleau-Ponty’s alternative understanding of children’s *readiness* to learn

In his critique of Piagetian thinking, the philosopher Merleau-Ponty cautioned that childhood is a time of rich learning possibilities that could get lost in a rigid, adult-based perspective. Children, he argued, should be understood on their own terms and not as ‘immature’ intellectual and emotional beings on a journey towards the ‘mature’ stage of adulthood. Merleau-Ponty, therefore, sought to turn Piagetian thinking on its head. For example, Piaget claimed that, prior to gaining a ‘scientific’ understanding of the world, children are drawn to ‘irrational’, magical explanations and are prone to fantasy. However, rather than relegating the ‘irrational’ and ‘magical’ to the inferior status of ‘immature’ thinking, Merleau-Ponty sought to highlight the rich learning possibilities inherent in children’s understanding of the world. He illustrated his approach through a children’s story about a small boy who put on his grandmother’s spectacles and opened her book to ‘see’ the stories that she had read to him. However, to his great disappointment, where he expected to find a story, there was ‘nothing but black and white’. As Merleau-Ponty explains:

For the child the ‘story’ and the thing expressed are not ‘ideas’ or ‘meanings’, nor are speaking or reading ‘intellectual operations’. The story is a world which there must be some way of magically calling up by putting on spectacles and leaning over a book. (2002: 467)

For children, reading takes on meanings that go beyond ‘computing meaning from print’ to encompass both

the ‘magic’ of the social connection, such as between the boy and his grandmother, and the child’s imagination, which may wane as his reasoning develops. Contrary to Piagetian thinking, child development is not a transition from ‘ignorance to knowledge’ but rather from a ‘polymorphous phase that contained all possibilities’ to a ‘purified, more defined’ but a ‘much poorer’ phase of adulthood (Merleau-Ponty, 2010: 37). Developmental psychology conceives reading as developing a mastery of decoding text and other intellectual operations. For Merleau-Ponty, imagination and the motivation to ‘put on grandmother’s spectacles’ and ‘open the book’ are key to the child’s *readiness* to read. Importantly, reading is a social experience involving the child in relations with others. Similar to playing, reading invites the child to share in the experiences of characters in a story, to live ‘for a moment in the other and not only... for his own benefit’ (2010: 25). The ‘magic’ of grandmother’s spectacles lies in the ‘firing up’ of children’s imagination and fostering their understanding of other people, rather than rigid adherence to activities sequenced according to pre-defined developmental stages. There are six-year-olds who are able to engage in abstract thinking and conversely, adults who appear to be stuck in the ‘egocentric’ stage that Piaget ascribed to children.

Implications for practice

To answer Merleau-Ponty’s call to see children ‘with new eyes’ and inspire them to learn, we first need to be aware of the dangers of imposing adult categorisations on reading and reading material that may disengage children. Encouraging children to ‘open the book’ and engage their imagination should form a critical aspect of early years education. The success of this practice depends on caring pupil-teacher relationships and secure learning environments (Education Scotland, 2020). The importance of stories in children’s learning can be seen not just in the context of learning to read but in learning across the curriculum. For example, has something been lost in the ‘solid’, factual knowledge approach to teaching history or science promoted by advocates of the *Core Knowledge* curriculum (Finn and Petrilli, 2004)? No doubt factual knowledge is extremely important but what of cross-curricular narrative accounts and play pedagogies that foster children’s interests and motivations?

The overarching point here is the critical importance of considering alternative theoretical perspectives derived from diverse disciplines. Merleau-Ponty’s critique of Piagetian ‘truths’ does not imply that the knowledge and techniques of developmental psychology are of little value; the ‘only thing under attack is the dogmatism of a science that thinks itself capable of absolute and complete knowledge’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2004: 45). To preserve the ‘magic’ of learning, we need to be wary of ‘dogmatic’ approaches to theory that lead to ‘dogmatic’ approaches to educational practice.

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The theory behind evidence-based practice – going beyond the surface level

Jonathan Firth (University of Strathclyde)

When preparing teachers for practice, there are various options regarding the level of theoretical depth that teacher-educators provide. In this article, I will argue that developing a theoretical understanding of human cognition can help teachers to make better decisions about which strategy to use, and when. My view differs from that held by researchers such as Willingham (2017), who argued that teacher-educators “should stick to basic empirical findings” (p. 171) and eschew theory, which, he believes, is hard to understand and likely to be misapplied.

Research in cognitive psychology has uncovered a number of promising techniques that stand to improve classroom attainment (e.g. Dunlosky et al., 2013). For example, *the spacing effect* is where practice is distributed over a longer period of time rather than being intensive, and *interleaving* is where diverse examples are contrasted rather than examples presented in blocks of the same type.

Both of these techniques are founded on a strong body of evidence, and are associated with large effect sizes in comparison with alternatives (Cepeda et. al., 2006; Firth et. al., 2021). And while it can be argued that both focus on memory, neither is confined to rote memorisation. Applications of the techniques include helping students distinguish between easily-confused concepts, and boosting higher-order skills such as evaluation. However, they are sometimes called ‘desirable difficulties’ because they can make the learning process harder and more error-prone, while improving long-term retention and transfer of what has been learned.

