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How to cite this publication

Please cite the final published version:

Klitmøller, J. (2018). Between 'pedagogy' and 'Pädagogik': a critique of lived pedagogy. *Education 3-13*, 46(7), 838-850. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2017.1373138>

Publication metadata

Title:	Between 'pedagogy' and 'Pädagogik': a critique of lived pedagogy
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Journal:	Education 3-13
DOI/Link:	https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2017.1373138
Document version:	Accepted manuscript (post-print)

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in Education 3-13 on 04/09/2017, available online <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03004279.2017.1373138>

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Between “Pedagogy” and “Pädagogik”: A Critique of Lived Pedagogy

Abstract

The present paper is an analysis of the recently formulated concept of *Lived Pedagogy*. With roots in phenomenology and narrative research and research on ‘student voice’, the concept is coined as a way to research participants’ experience of practical pedagogy in school. The main theoretical and methodological challenges in *Lived Pedagogy* stem from the use of relational theory (i.e., phenomenology and narrative theory) while a priori maintaining a number of divisions that challenge this relational logic. Having outlined these problems, a suggestion is made to inform *Lived Pedagogy* by way of the German Pädagogik with its central focus on purpose(s) of education. Specifically, I employ Løvlie’s educational transformation of Habermas’s discourse ethics as a framework for structuring the deliberation of what is educationally desirable.

Keywords: Lived Pedagogy, student voice, discourse ethics, pedagogy, education

People who criticize ‘pedagogy’ for its lack of practical value should not confuse what should be carefully distinguished. For that much ‘pedagogy’ knows: only a *good* theory of education can be practical at all. (Langeveld, 1958, p. 51)

The main aim of this paper is to critique the concept of Lived Pedagogy introduced by Niemi and colleagues (Niemi, 2009; Niemi, Heikkinen, & Kannas, 2010; Niemi, Kumpulainen, & Lipponen, 2015; Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, & Hilppö, 2015) in order to further develop its potential. My interest in Lived Pedagogy stems from a search for ways to conduct make empirical research in classroom interaction from the perspective of Pädagogik (a version of educational science developed originally in Germany but prevalent in Continental Europe)—a tradition firmly situated in philosophy and at present under heavy attack from a much more empirical Anglo-American pedagogy. The latter, however, may in some cases have lost connection with the question central to Pädagogik (i.e., what the *purpose* of education is, what education is *for*). Though the purpose of education is pivotal to Pädagogik, that science has little to say concerning pupils’ perspectives. Drawing in large part on ‘student voice’ research, Lived Pedagogy has been developed to focus specifically on participants’ experience of ongoing classroom practice. The present critique investigates the role of educational purpose in Lived Pedagogy. I suggest ways that participants’—especially pupils’—perspectives can be empirically investigated, including a redirection of future research in Lived Pedagogy. To this end, Løvlie’s educational utilization of Habermas’s discourse ethics will serve as a point of reference.

The past couple of decades have seen a rise in the literature on student voice (e.g., Cook-Sather, 2014), pupil consultation (e.g., Rudduck & McIntyre, 2007), and research promoting pupils as researchers or co-researchers (e.g., Bland & Atweh, 2007; Bragg, 2007). These are all attempts to introduce the educational experiences of pupils into existing research on educational improvement and reform, with the argument that pupil experience is essential for changes to be effective. Drawing partially from voice research, the concept of Lived Pedagogy is based on action research and is formulated within a narrative and phenomenological framework. The intention with Lived

Pedagogy is to redirect educational attention from teachers' ideas about and preparation of lessons to how educational practice is experienced by the participants, with the aim of fostering participation and community among pupils, teachers, and parents (Niemi et al., 2010). By explicitly (re)introducing the concept of *pedagogy* into research on pupil experience and voice, Lived Pedagogy contributes to the discussion between an Anglo-American version of pedagogy related to a strong empirical research tradition for effective teaching and a German version of pedagogy (Pädagogik) that is oriented towards the discussion of which values should inform education. However, this explicitly normative version of pedagogy has had much less empirical work done with respect to the way that pupils may partake in the deliberation of what is educationally desirable. Coming from student voice research and thus being concerned with pupil experience, Lived Pedagogy may contribute to both by highlighting questions about how we incorporate those with and for whom we do education in the deliberation of what is worthwhile. For Lived Pedagogy to serve this dual role, however, it is necessary to submit it to a critique of its theory, methods, and interpretations—specifically whether Lived Pedagogy opens up for being not just about *how* things are done in the classroom (experience of, say, the way group work is organized or how much time the teacher spends lecturing) but also *why* (that is, what purposes are worth pursuing). To more fully realize this potential, a critique of the theory and methods used is necessary.

