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## **Towards a Humanising Pedagogy through an Engagement with the Social–Subjective in Educational Theorising in South Africa**

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### **Abstract**

This article is an attempt to bring the social complexity of education into a conversation with what is referred to as a humanising pedagogy. In the article, I work with a definition of humanising pedagogy based on a three-dimensional conception of social justice. Drawing on Nancy Fraser (2009), I suggest that such a pedagogy should involve 1) the question of knowledge redistribution, 2) recognition of the knowledges, literacies, and identities of students, and 3) an emphasis on participation that brings process pedagogical orientations back into view to counter the rigid pedagogical orientation that informs South Africa's curriculum approach. The article unpacks what it means to insert a conception of the *social–subjective* into educational theorising in South African education academic work. I argue that this dimension is largely absent in hegemonic educational academic orientations, the consequence of which is a thinned-out focus on curriculum and pedagogy, devoid of how the complex social–subjective frames the subject's access to education. Based on my ethnographic work in urban sites, the article offers a view of the social–subjective that is aimed at disrupting South African educational theorising and provides a “pedagogical justice” view of education that may, conceptually, be able to account for the complex social–subjective in education—and thereby better enable the emergence of a humanising pedagogy in our educational discourses.

**Keywords:** social-subjective dimension of education, educational theorising in South Africa, education subject, pedagogy of recognition

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### **Introduction**

This article is an attempt to establish a conversation about what I regard as an implicit hegemonic theoretical orientation in our country's educational discourses, theorising, and research. This

orientation is governed by a focus on the internals of education, which involves a focus on the “pedagogic device” and knowledge transfer. These internals, the argument goes, ought to be kept distinct and separate from the educational externals—what I call the social–subjective entailments of education. I argue that this distinction or separation leads to an impoverished view of educational theorising and educational discourse, more generally. It fails to bring a pedagogy based on recognition and engagement into view, in effect, discounting the educational subjects, who sit in our classrooms and lecture halls.

My argument is that such a distinction privileges an “internals of pedagogy only” view by refusing the veracity of the social–subjective in educational theorising in South Africa. The theoretical focus of the internals-only position is informed by a concern over curriculum transfer of powerful knowledge. This orientation, while internally heterogeneous, has an implicit a priori theoretical position regarding the complexity of the social–subjective, as well as of questions regarding politics, power, race, class, and gender. The position issues into this: keep the social–subjective externals theoretically at bay. Keeping the externals at bay means there is little conceptual space for theorising about the role and position of the social–subjective in education—not as mere adjuncts to educational processes and pedagogical transfer, but as powerfully co-constitutive of educational processes, teacher development, student learning, and teacher pedagogy.

I also offer the descriptor, internal accounts, or what I later call an undersocialised view, as a metaphor for dominant theorising of education more generally in areas such as education policy and implementation, institutional change, qualifications, and work on leadership, learning, and teaching. In other words, my concern is with how the people involved in this pedagogical transfer, educational change, and policy implementation are configured in this story.

I use the notion, social–subjective, as a conceptual reference or shorthand for the complex processes by which human beings now transact their lives, amidst racialised neoliberal living in newer class formations, collapsing infrastructures, and with desperate, unorthodox, and informalised livelihoods. My claim is that hegemonic educational discourse, theorising, and research refuse the theoretical veracity of the social–subjective as co-constitutive of the educational.

There is an additional shortcoming: this discourse refuses a kind of generative view of curriculum and pedagogy—a process-orientated theory of pedagogical learning rooted in the subjectivity of teachers. The internals-only view, I contend, does not offer a fully dimensional theory of educational agency, advancing instead an implicit functionalist view of South African teachers and learners, as well as of institutions, which are in need of corrective intervention. I suggest that a rigorous conceptualisation of the social–subjective in educational theorising offers the potential for a generative theory of curriculum, knowledge, teaching, and professional learning. This stands a chance of bringing the fullness of the educational problematic into view.

### **Bringing the Complexity of the Social in Education into View**

South African education scholarship lacks a systematic account of the complexity of the educational problematic and ways to leverage change orientations, whether systemically or pedagogically. In other words, my argument is that the hegemonic view in educational circles, academia, and the research study of education in South Africa is that education theorising and discourse are devoid of a theoretical take up of the social–subjective.