The spacing effect and interleaving are becoming more commonly recommended in popular books about evidence-based teaching practice (e.g. Agarwal & Bain, 2019), as well as on blogs and social media. And it certainly makes sense to tell teachers about these techniques directly; not only do most report little or no prior knowledge of them, the majority do not appear to make a good intuitive judgement about the benefits of the techniques when presented with hypothetical classroom scenarios (Halamish, 2018).

The underlying reason for such misjudgements is that memory is fundamentally counterintuitive in its workings (Bjork, 2011). Learners and teachers are typically unaware that rapid and error-free performance in class does not always indicate secure new learning, and is in fact often negatively correlated with learning (Soderstrom & Bjork, 2015). They may therefore assume that desirable difficulties are best avoided. This is a fundamental and widespread metacognitive error in terms of how classroom techniques are judged.

To address this, I would argue that teachers need a theoretical understanding of human cognition. Teachers need to know what is going on beneath the surface if they are to select classroom techniques appropriately and use them flexibly, and must not be misled into thinking that learner mistakes or difficulty indicate that learning is going badly.

Willingham (2017) argues that while teachers do need a mental model of the learner, this should be a simplified ‘modal model’ (similar to the model presented by Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968), should stick to basic empirical findings, and should present these in terms of “folk constructs” (p. 171) rather than scientific terminology. Willingham (one of the co-authors of the Dunlosky et al paper cited above) would probably support telling teachers about techniques such as the spacing effect, but believes that telling teachers about scientific theories of cognition would lead to their misapplying those theories (p. 169).

The problem with this argument is that there is a lot of nuance as to how and when pedagogical techniques should be used. Interleaving, for example, can make differences between examples more salient to learners, but this advantage disappears when differences are so obvious that no learner would mix them up. The optimal spacing of practice depends on both the subject matter and the learners’ prior knowledge, and teachers need to understand forgetting in order to judge the optimal time to engage in practice (Firth, 2021). The theory that underpins such techniques is both specific and highly generative across different situations; understanding it is likely to help teachers make better classroom decisions.

In my view, then, teacher education should aim to develop an accurate understanding of the underlying theory among teachers. Without such a foundation, their judgements of techniques such as the spacing effect and interleaving are likely to be informed by flawed assumptions due to the fundamentally counterintuitive nature of human memory.

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You have to do this or that, but meanwhile life is just passing by: Methodological correctness and miracles in education research as a human science

Katja Frimberger (University of Strathclyde)

Philosophy has helped my self-understanding as education researcher: I am curious about cultural phenomena like *our intercultural lives* and *the role of our spoken languages* in it, as well as 'artefacts' like films and theatre, and how their processes of *coming into being*, can be understood educationally. A puzzle for me has always been the question of interpretation and representation. How is it possible to get to the 'truth' of cultural phenomena, when they are so bound up in *particular* events, places, relationships and sensations? It is the befuddlements of methodological 'correctness', that led me to turn to philosophy and to ask what words like *truth*, *meaning* and *method* might actually mean. This is the use of theory/philosophy in education for me.

In the company of the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (2013) and his book *Truth and Method*, I was able to name the humanities research tradition - hermeneutics and phenomenology - I was actually part of and distinguish its mode of knowledge creation from that of the (social) scientific tradition. What I had seen as the stubbornly and frustratingly particular, dialogic and situated nature of cultural phenomena, Gadamer, in contrast, did not consider an *obstacle* to objective truth. He appointed this messiness as being at the very heart of the *miracle of understanding* (Gadamer 2013) in the human sciences. It was his unsettling dissolution of the *subject - object relationship* (106), which intrigued me most. It resonated with my own experience of *thrownness* (*Geworfenheit*) - a concept coined by Gadamer's teacher Martin Heidegger (2006). Describing the basic structure of our existence (being) in the world, *Geworfenheit* poses the rather dazzling analytical paradox of how to get far away enough from 'being' to think meaningfully about it. In my everyday thrownness, when facilitating community arts projects, I found myself socially and materially *embedded* in relationships, situations, certain pedagogical and artistic practices, which did not only often suspend purposive relations (e.g. that of researcher-subject; educator-student), but also undermined my search for an Archimedean point of view - wanting to 'look in' on the party.

It was Gadamer's confidence, that the question about the truth of art will shine some light on the question about what knowledge in the human sciences might mean in the face of such thrownness, that kept me engaged. He posits that art is a mode of knowledge that acts differently to that of the other sciences, because it understands itself as being *part of the world*. Art cannot be easily abstracted as sensory data or ideational linguistic or cultural utterance - for coding and systematising - in the way that we might go about *creating*

knowledge in the natural and social sciences. The meaning of art and other cultural phenomena (like my arts projects and your favourite movie), unfolds in our *encounter* with them, within the world of which they speak; a world which we are of course already part of. It is a bit of a circular situation and is described as such – the hermeneutic circle. Encountering art is therefore always also an encounter with ourselves.