The main aim is to point out that the issues that haunt Lived Pedagogy stem from related issues surrounding research into *practice* and *experience*. These related issues show themselves in the way pedagogy, educational practice, and experience are defined and operationalized within Lived Pedagogy. The issues with the chosen concepts lead to the second main aim of the present paper—the division between pedagogy as primarily *method* and Pädagogik as primarily about the deliberation of what is valuable in education. These questions relate in a unique way when concerning primary school pupils. Immanuel Kant formulated the 'pedagogical paradox': that the purpose of education is a person's independent use of reason—while education as a means is to realize that independence through outside influence (Hamilton, 1999). A core aspect of what Kant termed the 'public use of reason' (Kivelä, 2012) concerns the use of reason to differentiate between individual desires and what is collectively desirable and to submit oneself to the moral imperative of what should be desirable. A key challenge posed by Pädagogik is to always question common-sense notions of education—for instance, the question of when pupils should be introduced not only to the reasons behind the educational activities they are being asked to engage in, but further when they should be involved in deliberating these very aims. A secondary aim of this paper is to insist that even young pupils should not automatically be excluded from such deliberation. While pupils are indeed listened to in Lived Pedagogy, it is not clear that they are invited to partake in such deliberation.

Therefore, in this paper I provide, first, a characterization of the concept of Lived Pedagogy, taking departure in the Niemi and colleagues' own differentiation between *pedagogy* and lived pedagogy; second, a critique taking departure in the central theoretical inspirations for the concept in relation to the methods and core concepts used. Third, a discussion opening for alternative interpretations of the meaning of pedagogy, as not only about *evaluating* what happens in school, but more radically that it must include *deliberating* what *should* happen in school, will lead to introducing Løvlie's educational interpretation of Habermas's concept of communicative action.

Lived Pedagogy—Pedagogy, Experience, and Practice

In the present section, I aim to give a brief overview of the intentions with and the theory behind Lived Pedagogy as well as the methods and findings of the research conducted. Only later will the assumptions be submitted to critique.

‘Lived pedagogy’ is by the authors of the concept separated from the concept of pedagogy proper, the latter being believed to denote teacher reflection and preparation rather than teacher, pupil, and parent divided and/or common stories about what goes on in school (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015). Lived pedagogy has so far been researched using participatory action research and either written diary entries or diary entries combined with interviews in which pupils talk about the photos they have taken.

Pedagogy—the teacher’s ideal

The concept of Lived Pedagogy is differentiated from a conception of pedagogy: ‘Pedagogy is a normative concept that often refers to a teacher’s presumptions, criteria or any conscious activity to design and to enhance learning in the classroom’ (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 681).

The primary constituent of pedagogy in this view is that it belongs to the teachers. Teacher presumptions, criteria, or conscious activity places pedagogy in a variety of places, both outside and inside the classroom, both silently as well as potentially voiced in relation to pupils. That is, it may be an explicitly voiced and acted part of everyday school activities or it may be teacher ideals that never visibly become part of what goes on in the classroom. Pedagogy, however, remains the teachers’ alone. When exemplifying pedagogy, Niemi, Kumpulainen & Lipponen (2015, vol. 602) point to the teacher in the study (who is also the first author) who is described as having developed ‘her practical theory in the light of *participatory pedagogy*’ (emphasis added).

This participatory pedagogy is described by three core ideals: (a) *agency*, specifically civic agency, with a focus on giving pupils ‘opportunity to make suggestions and decisions’ (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 683); (b) the *social nature of learning*, which is made concrete by focusing on pupils’ working in groups on projects; and (c) *evaluation* in which the pupils are not just evaluated by others, but self-evaluate and co-construct the evaluation criteria. It may be worth noting that the aims of this participatory pedagogy do not include any subject-specific aims for pupils (with perhaps civic agency as an exception). Pedagogy is thus primarily the teacher’s ‘ideal’ for the teaching conducted. In this sense pedagogy is first and foremost a set of ideals or intentions that teachers have when planning teaching and implementing it in classroom activities.