Let me stake out this terrain by considering aspects of the historiography of educational research in South Africa. I base my comments here on my reading of two key chapters in a book titled, *Curriculum in South Africa: Intellectual Histories and Present Circumstances*, edited by William Pinar (2010): one by Crain Soudien (2010) and the other by Ursula Hoadley (2010). These two texts represent a theoretical bifurcation with regard to the social in educational theorising and research in South Africa, one that I would preliminarily call an oversocialised view, and the other an undersocialised view.

The first, the oversocialised view, is presented in the chapter by Soudien who argues that the social logics of curriculum are, or ought to be, the theoretical fulcrum of our educational historiography and hence be located at the centre of our curriculum logics, framing, policy, and research orientations. Hoadley's chapter, drawing on the Bernsteinian distinction (1999), developed by Maton (2009), between knower and knowledge discourse, represents the undersocialised view. Hoadley (2010) explained that, within critical curriculum work, two groups are defined—those working in a 'knowledge mode' and those in a 'knower mode.' Fundamentally different orientations to knowledge, in particular curriculum knowledge, are captured in this distinction. (p. 127)

Her comprehensive field analysis of education in South Africa is based on this distinction, that is, academic work based either on the educationally external knower (identity research), and work on knowledge and the internals of pedagogy. This view suggests that knower discourses (read, identity research) have to be kept distinct from knowledge discourses in educational theorising and curriculum policy. The knower–knowledge distinction and its theoretical take up into powerful knowledge and its focus on the internals of education derives from this undersocialised view. As explained earlier, the internalist view is concerned primarily with a focus on the pedagogic device and the need, politically determined and framed in hegemonic policy terms, to bring knowledge transfer of powerful knowledge, that is, the school code, into view.

This view also has planetary, research-networked connections from England to Portugal to Australia and into South Africa around what has become known as social realist conceptions of knowledge. Joe Muller's book, *Reclaiming Knowledge* (2000), is the seminal South African text that brings this perspective into view persuasively and with conceptual precision. The research based on this tradition is informed by the neo-Bersteinian focus on the three-message system—curriculum, pedagogic recontextualisation, and assessment—with its emphasis on pedagogic discourse and knowledge transfer processes.

Social realism, however, fundamentally turns on a particular conception of knowledge. It argues that there is something worth holding onto with regard to the kind of knowledge that ought to provide the basis for curriculum knowledge selection, that is, knowledge based on long-standing traditions accumulated via coalitions of minds over time, and settled in disciplinary knowledge (see Zipin, Fataar, & Brennan, 2015). It is this disciplinary knowledge that ought to form the basis of curriculum offerings. Such powerful knowledge ought to be provided to all children, especially in a country like South Africa, to black working-class children whose chances of upward mobility in life and a shot at the educational game are secured through access to such powerful knowledge. The moral logic presented is this: not providing children with powerful discipline-based knowledge does them a second kind of injustice, the first being racial and class exclusion. Making available powerful knowledge to all children is trumpeted as a social justice commitment that an education system must make to ensure that education serves as an individual positional and a broader social good. Individual, because it secures the individual's access to the knowledge economy, and social because it contributes to providing an education and skills base to ensure the country's entry into the knowledge economy.

Such a view is conceptually compelling. It speaks to the moral and political agenda of the country and its social justice foundations are secure. I certainly agree with the shift to powerful knowledge as an antidote to the knowledge arbitrariness or relativism of outcomes-based education. I argue, however, that this perspective is in need of attenuation through the insertion of the social-subjective. My suggestion is that, in aggregation, this undersocialised or internalist view of education underplays the social. It does not have a theory of the place of the social-subjective in the educational discourse. I proffer the view that the undersocialised view, in its preoccupation with the internalist focus on the pedagogical device, does not offer a theoretical account of the social or the subject. The policy takes up, if not quite the theoretical framing, is based on the transfer of settled bodies of knowledge delivered in tightly scripted curricula. In such a view, the social-subjective is theoretically a marginal space.

Let me take up the debate on the other side of the undersocialised argument, that is, what I call the oversocialised view or externalist accounts of education that focus preponderantly on the place of the social in educational discourse. I work here with two core texts: Soudien (2010) and Jansen (2009). Soudien's starting point is the social character of the subordinating, colonial, and apartheid curriculum. He argued that "social difference, as opposed to, say, pedagogical reform, is the central question that drives curriculum development" (2010, p. 25). This view suggests that colonial and apartheid educational discourses were worked out on the basis of a specific conceptualisation of the production of putative social identities of people, which in turn informed governmental curriculum policy orientations, that is, the curriculum's production of racial and ethnic identities of subordination.