Despite this stubborn particularity and situatedness of art, the knowledge it creates cannot be considered subjective *per se*. Namely, it is not merely located in our, the individual's, consciousness. Gadamer gets in fact quite impatient with our modern penchant for subjectivism:

'The "subject" of the experience of art, that which remains and endures [the truth], is not the subjectivity of the person who experiences it but the work itself. This is the point at which the mode of being of play becomes significant.' (107)

If art is knowledge, and encountering an artwork means sharing in that knowledge, how do we do justice to the truth that is revealed within this dialogue (with art, the world and ourselves) - beyond the mere subjectivity of the person?

In order to approach this hermeneutical conundrum, Gadamer puts forward the concept of play. It is meant to help us orient ourselves towards the mode of being of the work of art and the ontology (which just another word for mode of being) of human science knowledge in general. Play, Gadamer insists, exists independently of the subjectivity of the players. It *comes to presentation* in the players, yes, but only when their usual subjective points of view, and the purposive relationships that mark their everyday lives and identities, are momentarily suspended, and they lose themselves in the 'seriousness of play' (ibid). That is to say, the *structure of play*, patterned by the to-and-fro movement that is instigated by its specific rules, regulations and rituals (children's play, a theatre performance or a ritual might be the most obvious examples), absorbs the players into itself - and makes all playing a *being played* (109ff). Take that as a metaphor for research!

This ontological structure of play denotes our *freedom* to take the initiative, of *playing* with seemingly open, but serious possibilities. At the same time, it also reminds us of the limitations to our freedom, of the risk of being 'outplayed' - by the (perhaps unforeseen) consequences of *the game's* rules, our own or other people's actions, or perhaps by general bad timing. Most importantly for Gadamer, we have to keep in mind that the players' conduct is intimately tied to the make-believe goals of the game, which finds its ultimate purpose in *being represented* (but never in a fully perfected state), usually to a (real or imagined)

audience. *Presentation* is thus the mode of being of the work of art, and human science knowledge more

generally (119). It invites a spectator to 'get in touch' and calls for their attention. Within this (potential) joy of recognition - of something of the world and oneself in it - when encountering art 'what we know emerges, as if illuminated, from all contingent and variable circumstances that condition it; it is grasped in its essence. It is known as *something*' (ibid). It is this miracle of understanding that provokes my ever hermeneutically circular, befuddled curiosity about how to think, speak and write education research *as an event* where meaning occurs - joyfully in the face of our existential thrownness. But before you throw up your hands in despair and bewilderment, contemplate these wise words by *Toni Erdmann*, life coach, trickster extraordinaire, and protagonist of the eponymous 2016 German comedy: 'You have to do this or that, but meanwhile life is just passing by'.

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Toni Erdmann (Germany 2016, Maren Ade)

Grounding One's Teaching: Thinking Philosophically As Teachers

Cristina Cammarano (Salisbury University) and Cara Furman (University of Maine)

A group of teachers gather to think and talk. They ponder questions such as, can one pursue meaningful existence in school? What does it mean to be a writer? Is it ethical for a classroom to work well for every child but one? How do we help students prepare for the world as it is, while also changing it? What does it mean to teach for human dignity? How did a particular teaching practice come to be?

These are big questions yielding conversations that are simultaneously difficult, confusing, and promising. Because they draw attention to epistemology, ethics, teleology, and the good life, engaging these questions is a philosophical activity. Where the editors ask, what's the use of philosophy in education, we counter that as much as teaching and philosophy are both engaged in the pursuit of meaningful living, to be a teacher is to be a philosopher. When we don't honor this relationship we strip teaching of an essential dimension. Philosophy, therefore, ought to be part of the preparation and life of teachers. We offer two scenes in which it is.

Scene 1: Descriptive Inquiry

It is Friday afternoon in an urban public school. The child-sized desks have been rearranged into a large oval around the periphery of the room with teachers, paraprofessionals, and the principal filling every seat. I, Cara, a first and second grade teacher, sit in the front of the oval next to my colleague, Cecelia Traugh, who is chairing this session.

We are engaged in Descriptive Inquiry, a practical and philosophically rooted approach to studying teaching practiced in schools, inquiry groups, and a summer Institute.¹ Practical in that the particulars of teaching (a description of a child, teacher's actions, or a piece of work) ground the investigation and we inquire to improve our instruction. Philosophical in that philosophers such as John Dewey and Maurice Merleau-Ponty undergird our work, we pay meticulous attention to process -- responding to an inquiry by speaking descriptively in rounds, and we pursue the ethical underpinnings of teaching questions. I am presenting a Descriptive Review of a Child, Ari,² a first grader who puzzles me. In preparation I have written descriptively about Ari across four headings: physical presence and gesture, disposition and temperament, connections with other people, strong interests and preferences, and modes of thinking and learning. Cecelia has read my description -- pushing me in places to be more descriptive and helping me form the focusing question: How can I provide a sense of emotional safety for Ari while also helping to integrate him into what it means to be

part of a classroom in school (for the sake of his learning and being in a community)? Cecelia has helped me shift my question from the purely logistical -- how do I keep Ari from running out of my room, to the ethical -- how do I help Ari feel part of a larger community and, in feeling more connected, want to stay?

After I read aloud my review, Cecelia asks my colleagues to each describe back what they have heard. She then summarizes their comments before directing the group to my focusing question. Drawing from the descriptions, my colleagues now offer ideas to help Ari feel a part of the community. I sit silently taking it all in.