Lived Pedagogy—the experience of the ‘real’ pedagogy

In contrast, Lived Pedagogy is about how all participants experience the educational practice in which they participate: ‘Lived pedagogy is about listening to teachers’ or pupils’ experiences in a pedagogical relationship, i.e. how individuals experience and interpret the *process of teaching and learning in the classroom*’ (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 681; emphasis added).

This listening is conceptualized within a phenomenological and narrative framework and is about paying attention to ‘the stories told by people in pedagogical relationships’ (Niemi et al., 2010, p. 140). The relationships of interest include, besides pupils and teachers, also parents and potentially others who come in contact with pupils in school. The authors urge that Lived Pedagogy should not be conceived of as a thing, but rather a process of interpretation ‘continually changing *in response to the stories told by people in a certain cultural and social context*’ (p. 139; emphasis added). Whereas

pedagogy is conceived of as the ideal or the goals of education from the perspective of the teacher, Lived Pedagogy is the real or actual pedagogy as *experienced* by the participants and changes in ongoing participation. To tap into the experience of the real pedagogy is the central aim of Lived Pedagogy.

The aim: What Lived Pedagogy is for

The educational concerns that Lived Pedagogy is designed to address are to help foster pupil agency, engagement, participation, and community and to help develop pupils' voice and agency (Niemi et al., 2010, p. 138). These aims are in line with the wider field of student voice research (e.g., Cook-Sather, 2007; Flutter & Rudduck, 2004) and concern whether pupils are being sufficiently heard in the educational system. Pupils' voice, pupil consultations, and pupils as co-researchers have been suggested as ways to make pupil perspectives available for educational change (e.g., Cook-Sather, 2008; Messiou, 2013). More specifically, 'we are beginning to identify possibilities for how pupils can become *accountable stakeholders* in the process of investigating and developing *pedagogical practices* of their schooling' (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 694; emphases added).

Thus, pupils are being called upon to partake in the development of educational practice in accountable ways. Lived Pedagogy intends to help teachers by offering ways that participants' experiences reveal how they interpret ongoing practice, and by being heard develop pupils' voice, agency, engagement, and accountability.

Theory, research design, and methods in Lived Pedagogy

As already pointed out, the theoretical framework is a combination of narrative and phenomenological theory. From van Manen (1990) comes the concept of lived experience, which forms the basis of the concept of Lived Pedagogy. Niemi et al. (2010, p. 139) present the central points in these traditions and their connections in this way: 'Phenomenological research asks what is the nature of the phenomenon as meaningfully experienced. . . . This comes to the constitutive foundations of narrative research, which aspires "to recover, yet interrogate, the meanings of the lived experience."'

Narrative research becomes the method by which to inquire into the phenomenon of the lived experience of participants in educational practice. One advantage of narrative research, highlighted by Niemi et al. (2010), is that it is possible to inquire into who we are, revealing an existential focus in Lived Pedagogy. The design and methods of Lived Pedagogy are set up to 'listen' to these stories told in pedagogical relationships. Being about *all* participants, this means that a number of voices must be heard. 'In that sense, the pedagogical research should be *polyphonic*' (Niemi et al., 2010, p. 139 - my emphasis).

The authors further point out that the 'truth of the narratives comes from the *sum total* of them all' (Niemi et al., 2010, p. 148; emphasis added). The polyphonic nature of the research is not operationalized as such, however. The stories of the multiple individuals are not categorized based on content, but first on educational role (i.e., pupils, teachers, and parents). This gives three perspectives: the teacher/researcher's perspective (called the 'me'-perspective), pupils' perspective ('you'-perspective), and parents' perspective ('them'-perspective)—the *overlapping* (not the sum total) of which gives an 'us'-perspective.

Being a research project based on action research, Niemi is in the dual position that she is both the teacher and a researcher. As a teacher she has her own version of the Lived Pedagogy that needs to be listened to and as a researcher she is the one who is supposed to do the listening. To help deal

with this dual role, the concept of *reflexivity* is utilized. Reflexivity is thought to make it possible to take 'into account the multiple contexts and properties of the participants, such as culture, age, gender, class, social status, education, family, political praxis, language and values' (Niemi et al., 2010, p. 138). There is little information as to how much the teacher in the study knows about, for instance, the participants 'values', 'political praxis', 'class', and 'culture' and it is thus unclear how or in what way such information was part of the analysis.