For Soudien, what is key is a consideration of what the most appropriate curriculum orientation would be to help undo the racist legacy of the past. Soudien can be said to be representative of a social redemptive view informed by the ontologies of the subordinate. Soudien's emphasis is on the small opportunities found in the interstices of (post)colonial or (post)apartheid discourses, structures and practices (that) would provide the ontological basis for the epistemological underpinnings of the curriculum via an openness to the attendant knowledge generation practices and knowledges of subordinate peoples. (2010, pp. 19–49). He suggested that a conversation be established between the ontological (being) and the epistemological (knowing), in other words, the human in the epistemological—not its bifurcation or separation.

This socially redemptive view of knowledge and curriculum found some resonance in the first iteration of governmental educational and curriculum policy discourse between 1994 and 1999, namely, outcomes-based education (OBE). OBE was made up of an amalgam of various discourses that were finally superseded by competencies associated with outcomes, which led to a dangerous instrumentalisation of knowledge, in addition to OBE's inchoate curriculum design architecture, which made curriculum implementation by teachers a nightmare. But OBE was partly informed by a strong attempt to accord curriculum space for the knowledges and practices of the hitherto socially excluded. One intention of such a socially redemptive view was to provide a curriculum platform that would enable South African students to meaningfully engage in educational modalities that emphasised rich, contextually informed knowledge engagement processes.

My point here is that the oversocialised view laid emphasis on the social redemptive, that is, on the undoing of South Africa's racist legacy through curriculum and knowledge processes. But this perspective failed to provide an internally compelling curricular language and conceptual architecture to inform teachers' curriculum implementation and pedagogical work. The oversocialised view, in the way it was presented by South African policy bureaucrats through the conceptual inchoateness of OBE, failed at the level of the three-message system: it was a

misalignment between curriculum policy, pedagogy, and assessment. It thus failed to translate its conceptual orientation into a curriculum and pedagogical architecture for implementation in the country's schools.

With the social redemption orientation having failed to develop a compelling curriculum architecture, the following two questions deserve consideration. First, how should the social redemptive emphasis on making connections to undo the legacy of colonialism and apartheid be incorporated into the curriculum? This refers to the manner in which the social–subjective is inserted into the question of knowledge selection for curriculum. Second, on what basis should curriculum and pedagogy contribute to generating intersubjective dialogue around notions of critical citizenship and our common humanity? — a question around the nature and efficacy of the pedagogic device.

Coherent answers to these questions would have to be arrived at through careful consideration of the logical entailments of education, and a reinsertion into educational debate of critical notions of citizenship education. I develop an argument in the rest of the article for a theoretical consideration of the social in education discourse in terms of which we are able to rescue a notion of educational agency that is able to leverage knowledge, curriculum, and pedagogical processes that bring the following three aspects into view:

- The centrality of powerful knowledge in interaction with social and life knowledges;
- Knowledge mediation through generative pedagogical processes; and
- The importance of ethical connections to bigger moral purposes.

Let me illustrate the perplexity of this educational moment via reference to the most “dangerous” text to have entered the educational terrain in recent years, dangerous in many senses. The scholarly veracity of the text is in question (is it a scholarly text?), the research ethics is under dispute (did the people spoken about in the text give their ethical consent?), the arguments made by the author are troubling, emotionally charged, illuminating, troubled, terrifying, in other words, dangerous. I refer of course to Jonathan Jansen’s 2009 text, *Knowledge in the Blood*—a book which, I would argue, presents the social–subjective in its most compelling form, veering between the essentialisation of knowledge and its deeply troubled and troubling conceptualisation as knowledge socialisation metaphorically, in the blood.

The book was feted in popular circles but did not have take up in education undergraduate or postgraduate classes. Everyone knows about it, academics have read it, have strong opinions about it, but refuse to touch it, prescribe it as a pedagogical text in a university classroom, for example. It is a compelling yet complex text to digest emotionally and psychologically, to talk about, to work through, yet it goes right to the heart of the ethical—an engagement with the limits and possibilities of our humanness. Yet we do not have a language of engagement, an engaging pedagogy that would allow us to work through the text productively.