After the review, I am under no pressure to follow any suggestion but instead trusted to use these insights to find my way. In clarifying my teaching philosophy -- the need for physical and emotional safety and for people to be in community with others-- my practice shifts. I begin responding to Ari's running away by commenting that we miss him. I ask peers who Ari likes to check on him in the hallway and share that he is missed. I give Ari permission to leave activities when he feels overwhelmed and reiterate the loss of his presence. Finally, I set up a basket of games (like Jenga) that can be played quickly and offer that any child can take a break with a peer when they are agitated. Through the review I found a way to better connect my philosophy (that we benefit from social engagement) with my conduct as a teacher and, in doing so, life at school improved for all of us.

Scene 2: Philosophy in Schools

For some years now my philosophy department at a college in rural Maryland has regularly engaged with the local k-12 schools. Philosophy undergraduates help out the high school philosophy club, and visit elementary and middle school classrooms to organize philosophy-based activities. I loosely follow a pedagogy proposed by Matthew Lipman and Ann Sharp, known as Philosophy for Children (P4C), inspired by John Dewey's pragmatist conceptions of inquiry.³ Occasionally, I am asked to teach professional development workshops such as "how to have difficult conversations about ethics with adolescents" for the high school math department or "how to incorporate critical thinking in your teaching through games" for elementary school teachers. I am always surprised and honored when invited because despite my "skill-oriented" titles, these workshops are really an occasion to sit down as teachers and philosophize together.

In 2018 a large grant facilitated a week-long Philosophy Summer Institute for Teachers. My good friend and fellow P4C practitioner Stephanie Burdick-Shepherd helped with planning and teaching the institute. As with Cara's story, Stephanie and I sought the spaces where philosophy and teaching overlapped. Our teachers would experience first-hand the rewards and efforts of joint philosophical inquiry, while also sharing

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materials and methods with direct relevance to the classroom. Yet, while they appreciated the practical methods, it was the long, free-floating inquiries in our new small community that they named as central and critical to their experience. They expressed a desire to keep these philosophizing spaces open with monthly “Philosophy Happy Hours,” hosted at my department. In this way, a group of local teachers has shown me that philosophy is indeed a vital part of the good life of teaching.

Our different experiences are calls for, and affirmations of, philosophically grounded inquiry for teachers. We described two different approaches in which philosophy is appreciated and cultivated by teachers, helping them, in the words of one teacher, “stay grounded.” The question of whether there is a use for philosophy might be addressed by experiences like the ones we described. In sharing different methods with similar underlying goals, we hope to have demonstrated how philosophy is beneficial for educators in their local communities.

What is it to think and practice educationally? The Three Elements Heuristic

John I'Anson (University of Stirling) and Alison Jasper (University of Stirling)

The aim of this paper is to put theory to work so as to raise the question: what is it to think and practice educationally?

In recent times we have become so accustomed to seeing schools, colleges and universities positioned as sites for the promotion of policies ranging from health and wellbeing, equity and inclusion to employability, amongst much else, that to raise the question as to *what education consists in* might seem rather odd, and even misguided. This is in part because Anglo-American thinking about education has tended to position 'education' as a second order activity, playing second fiddle to - and being dependent upon - other subjects such as Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology, and History, rather than being conceived as a discipline in its own right (1). And so the current tendency to see education as a site for the promulgation of other-than-educational activities and purposes could be seen as being in line with this orientation.

Of course, the Anglo-American approach isn't the only approach to education: continental traditions of education(2), have instead tended to characterise 'Education' as a discipline in its own right, with its own characteristic matters of concern and associated modes of inquiry. So, in thinking about what the educational consists in, is it a simple choice between, on the one hand, education as instrumental, (the Anglo-American approach) or education as a specific discipline in its own right (the continental approach, broadly conceived)?

We argue that it is desirable to articulate *a middle way* to thinking and practising education in-between these alternatives, such that education has its own distinctive and characteristic concerns whilst drawing upon a broad range of disciplinary areas – as a subject that is fundamentally interdisciplinary in scope. This is to conceive disciplinarity in a way put forward by Doreen Massey (1999), as defined less by its borders *than by its relations to others*, deliberately multiplying these lines of connection. This is also to take up the question as to what an *educational milieu* might consist in, as articulated by Dewey (1948).

Here, 'the educational' is characterised less by appeal to specific disciplinary resources, traditions, or territories, than by the mode of its engagement with, and negotiation of, certain problematics and

mysteries. In the light of this, one way of identifying ‘the educational’ is through identifying how this might guide action within a certain milieu.

Approached in this way, a key task becomes the identification, description and mobilisation of guides for action (heuristics) that might inform practices that are characterised as educational. One way of conceiving this is through the ‘three elements of education heuristic’ (I’Anson and Jasper, 2017)(3), as involving the mutual interaction of the critical, ethical and experimental elements:

- i. *The critical element* entails a willingness to question our own point of view as well as that of others; to this extent, this involves trying to make explicit where we stand through teasing out assumptions that might otherwise be invisible.
- ii. *The ethical element* raises questions re. our responsibilities and obligations to other(s) given that we are deeply imbricated in webs of relations. These relations include our relations to other humans and broader planetary entanglements.
- iii. *The experimental element* explores the implications of translating ideas and concepts into practice. It is often difficult to anticipate what will happen without actually trying something out. It is therefore necessary to look for opportunities to translate ideas into practice, to see what difference this might make, acknowledging how reality might ‘talk back’, and drawing conclusions in the light of this.