The empirical material collected varies between the different studies. In the original paper based on part of Niemi's dissertation (Niemi, 2009), the analysis is based on the teachers' diary, pupils' diaries, and more informal feedback from parents (Niemi et al., 2010). In the later paper (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015) data come from discussions with pupils in 'home groups' about pictures that pupils had been asked to take of 'meaningful learning experiences' during two school projects (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 684). The different sources are treated as identical in relation to identifying the Lived Pedagogy even though the 'polyphony' is clearly different.

Findings from research in Lived Pedagogy

Whereas findings in the original research (Niemi et al., 2010) seem to have been concerned with the 'whole story' and included the previously mentioned 'me', 'you', 'they', and 'us'-perspectives, the focus is clearly different in the later paper (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015). Here the results are categorized purely as the pupils' experiences and *not* as experiences from several different categories of participants. The findings were categorized as follows: 'pupils' experiences of teaching and learning practices in the classroom'; 'pupils' experiences of time and space'; 'pupils' experiences of belonging'; 'pupils' participation in the process of developing school pedagogy' (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015). Furthermore, an explicit *evaluative* theme is evident throughout interpretation: 'Often times, the pupils' meaningful experiences had a strong coherence to the teacher's pedagogical goals' (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 694). That is, the 'pedagogy' of the teacher was compared with the Lived Pedagogy revealed in the research, further strengthening the previous division of pedagogy as being conceived as the 'ideal' and the Lived Pedagogy as the 'real': 'After each research cycle, the teacher compared the results with her practical theory' (Niemi, Kumpulainen, & Lipponen, 2015, p. 609).

In a cautionary passage the authors point out that pupils were almost exclusively positive and notes that there is a danger when criticism is not invited as it may then 'reaffirm practices that continue to repeat the canonical script of schooling, typically characterized by a power relationship between the teacher and pupils' (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 694).

In sum, Lived Pedagogy is about how pupils, teachers, and parents create stories about the meaning of what goes on in school. It is researched as participatory action research oriented towards participants' (particularly pupils') experience of ongoing educational practices. Data are exclusively linguistic—either as diary entries or interviews on the basis of photos.

Theory, Methods . . . and Pedagogy: Discussing Potential Contradictions and Tensions in Lived Pedagogy

Having outlined the concept of Lived Pedagogy above, this section will point to some concerns regarding the concept and the way it has been operationalized so far. I will do so by addressing three issues central to the research agenda: the concept of 'experience'; how educational practice and

participants are defined; and that Lived Pedagogy seems to have changed to become first and foremost an evaluative device.

On the concept of experience

As already described, researchers utilized diaries and photos to tap into pupils' experiences. In the original research, the data consisted of diaries written by pupils and teacher and of informal comments made by parents. In the later paper (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015) it consisted of pupils' taking photos and then being interviewed, followed by group discussion. Whereas in the former study the data in some sense already had the form of a narrative, in the latter the data consisted of giving reasons for taking specific photos. What remains unclear, however, is how 'experience' is conceptualized.

The inspiration for Lived Pedagogy comes, as noted, from phenomenology and narrative research. Both are concerned with understanding human action as intentional and persons as intentional beings. However, the way meaning is conceptualized in the research on Lived Pedagogy seems at odds with both. When discussing meaning-making from a narrative perspective, Niemi et al. comment that narrative inquiry 'rests on the assumption that we as human beings make sense of random experience by the imposition of story structures on them' (2010, p. 139). Ending the same section, the authors cite Webster and Mertova (2007), who write that 'people make sense of their lives according to the narratives *available to them*' (p. 2; emphasis added). Narratives in such a view are not 'imposed' on 'random experience'—on the contrary, the way experience works is by utilizing already existing frameworks. It is dependent on what is already available. A similar argument can be found in phenomenology. The point of Husserl's concept of the *life-world* or Heidegger's *Being-in-the-World* is not that we built these from 'random experience'. It is rather the other way around: that the world appears to the person as already meaningful (Heidegger, 1962).