The undersocialised view does not offer a language of curricular processing and pedagogical engagement that would allow us to work with such a text or the issues it raises, such as older and newer forms of racialisation, gender and class oppression, and the challenges associated with xenophobia and gender violence. Its view of settled powerful knowledge, at least its take up in South African classrooms and lecture theatres, offers little to no space to work productively through knowledge in the blood. The oversocialised, on the other hand, also refuses a pedagogical language of engagement. The social redemptive articulation overwhelms the pedagogical in its inability to gain purchase on the internals of education in order to develop a theory of pedagogical engagement.

Jansen (2009) gave a clue about the predicament of this lack of pedagogical take up in the final chapter of his book where he wrote about the limits of critical pedagogy. He argued that critical pedagogy provides few clues for developing a language of pedagogical and educational engagement. Jansen explained that (Jansen, 2009, p. 257):

*Critical theory . . . offers a lens for understanding the role of schools in perpetuating and subverting the race, class, and gender interests of state and society. But critical theory, interpreted broadly, is severely limited in postconflict situations for making sense of troubled knowledge and for transforming those who carry the burden of such knowledge on both sides of a divided community. Critical theory receives and constructs the world as divided between black and white, working and privileged classes, citizens and illegal immigrants, men and women, straight and queer, oppressors and oppressed; its dialogical pretenses notwithstanding, the world is taken as torn between rival groups.*

According to Jansen, the facile deployment of these categories, often the function or consequence of a flat socially redemptive view of the world, tends to gloss over the complexities of human life, relations, and practices. The oversocialised view of education therefore also lapses into an impoverished account of knowledge, curriculum, and pedagogy that is unable to engage the very complexity of the social that it wants to instantiate into our educational discourses. There is an enormous middle ground to work with here, a task that combines the concerns of both the over- and undersocialised views of education that map the so-called external sociohistorical onto the internal curriculum–pedagogical.

My view is that we have to start by working within the limits and potentials of these binaries and work carefully across them. To be more specific, I start out at the external, social–subjective end and work my way across to pedagogy. My starting point is the suggestion that there is a way of recuperating the social–subjective, its radical rupturing quality, and mapping this onto an educational theory that would provide South African educational discourse with generative curricular and pedagogical potential. This requires me to build an argument that weaves through the research and work that I have been doing over the last 10 years. I have worked on themes in the sociology of educational subjectivity in urban spaces. My work is based on an attempt to bring understandings of excluded communities and their perspectives and knowledges to academic consciousness. I argue that a pedagogically generative approach ought to be predicated on a vigorous conceptual basis that brings the complexity of the schooling subject into view. I suggest that curriculum and pedagogy have to be augmented by giving credence to schoolgoing subjects, their knowledges, and literacies, as a way of engaging them in their education. The core concern of such an educational perspective is the need to leverage the active engagement of students in their educational becoming. Such a perspective labours to bring fuller, multidimensional perspectives to academic consciousness.

### **In Search of the Subject in the Sociology of South African Education**

My work proceeds from the view that the sociology of South African education lacks a rigorous account of the educational subject. I ask the following questions: Who are the teachers, students, and managers in our schools, universities, and colleges? What worlds do they come from? How are they positioned to encounter and engage in the process of education? And, how do educational institutions engage with the complex subjects who now come through their gates? The emerging youth subject, for example, is a troubling and troubled subject who struggles to connect with the normative expectations of national governmental imaginaries. This is not the unitary rainbow subject who was invoked in the early democratic period.

Let me focus briefly on my own work in one of my research projects as a way of bringing this focus on the social and the subjective into view. I had initially set out to understand how national educational reform plays out at the local level of a township in Cape Town. I was forced very early on during my qualitative work to shift my initial conceptual approaches. I quickly came to understand that the intended educational reform played out in unrecognisable ways in this local terrain. It was hard to see the effects or impact of the intended policy reforms. Instead, I observed the overwhelming bearing of the informal and impoverished socialities of the township on its schools. This influenced me to make an adjustment. I proceeded to approach the knowledge problematic in a different way.