For something to be considered ‘educational’, it is necessary for each of these elements to be in dynamic interaction. Thus, the heuristic can be used a tool for inquiring into *the extent to which* a given initiative or policy imperative is ‘educational’ as such. So, for example, a policy such as *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* (Scottish Government, 2012) can be analysed using the heuristic to determine the extent to which this it is *educational* as such (4).

Beyond policy analysis, the heuristic has much broader applicability in regard to thinking through issues of educational practice and what makes research distinctively educational.

Notes

1. On the Anglo-American approach see the classic approach articulated by Hirst (2010) and overview, Standish (2007).
2. On ‘continental’ traditions of education: *Didaktik*, Hudson (2007); *Bildung*, Alves

(2019); *Erziehung*, and overview, Biesta (2011).

3. The heuristic is also part of a broader project, with which the authors are currently engaged, which aims to articulate a poetics of education.
4. See I'Anson (2018) for an analysis of *GIRFEC* using the three elements heuristic.

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What's the use of Theory and Philosophy of Education?

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In the way the question is formulated, one begins to wonder: Why would it be relevant whether or not something is 'useful'? And 'useful' for whom, with regard to what? The choice of words seems to insinuate that, just like Achilles, we have to fatefully choose a way of action, as if one could *do* Theory and Philosophy of Education – or not, which would then demand a decision based on musings about the usefulness of both for something, or someone.

Alas, this is, of course, not the case. Whereas Achilles did indeed have a choice – and we all know which path he chose – there is no choice about Theory and Philosophy of Education. Whatever the 'use' might be of both (if there is one at all), there is no choice. "*Why is that?*", one might ask. To answer that, some words need to be discussed.

What does *theory* mean? Etymologically related to words like *theorein* ('to look at') and *theoros* ('spectator'), the word was originally used to denote acts of observing something or looking at something. However, it was then in the discussions of the so-called *philosophers*, especially Aristotle, that the word took on an almost mythical aura of relevance – without being entirely clear (Roochnik 2009). Coming from here, the notion has been used throughout the centuries in a variety of meanings. Eventually, it was wedded to the idea of (natural) science and, somewhat later, to the Social Sciences and Humanities, which were now perceived to be producing theories, in opposition to mere beliefs or speculations, about the world. Here, *theories* are then (depending on the view of the academic discipline): a collection of (axiomatic) sentences; a collection of (non-linguistic) models; or an amorphous entity including maybe sentences and models, but also exemplars, problems, standards, skills, practices and tendencies. (Savage, 1990) Or, in short: theories are the 'scientific/academic' way of talking about the world, distinguished from 'normal' ways of talking about the world by academic criteria of precision, truth, and acceptability.

Such a distinction of science and non-science can, and should, be challenged, and on closer inspection, one might end up with a very broad idea of *theory* as proposed by P. Feyerabend (1981b: vii) according to which, *theories* are "systems of thought, forms of life, frameworks", "including] myths, political ideas, religious systems" (Feyerabend, 1981a: 105, n.5). This perhaps becomes even more obvious when remembering that already a mere description of 'what there is' has to use concepts, i.e. complex ideas embedded in greater frameworks of meaning, when referring to the world. There is no 'theory-free'

description. Or, in other words: Every notional interpretation of what is ‘in front of us’ in any given moment is based on certain theories inasmuch as it is dependent on concepts that become meaningful only in a wider horizon of meaning; e.g. a seemingly simple description like ‘The child plays happily.’ needs rich concepts of ‘child’, ‘play’, and ‘happiness’ – and a certain understanding of what an activity is, i.e. some process extended over a certain period of time. And, of course, in extension, this means that every reflection on education is also inevitably based on theories deemed to be relevant for such specific reflections, i.e. theories of education. There simply is no choice: We cannot choose between using or not using theories in even the most common event of education (if ‘education’ is to be more than a mere instinctive way of re/acting to a situation without reflection, i.e. if it is an act that is based on an interpretation of the situation).

The only choice we may have is regarding the level of awareness of our interpretations and the extent to which our interpretations and *theories* govern our acting in this or that situation. But without *theory*, there is no education ... without *theory*, there is no world to speak of.

What about *philosophy*? Is *philosophy* useful in educational matters? Is a *Philosophy of Education* of any relevance? The answer to this question does, of course, again depend on the meaning one would like to give to the notions of *philosophy* in general and *Philosophy of Education* in particular. Neither are very clear. Etymologically derived from the Greek, *philosophia*, i.e. love of wisdom, the notion has been bestowed with as many different definitions as people claiming to engage with it. One approach has always been the attempt to define certain areas of knowledge, i.e. certain areas of questioning the world, which make up *philosophy* as a specific field or discipline. Sometimes it is the trinity of ‘What is true?’, ‘What is good?’, and ‘What is beautiful?’ that apparently encircles the field *philosophical* inquiry is interested in. Later, specific notions for distinct areas mapping out the horizon of *philosophy* were introduced, like Ethics, Epistemology, Metaphysics (or Ontology), and Aesthetics – only to be followed by an uncountable number of composite words, like *Philosophy of Education*, *Philosophy of Mind*, *Philosophy of Mathematics*, *of Science*, *of Biology*, or *Political Philosophy*, *Social Philosophy*, etc.