In *Lived Pedagogy* the narrative meaning-making is conceptualized as mostly *individual* acts. However, this has little relation to Ricoeur (1992), who is used as reference. In *Oneself as Another*, Ricoeur argues explicitly for an understanding of narrativity that has to do with the other's being central to understanding how 'self' comes to be.

This critique of the research in *Lived Pedagogy* is in line with similar critiques made of research in 'student voice'. For instance, Moore and Muller (1999) point out that what constitutes 'talk' and 'experience' is unclear. Arnot and Reay (2007) discuss the unclear distinction between what is said and what is revealed, and Lewis (2010) asks about the meaning and status of silence (see Klitmøller, 2016). The notion that (interpersonal) meaning in some sense comes *before* personal experience has quite fundamental consequences for our notions of what it is we get when talking with participants about their experience. This is the question of whether voice (be it teachers', pupils', or parents') is independent of the practice in which it appears. That is, whether *Lived Pedagogy* is the sum of individual stories or the 'repository' that lends participants the language in which they speak.

As noted, Niemi and colleagues (2015) use van Manen's (2014) concept of 'lived experience' as a source for the *lived* in *Lived Pedagogy*. When defining his concept of lived experience, van Manen points out that 'experience' cannot readily be separated from 'lived'. On the contrary, the etymological core of the concept already contains *lived*, since experience in German is 'Erleben'. To convey this in English that does not have similar connotations, van Manen chooses to explicitly use 'lived'. It is not meant to add anything, but simply to retain what is already there. It is a reminder

that experience is *always* lived. This non-division of ‘experience’ and ‘lived’ challenges the way that Niemi and colleagues divide ‘lived’ and ‘pedagogy’ into the ‘real’ and ‘ideal’ for teaching.

What counts as educational practice—and for whom

In the existing research on *Lived Pedagogy* it seems that researchers make demarcations of what constitutes educational practice and educational participants in ways that follow from neither phenomenological nor narrative analysis, but rather from common-sense—or perhaps better: institutionalized—divisions. This is particularly clear in the way ‘educational practice’ is operationalized as ‘lessons’ and the way that ‘educational participants’ are operationalized not on the basis of, for instance, how they experience the educational practice, but rather their educational role as either pupils, teacher, or parents.

In the presentation of their research, Niemi and colleagues present some of the choices made concerning the production of data. First of all, the research is school-centric. This may at first glance appear natural—we are after all discussing educational issues. However, in presenting the findings the authors show that what is and is not part of ‘school’ is already a contested question between the participants.

‘The pupils were not supposed to take photographs from the breaks’ (Niemi, Kumpulainen, & Lipponen, 2015, p. 607). It is unclear why such a rule was implemented. If the point is that the experience of pupils is central, why limit the time and space in which they are allowed to take pictures? Pupils seem to have bent the rules and taken photos at other times and places, thus insisting on a different definition of what constitutes school activities. However, there is a further concern: if pupils are only ‘allowed’ to take photos of what is deemed ‘educational’ by the teacher/researcher, are the researchers then limiting the way the photos may ‘comment’ on the Lived Pedagogy? Just as the division into ‘roles’ of the participants it also seems that the research at hand is predefining what counts as educational practice and educational relationships instead of letting such definitions flow from the experience of the participants.

In *Lived Pedagogy* the narratives are arranged by educational role. Pupils, teacher(s), and parents are conceptualized as different groups (Niemi et al., 2010)—and the analysis in the early paper is done by finding overlapping themes across the three roles (my voice, your voice, their voice). This division follows a common-sense logic of schooling (an already established logic of schooling) and it is unclear how it affects the way that narratives are being ‘interrogated’. It would appear that important information could be lost when reducing not only individual stories to collective ones but defining the different ‘groups’ in ways that come from the structure of education, not the experiences of participants. It seems that reflexivity is positioned to carry too much in the analysis. In any case it remains unclear how different aspects related to experience, such as ‘class’ or ‘culture’, were *reflexively* analysed. As already mentioned, the way of grouping may indeed conceal more diversity than it reveals.