The problematic was turned on its head. I adjusted my research in an attempt to capture the fluid interactions between social life in the township and school processes. I began to observe how the intended education policy reform was reworked in the township's schools as these reforms became part of the township's dynamics and informal social flows and networks. My work began to reveal the performative roles of principals, teachers, and governing bodies in their attempts to domesticate their schools' surrounding social flows.

Methodologically, I had to be in a position to capture the interaction between geography, lived spatiality, flux, and mobility. I favour a relationalist research approach as a way of capturing the dynamic impact of the environment on the research unit. Unorthodox methodological application is a requirement; for example, spending time in people's homes, accompanying them in search of a new shack dwelling, and getting into a taxi at 6 a.m. to accompany a child to school. The logic that presents itself is that if the subject on the make is on the move, the researcher should be prepared to move with her in order to catch the complex subject-making process in which she is engaged.

From my own work I would suggest that South African urbanity is on the move and on the make, made up of heterotopic spaces where, for example, school-related citizenship is not only cultivated in the place of young people's living environments, but also in the precarious extensions that children make daily across the city as they access their schools elsewhere. Contaminated readings of the school nearby, around the corner from home, whether in the suburbs or the townships, cause children to travel long distances to enter schools that are culturally incongruent and, in many instances, unwelcoming to them. The inclusion of these newer children in educational institutions all over the city, across the racial spectrum, is accompanied by cultures of exclusion at the awaiting school, university, or college, informed by these institutions' reworked and deracialised hegemonic ways of being. Race lives on, now transmogrified into cultures of being, articulated by newer forms of class expression.

Young people now inhabit a complex and shifting world. They are not denizens of one place. Instead, they transact their school going in the light of a number of spaces in and across the city. They are confronted by, and work productively with, a diversity of cultural materials and culturally dissonant schooling experiences as they move in and out of the multiple spaces of their lives. The explanation that emerges challenges predominant accounts of youth subjectivity in the city. I make the argument that "visibly invisible" mobile school subjects carve out complex bodily orientations on the move across the city. They acquire sophisticated street literacies as they generate their own cultural capital—often parallel to their schools' and teachers' practices, who seemingly do not have the language or conceptual repertoires to recognise these students in their midst. Young people are always already thinking, adapting, and generating knowledge—always doing headwork.

A core conclusion that I come to about young people's encounters with their education in the postapartheid city is the following: qualitative work enables us to provide acute understandings of

how students go about developing interactive, spatially inscribed, everyday practices, relations, and interactions in terms of which they shape their livelihoods. They utilise their resources, networks, and interactions in carving out aspirant schoolgoing bodies. One key finding is that they keep their schoolgoing constructions relatively parallel to their everyday peer and neighbourhood engagements, often in the face of violence, which impacts markedly on the nature of schoolgirls' mobile constructions. These schoolchildren, in effect, manage to accumulate their schooled dispositions mostly out of sight, almost spectrally. On the other hand, my work shows how, in their domestic environs, they engage in urban peer discourses as spectacle, show, and bravado. Having to survive tough criminal terrains and peer cultures, they establish street credibility that secures them space for their schoolgoing navigations. This is the basis on which aspiring youths encounter and establish their school going.

Spectrally (or ghost-like), these children pull off their schooling careers precariously in the city's shadows, amid squalid infrastructures, in sprawling city spaces, shacklands, shantytowns, and run-down parts of the city. They go to great lengths to access what they perceive as better schools across the city. The receiving schools, however, are as much places of formal inclusion as they are places of cultural exclusion. The discursive assumptions of cultural assimilation are hard at work in the city's schools. I suggest that schools deny these students any meaningful recognition of their identification struggles, instead inducting them into one-dimensional institutional cultures. The counter-normative epistemic forms of the children, their spectrality, are never given institutional or curricular currency. And this is my core argument: these children have sophisticated knowledges, literacies, and identification practices, cultivated as spectacle, on the move across the city grid. But their schools fail to provide discursive traction for recognising and working with their knowledges and practices. Such a deficit approach to curriculum and knowledge embeds an entirely modernist teleology.

I would suggest that the changing city's schooling landscape provides a key articulating platform for the ways in which these continuing racialised informalities, in a post-racial context, play out. My key argument is the suggestion that these informalities work way beyond what a racial or modernist trope would recognise or make visible. The analytical task is to make visible the mobile schoolgoing subject who moves below the city's radar. These are city children who cultivate their aspirations in the thickness of social life, described as "bare," or "miserable" urban life. Cities no longer offer poor people either the prospect of improving their livelihoods, or modern ways of life. The children have to make what they can out of bare life.