Defining an area seems futile. And indeed, it may be easier to understand *philosophy* more as an activity, as *philosophizing*. And it was indeed a specific kind of activity for which one of the seminal *philosophers* was admired, and despised, and killed. Socrates was loved for relentlessly asking questions (often in the form of: ‘What do you mean when you say ...?’), for confusing people, for destroying much-loved convictions – and he was killed for this very activity as, apparently, it was corrupting the youth of Athens. If we therefore understand *philosophy* as *philosophizing* – as this very Socratic activity to engage in relentless questioning of all and everything – then what is it good for in general, and what would it be

good for in relation to education?

I would be inclined to say: It doesn't matter what it is good for – simply because, again, it is not a choice people make. They do not choose to *philosophize* or to not *philosophize*. Those who do usually cannot help themselves. They are intrigued, puzzled, and driven to ask all those questions. They are driven so much that sometimes they try, in vain, to escape (by climbing mountains, mix with 'simple' folk, or by meditating themselves out of their own minds). Those who are not driven, won't engage with those kind of questions – not convinced by even the long explanations of apparent usefulness that those who cannot stop engaging with it see in it.

'Usefulness' is just the rational coat into which some people wrap themselves to hide their overwhelming desires to question and to know under a fig leaf (admittedly a very old tradition). As such, it is already justified: it answers to an urge that cannot be silenced, and there is a good reason why Classic ideas of *philosophizing* are closely related to Classic ideas of *eros* as a forceful and overwhelming 'daimon'. (Belfiore 2012) And the times when we had to defend the erotic in terms of usefulness are over – one would hope.

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International students' identity negotiation and the production of new identities over transnational space

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With increasing global mobility over physical and digital spaces, international students have constituted a large portion of internationalised higher education. The roles of international students in internationalised higher education vary from the stakeholder of higher education to the object of consumerism of internationalised higher education.

Beyond the neoliberal ethos which alienates international students as temporary 'sojourners' (Siu 1952) for the educational capital from higher education, more profound understanding of the potentiality of international students as agents is needed. In this sense, it is necessary to excavate international students' identity negotiation over transnational physical and digital spaces such as higher education institutions and social media platforms. The essence of identity negotiation is an individual variety of how to interact with surrounding contexts. Existing studies (Gomes, 2015; Schweisfurth & Gu, 2009; Spurling, 2006) explored the relationship between international students as agents and their differing contexts, but few of them have provided an elaborative analysis of the specific process of identity negotiation. As Onyx et al. (2016) note, the cause of the identity negotiation mechanism has been in question.

The study argues that international students may experience identity transformation in a new context through psychic and collective individuation. Based on Simondon (1989; 2005), the paper analyses the four international students' cases using concepts: (1) metastability, (2) transduction, and (3) psychic and collective individuation. Metastability refers to the state of instability with unevenly distributed energy. Transduction triggered by information occurs at a metastable phase through which actual changes of identities are made. One's pre-individual potential is activated by interactions with their associated milieus.

Simondon's psychic and collective individuation theory enables us to understand the micro- and macro-aspects of identity negotiation by seeing individuation as a fundamental element of self-transformation. It explains fluidity and changeability of identities and the co-occurrence and co-existence of multiple identities. In addition, psychic and collective individuation theory highlights the significance of pre-individual potential and individual singularity in interacting with contexts.

Drawing on Simondon (1989; 2005), Bowden (2012) points out the processes of individuation is complex as

it takes place at a single level in a physical system and also at an indirect and hierarchical way in the living being. The intensity of relations characterises the process of individuation. Another key factor in psychic and collective individuation is how an agent processes quality information.

Simondon's theory explains why and how identities keep changing by showing processual actualisation of potentials. It highlights not only individual singularity but multiplicities formed through (1) actualisation of individual potential, (2) relationships with the collective reality as well as an internal self, and (3) the genesis of becoming. In particular, the theory places emphasis on 'becoming'. Simondon (1989) argues that an individual is not an entity created with a fixed form and qualities, but an ongoing process of becoming through continuous interplay with internal and external milieus.

Through a two-year long longitudinal study, I detail the individual uniqueness of psychic and collective individuation processes. The research findings unfold that 'becoming' takes place to each international student in a diverse manner. My focus, in particular, is on spatiotemporality of international students' becoming and how international students negotiate their sense of belonging.