What counts as *good* educational practice—and for whom

Teacher, pupils, and parents contribute to diverse as well as common narratives in the original paper thus giving a multivocal empirical base from which to identify the *Lived Pedagogy*. There is a definite shift in the second paper (in which interviews based on photos are used). Here the focus is exclusively on *student* experience. Furthermore, pupils’ experiences are much more clearly utilized as an evaluation of the teacher’s pedagogy (i.e., the intentions the teacher had).

Moreover, the narratives are made for a particular purpose: 'After each research cycle, the teacher compared the results with her practical theory [in which] she emphasized the meaning of active learning, pupils' autonomy and the possibility of expressing their experiences and learning in multiple ways' (Niemi, Kumpulainen, & Lipponen, 2015, p. 609). Lived pedagogy is thus not primarily about what pupils and teachers (and parents) experience, but how the stories that express this experience conform to the pedagogy of the teacher—her 'presumptions, criteria or any conscious activity to design and to enhance learning in the classroom' (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 681).

That *Lived Pedagogy* in the later paper is more an evaluative device than about participants' experience in general may be understood as partly influenced by a particular idea about what we, as educators, want from our pupils. The attempts to lessen the differences of power in the classroom run the risk of foundering when pupils are only asked about what they experience concerning existing classroom practice, rather than making them participate in the discussion of what is valuable to be educated in.

Lived Pedagogy wants to discipline pupils to become more active participants. That this is indeed what is intended follows from their description of the research as a way to make pupils 'accountable stakeholders'. The concept of accountable stakeholders highlights a very specific interpretation of the aims from the participatory pedagogy that forms the background for the teachers' educational goals of developing, I would argue, a tension in the aims that the teacher holds (democratic agency, social nature of learning, evaluation). It is borrowed from a completely different vocabulary of neoliberal, contractual education and it bears connotations of pupils' taking an active part in making themselves the object of education for their own (future) benefit. It suggests that they are *not* at present stakeholders and/or that they are not (or refuse to be made?) accountable.

Summing up and pointing onwards: From voices and pedagogy to deliberation of desirable ends

There is, in the research on *Lived Pedagogy*, a persistent divide in which the actual interactions between participants are not deemed sufficient to evaluate what goes on—and hence pupil experience (in particular, but also teachers') is called upon to interpret the practice. In the end, *Lived Pedagogy* acts as an evaluative device to measure whether pupils experience the educational activities in accordance with the teacher's intentions.

Rather than suggesting possible solutions for each of the issues, I will instead argue that those problems can be seen from a different perspective. It can be interpreted as a consequence of *Lived Pedagogy*'s not sufficiently asking what constitutes the purpose of education. Hence, for the remainder of the paper, I turn my attention to what I consider a fundamental issue that concerns the criteria by which something is deemed educationally valuable. Within the research on *Lived Pedagogy* it concerns an aspect of the 'participatory pedagogy' that does not get much attention in the papers: the intention to let pupils be part of creating 'assessment criteria'. In the following I will, by introducing a redefinition of what 'pedagogy' might be, focus on the way that pupils in *Lived Pedagogy* are excluded from discussing the purpose(s) of their education and how this might be a fruitful agenda for further research in a version of *Lived Pedagogy* that wants to go beyond the 'canonical script of schooling'.

The \$64.000 Question: What Is Pedagogy?

As previously noted, the concept of pedagogy receives only passing attention in *Lived Pedagogy* though the concept is part of the name. Two core issues pertinent to a reorientation of *Lived Pedagogy* will be addressed: (a) that pedagogy has different connotations in Anglo-American versus European contexts, and these have important implications for the issues at hand; and (b) that in a German/European version of pedagogy, deliberation of desirable ends of education is central and can help further develop research in *Lived Pedagogy*.

Just as with the concept of lived experience above, the argument will essentially be this: the fault of *Lived Pedagogy* is that it claims that pedagogy is *not* lived—and that there is something missing that *lived* will help fix. My point will be that just as with experience, the *lived* aspect is already there when it comes to pedagogy. Not acknowledging this is part of the problem. That is, *Lived Pedagogy* makes a forced distinction between *pedagogy* and *lived* that makes one theory and the other practice while at the same time claiming that research into *Lived Pedagogy* bridges that divide.