In this light, my research illustrates how schoolchildren construct their navigational maps on the go, based on destinations somewhat in sight—only somewhat. End destinies remain largely unknown, even unknowable. Clarity of end goals for them is not the key to subjective construction. It is not the clarity about where they will end up that motivates aspirants to schooling, but the reaching out for a destination whose route remains unclear and tenuous. Investing in the destination, however tenuous, serves as a motivation for remaining en route—and it is remaining en route that matters. Herein resides the "banality" and utter hopefulness of the investment: the hope invested in becoming a recognised urban citizen. Young peoples' "hopeful investments" are the only leveraging materials on offer for us to work with as education academics, lecturers, and teachers. This is a tenuous leverage point. My suggestion is that we invest academic labour to recognise these investments and experiment with pedagogically generative ways as educators to engage them in their educational becoming.



## **Changing the Optics of Learning**

The overall theoretical orientation of my work is based on an attempt to bring the analytics of social space to an understanding of schooling in the city. I would suggest that schools are not simply settings with clear boundaries and easily definable practices and intellectual content. The perspective that I favour attempts to understand how political and sociocultural dynamics shape schooling practices. I attempt to bring the impact of life outside of school into play in our consideration of life inside schools. The focus is on schooling as understood in relation to a myriad of co-constituting processes in the various spaces of people's lives. The classroom is one key venue where such processes play out, affecting students' learning orientations and teachers' pedagogical practices. The emphasis is on understanding education and learning across multiple spaces, where complex subjectivities are established in mobile extensions across diverse dynamics.

My focus on schooling-based subjectivity is founded on a theoretical language that combines an understanding of the spatiality of subject making and the youths' positioning in multiple spaces, including the school and the classroom. The particular mobilities of people moving through these intersections via their habitus, various kinds of capital and emotional labour, and their life affordances such as their resources, discourses, tools, become a key focus for analysis. Grasping the way that they mobilise, network, and put together their educational resources across spaces in the course of their spatially inscribed activities is crucial to developing an understanding of their educational and learning trajectories.

In a project with a fellow academic on the learning assemblages of four Grade 6 learners who we followed across their various township living spaces, including their school and classroom, we illustrated how they assemble learning literacies and knowledges that position them as active, articulate, and smart knowledge constructors. But we showed how their school and classroom, positioned precariously in performative and deeply reductive discursive terrains, in effect suppress these children's rich assemblages, which we observed in effect conferred on them one-dimensional underachieving learning identities (see Fataar, 2015). The homogenising space of the school and classroom suppressed their learning identities. This, I would argue, represents the larger inability of our educational infrastructure, processes, and practices to recognise the learners in our midst. The social subject is thus fundamentally misrecognised and thereby positioned as educationally "deficit," or "lacking."

## **Inserting the Social–Subjective to Generate a Pedagogy of Recognition**

I would suggest that we have to work across what I would describe as epistemological incommensurability; in other words, we should work carefully to establish a conversation between incommensurable discourses, based on lineages that have never quite been brought into conversation with each other. In building such conversation, let me turn to the educational normative, in other words, recuperating core normative education framings to establish a conversation between the internalist and the externalist views. This ought to proceed on the basis of questioning the purposes of schooling, which I suggest should go beyond the induction of potential workers into the elusive knowledge economy. This is arguably the dominant view in South Africa's education policy discourse. What has to be brought back into this conversation is the critical citizenship role of schooling that places emphasis on generating thinking and ethically informed citizens who are able to establish viable and productive lives in complex times.