First, international students create their own new psychic and collective space where they embrace locality and globality at the same time and generate new identities such as multimodal everyday cosmopolitanism. For example, Anisha from India actualised her preindividual potential such as sociability, leadership, and compassion through her volunteering at Oxfam. In addition, based on her lived experiences to overcome others' cultural prejudices, Anisha argued that we need everyday cosmopolitanism to exercise our generosity and tolerance in everyday experiences. Similarly, James from Mauritius generated new identities through a melange of diverse cultures from different parts of the world. He took Korean food he ate in the UK as an example: James maintained that such a new culture becomes part of him and helps him continue 'becoming.' The recognition shows psychic individuation of an individual extended to a different level of collective individuation in which an individual takes a variety of cultures in their associated milieus.

Identity negotiation through psychic individuation develops into collective individuation. Jinwoo, a Korean student, for example, realised that patriotism and nationalism can be connected to cosmopolitanism through his active participation in activities over physical and digital spaces. Jinwoo pointed out his country's long-lasting motto, 'Hongik-Ingan', the values to benefit all human beings, can be applied to not only Koreans but also all the people in the world.

In a similar vein, James, with a vision to be part of international leadership, realised he was able to

contribute to others who needed concern and help by actively participating in a student-led international society. In the process of effort to find out his potential, James became interested in the public campaigns for women victims of acid attacks or breast cancer. On his coming to the UK as a university student, his concerns were turned into action in practice sparked by his latent leadership and volunteering motivation. Furthermore, such psychic individuation at each individual level may transform the collective identities of a community, a society and the world. Regarding this, James indicated that the UK has also been changing in its perceptions on cultural diversity by having international students.

In conclusion, the study explores how international students interact with their new milieus and how they transform themselves in the process of making relations and participating in activities in terms of psychic and collective individuation. In this process, international students become more agentic to make their voices heard and to resolve problems that emerge while reconstructing new identities and new relationships with external milieus. International students find a new self from the process of psychic and collective individuation and experience continuous 'becoming'. Moreover, they may contribute to shaping new collectivity by applying multimodal everyday cosmopolitanism into practice.

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Education Policy and Speech as Action

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The expansion of the academy programme has ensured that communities denied a choice of good schools have at last been given the schools they deserve. Michael Gove (2014, n.p.)

How does this comment make you feel? Proud? Frustrated? Pleased? Annoyed? In this article, I'm going to explore how speech act theory, a field of philosophy concerned with speech and response, can prompt those working in education to reflect deeply on the impact of political language.

This article is about how using speech act theory, a branch of philosophy which has been particularly influential within linguistics, can help us to think differently about what policymakers say. Rather than rushing to prove politicians wrong, or right, speech act theory helps us to instead think about the possible consequences of political speech within the social world, on people's feelings, beliefs, and behaviours. Speech act theory can help education researchers to clarify exactly why they may be uncomfortable or unconvinced by a political claim – is it because the claim is untrue, or is it because the claim may have a negative social impact?

Much education research assumes that political claims are either true or false. Take, for example, Stephen Gorard's work on the effectiveness of academies, which disputes political claims about the effectiveness of academy schools (Gorard, 2014). Such research is, of course, very useful and necessary – it is important that politicians are held to account, and that their claims are not taken at face value. But it rests on the assumption that political speech is primarily *constative* – that is, that it should be proved right or wrong.

An alternative way of understanding Gove's pronouncement would be to understand his speech as *performative*, actioning changes in the social world. Looking at his utterance from this angle, we can see how his speech hierarchically places academies as superior to other types of schools. The social effect of such speech could be to damage confidence in schools which are not academies, facilitating the growth of the academy programme. Regardless of whether Gove's words are true or false, they have an effect on the social world.

This distinction, between constative and performative utterances, was introduced by the philosopher of language J.L. Austin in a series of lectures at Harvard, posthumously published as *How to Do*

Things With Words (Austin, 1975). By understanding political speech as performative we can start to ‘disentangle the question of truth value from the question of performative effect’ (Sedgwick, 2003, 129). In other words, we can turn our attention to what speech *does*, rather than whether it is true or not. Rather than immediately questioning whether political claims are right or wrong, we turn our attention to the effect of these claims on how people feel and behave. In doing so, we engage with the philosophical field of speech act theory, a theoretical approach which can be usefully employed in education studies to understand not only the motives behind what people say, but how and why people respond in certain ways.

The performative utterance

At this point, it is probably worthwhile pausing, and taking a moment to define what is meant by ‘performative utterance.’ Austin argued that performative utterances met two conditions:

- A. they do not ‘describe’ or ‘report’ or constate anything at all, are not ‘true’ or ‘false’; and*
- B. the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not normally be described as, or as ‘just’, saying something.* Austin (1975, 5, emphasis in text)

Austin gave some examples of performative utterances, the most famous of which was the utterance of ‘I do’ at a wedding ceremony. This utterance cannot be verified as true or false, but it does have an impact on the social world, legally binding two people in marriage.

Austin made a further distinction between utterances, the most relevant to this piece being the ‘perlocutionary’ utterance:

Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them [...] We shall call the performance of an act of this kind the performance of a ‘perlocutionary act’ Austin (1975, 101)

What is key here is the attention to ‘values, attitudes, beliefs and individual identity’ (Widdowson, 2004, 12) – the effect that speech has on the way that people feel, identify, and consequently behave.