Such a view of schooling has to be founded on a thick notion of social justice: what I refer to as pedagogical justice (see Fataar, 2015). A thick notion proceeds from an emphasis on the role of schooling in inducting students into powerful knowledge, which conforms to the first of Nancy

Fraser's (2009) dimensions of social justice, that is, the redistributive dimension. In other words, schooling would emphasise the pedagogical transfer (redistribution) of school knowledge. What is also required, is to bring Fraser's other two dimensions into view. Fraser's recognitive dimension emphasises a knowledge orientation that works with fuller recognition of students, and establishes vibrant leverage points to scaffold their life world knowledges and literacies onto the school knowledge code. In other words, schooling would be informed by vigorous and thoughtful interaction between school knowledge and the students' life knowledges. Such a perspective stands a better chance of engaging students in their own learning on the basis that schooling recognises the knowledges that they would find appealing and important. It would also establish credibility for students' knowledges, ideas, and perspectives as an important vehicle for working out their place in the world. This thicker notion of schooling (combining the redistributive and recognitive dimensions of knowledge) has to be founded on Fraser's (2009) participatory (third) dimension: the view that knowledge is participative and generative, not simply consumed. This dimension, I would argue, emphasises students' active engagement in their educational becoming.

This extends into another normative dimension, that is, an emphasis on the purposes of education based on a notion of citizenship that emphasises what Arjun Appadurai (2013) called the right to research: the right that every citizen now ought to have to develop the conceptual tools to figure out life, to adapt and survive, and work across difficult points of systemic and personal articulation to establish viable lives. In other words, what is required is a view of education for citizenship that emphasises both life use value and utilitarian use value.

Is this pie in sky in a post-OBE, now CAPS (Curriculum and Assessment Policy), world? Would this be a call for engaging in a type of social constructivism gone mad? How do we pedagogise in light of a teacher corps struggling with pedagogical content knowledge, let alone the deep conceptual knowledge that thicker notions of knowledge engagement require? This is not the relativist world of OBE. It is not a collapsing of vertical and horizontal knowledge discourses. It is not the stripping down of pedagogy. This is something else. Pedagogical justice is an attempt to better tether knowledge, curriculum, and pedagogy to normative commitments, and to infuse pedagogy with educational agency and generativity (see Fataar, 2015).

### **Conclusion: Leveraging Pedagogical Generativity via Pedagogical Habitus**

My final point is to describe the basis on which such a conception of educational work can proceed. Here I draw on work that I am currently doing, based on my involvement in a professional learning community (PLC) with my research assistant and a group of teachers. The aim of the PLC is to leverage productive conversations about leveraging a thicker social justice approach in teachers' pedagogy. Our PLC work has quickly come to acknowledge the durability of the teachers' professional teaching styles and dispositions. Drawing on Bourdieu (1997), we labelled this durability and toughness, *pedagogical habitus*, with the intention of indicating how very difficult it is to leverage even small shifts in these teachers' pedagogy.

We have come to understand how the implementation of order and discipline is employed by teachers as the primary pedagogical technique when teachers teach. We observed this as representing a kind of emptying out of their pedagogical agency, a process that can be understood structurally by the way teachers' work is positioned by their teacher education and professional socialisation over years, and the in-working of performativity and external regulation that ensnare teachers' work. The political and discursive space for educational agency is exceptionally narrow. We stared this constrained space in the face in the PLC for about six months. The teachers perpetually

lapsed back into descriptions of conditions in schools—of unruly students, bureaucratic demands, and compliance expectations as the reason for falling into a pedagogy of control and closure.

But we did observe that they lacked a pedagogical language, a language of description by which they could engage in pedagogical adaptation. The PLC then went on to employ a set of pedagogical tools to help insert such a language. The PLC teachers began, slowly, to experiment with opening up or relaxing their pedagogical framing (organisation of the class), which is important for a thicker notion of social justice pedagogy. It was through opening the frame tentatively, through relaxing classroom organisation and giving space for students' voices in lessons and allowing student participation more generally, that the teachers began to take on a pedagogical language, slowly, tentatively, back and forth.

The PLC has now moved into the next phase, that is, pedagogical generativity based on incorporating identity recognition and lifework knowledge engagement into their CAPS curriculum. This is both fun and difficult. It brings to the fore the complexity and multidimensionality of the pedagogical device, but the teachers are taking it on. There is a space opening up here. Educational agency is beginning to be asserted. Dispositions are being shifted. This, I would argue, is beginning to emerge out of a conceptual mapping of the social onto the educational–pedagogical, which I argue is a necessity if one wants to leverage and connect educational processes onto normative goals that are better able to bring social justice objectives into view, or, as I frame it in this article, to productively map the social–subjective onto the pedagogical. This, I would argue, makes possible the emergence of a rich conception of a humanising pedagogy as a key part of our educational repertoires; in other words, it makes possible a pedagogy that engages the full and ever evolving humanity of people.

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