Speech Acts and Education Policy

Why is this distinction between constative and performative important in education? It is tempting, when offended by what politicians say, to jump to an analysis of whether what they say is right or wrong, true or

false, correct or incorrect. The problem is that identifying a political claim as wrong does not necessarily undo the social effects of such claims. The performative force of political utterances is such that the social effects of political claims persist, regardless of the truth value of said claims. The staggering pay of academy leaders, for example, is justified in part by the performative political positioning of academy schools as a superior product within the education marketplace (Thomson, 2020).

It is not enough to prove politicians wrong. We also need to stop and think – who benefits from such talk? And, concomitantly, who is damaged by these statements? What kind of people, and what kind of world, is being made possible by such talk? Speech act theory can help us to look at education policy in a new light, by encouraging us to attend to the effect of political talk, rather than its truth value. Speech act theory is valuable in education because it helps us to understand how people are made to feel as a result of political talk; these feelings bring about actions which otherwise could be difficult to comprehend. By understanding the relationship between language and response better, we could start to advocate for a language around education which is less provocative, less divisive, more respectful – and more likely to encourage feelings of safety, security and belonging within the teaching profession.

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Philosophy of Education and the Resistance of Injustice

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In this article, I argue that a vital use of theory and philosophy of education is to re-orient education towards the resistance of injustice.

In *How to Fight Inequality (And Why That Fight Needs You)*, author and activist Ben Phillips (2020) argues that debates about economic inequality have essentially been won. It has been admitted by most governments and the United Nations that inequalities harm all of us and that the pursuit of economic growth does not quell inequality. Political targets aimed at tackling inequality, however, ring hollow in the absence of real social transformation. Inequalities appear to be worsening, exacerbated by the contexts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and systemic racism. Phillips' claim is that winning the debate is not enough: now the job is to win the fight.

This is representative of a broader narrative; one in which social justice is not understood as an ideal end but the struggle – or the fight as Phillips would have it – of resisting injustice, demonstrated by the emergence of social movements such as Black Lives Matter, School Strikes for Climate, and campaigns against gender discrimination and violence. However, even the fight itself is under threat. As I write this, activists argue that the public's right to protest and demonstration is threatened by the proposed Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. The prospect of being jailed for up to 10 years for causing noise and disruption, even acting on your own or being in the vicinity of a demonstration, becomes a possibility with this bill.¹ While not all of the bill applies to Scotland (policing and public order are devolved), we should be vigilant of attempts to stifle non-violent demonstration and dissent, taking the opportunity to explore these issues in schools and classrooms. As Martin Luther King wrote from a jail cell in 1963: 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere' (King Jr., 1964: 2).

What is the role of education in resisting injustice during such highly charged and complex times? Social justice is a familiar and contested topic within the theory and philosophy of education, debated via critical and post-critical pedagogies, for example (Hodgson et al., 2018). It has been recognised, however, that this body of work can overlook fundamental and radical critiques of capitalist modernity and the related assumptions that undergird the education system (Allen and Goddard, 2017; Suissa, 2019). My contribution to this discussion follows the contours of Nancy Fraser's work in political philosophy, which emerges in part from social movements and their historiographies (Fraser, 2013; Blackmore, 2016). Fraser's tri-part model recognises the

economic, cultural and political dimensions of social justice. Lynch and colleagues add a 4th dimension – relational equality – arguing that social justice is an affective commitment rooted in love, care and solidarity (Cantillon and Lynch, 2017). Using these four dimensions of social justice, I see the associated injustices as exploitation/expropriation (economic), discrimination (cultural), exclusion (political) and indifference (relational), all of which are mediated by relations of social power.

This theorisation becomes relevant to our purposes here when we consider the role of education in the fight against these more specific forms of injustice. I propose that pursuing a social justice agenda in education, as understood above, would require a significant re-orientation of educational theory, philosophy and practice. The philosophy of social justice education is, in one sense, a crowded space that many scholars have addressed. However, when social justice is defined as resisting injustice, I argue that we have only just begun to contemplate what such a shift would entail. Educational philosophy and theory have been too focussed on what social justice might mean (Francis et al., 2017), and not focussed enough on the practicalities and politics of resisting injustice.

In part, this is owing to the aforementioned absence of radical and interventionist critique in educational philosophy. One of the things we would need to do, for example, is to explicitly recognise that the education system itself perpetuates the very injustices we seek to oppose. In Scotland, for instance, it was recently reported that there were 2,251 racist incidents reported in Scottish schools between 2017 and 2020.ⁱⁱ It is unlikely that universities perform any better in this regard: a recent survey of ethnic minority students at the University of Glasgow found that half had been racially harassed, revealing significant underreporting in official figures (Virdee et al., 2021).

I suggest that the practical role of educators in resisting injustice is to seek out and work among alliances of critical activists (see Collins, 2013), opposing the injustices within and beyond the education system, informed by the struggles and radical theorisations of social movements. This is not straightforward, of course, and we may find that this approach does not find universal favour. It is precisely during such struggles, however, that the relations of power in which injustices are reproduced become apparent, and the knowledge of how to resist is born. Perhaps the use of philosophy and theory of education is to enable us to become comfortable with the discomfort of resisting injustice (Zembylas, 2015).

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