Differences in connotations about pedagogy—about education or about teaching

A number of researchers have pointed out that the concept of education has significantly different connotations in an Anglo-American setting as opposed to a Continental European setting (Biesta, 2015a; Hopmann & Riquarts, 1995). Whereas *pedagogy* in the Anglo-American sense relates to education as a practice and a field of study, the analysis of which can benefit from different sciences, education in the Continental European sense is both a field of practice and also a discipline (Geisteswissenschaftlich Pädagogik). Crucially, Pädagogik is not limited to the study or theorizing about educational practices as they are institutionalized in, for instance, schools. Rather, it is about how persons come to be part of the wider cultural environment on the one hand (Bildung) and the way that this may be accomplished partly through educational intervention (Erziehung). Immanuel Kant is often the reference point as author of the first modern conception of education as ‘an intergenerational effort to open the possibilities for the emergence of public use of reason thus being the temporal requirement for the processes of Bildung. The function of education as Erziehung is to take part in the process of history outlined in the philosophy of history and the idea of Enlightenment’ (Kivelä, 2012, p. 282).

A crucial aspect is that in this understanding education concerning ‘public use of reason’, education is centrally about becoming able to give reasons for one’s actions and opinions. Whereas the existing research on *Lived Pedagogy* does focus on pupils’ opinions and desires, it does not explicitly deal with the reasons (teacher’s or pupils’) for actions and desires. If there is a deliberation of ends (for instance, the notion of education as the formation of civic persons) it is thoroughly in the background, whereas the ways in which teaching is structured are very much in the foreground.

As such, Pädagogik is a thoroughly normative science, which van Manen also supports: ‘Pedagogy involves us in distinguishing actively and/or reflectively what is good or right and what is life enhancing, just, and supportive from what is not good, wrong, unjust, or damaging in the ways we act, live, and deal with children’ (2015, pp. 19–20).

Given the phenomenological inspiration of his work, van Manen has in mind here a ‘we’ that is about the cultural horizon of society, rather than individual participants’ opinions. That is, the values that are at stake are not to be found in individual desires, but rather in an ongoing deliberation of what is (what should be, in a *public* sense) desirable.

Pädagogik as the deliberation of desirable ends

By ignoring this, *Lived Pedagogy* runs the danger of becoming 'just' a technique. A way to lure pupils to engage more in activities without doing the work of making them able to identify or discuss the validity of these activities or the aims they are intended (consciously or otherwise) to realize—in short, as an instrument for more *effective* education rather than a way to deliberate on making a *better* education.

In his ongoing critique of evidence-based education and the ever growing tendency to measure the outcomes of education, Biesta has coined a phrase to summarize his points: Do we measure what we value or value what we measure? (e.g., Biesta, 2015b). Education—Pädagogik—is ultimately about what we value. However, and quite importantly, it is not a readymade checklist of what we value, but the insistence of a continuing deliberation on this matter. 'I believe that we should still make an effort to speak, not with the ambition to pin down education and fix its meaning once and for all, but in order . . . to show that there are alternatives, that there are differences . . . that do make a difference' (Biesta, 2016, p. 834).

Knowing about the standards that are used to define education is not only nice to have, but imperative, as we may disagree about what makes worthwhile and valuable education (Peters, 1967). To evaluate an educational practice it is necessary to know which values it is working to further.

The crucial question in relation to *Lived Pedagogy* is whether pupils should be part of the discussion of not only educational content and types of activities, but also the discussion about the values that are pursued. Cullingford (2002, 2006) argues that pupils have precious little experience in even being presented with the *reasons* for the tasks they are asked to perform or the content they are taught. Peters continues under the heading 'What Is an Educational Process' delineating what counts as education (rather than, for instance, training): 'For if something is to count as "education," what is learnt must be regarded as worth-while just as the manner in which it is learnt must be regarded as morally unobjectionable' (Peters, 1967, p. 4).

The question to *Lived Pedagogy* is double: Can pupils evaluate a practice if they do not have a clear idea about what the practice is for? And can pupils relevantly be part of discussing educational values? Even though evaluation explicitly is a valuation, it is not quite clear what *Lived Pedagogy* is an evaluation of.

Pädagogik is not just 'being in a relationship with a child'—it is also insisting on keeping alive the discussion of what counts as valuable and desirable, even if at times such judgements may seem obvious and self-evident (or perhaps particularly when this is the case). How certain values are chosen and how teaching is intentionally directed at realizing these is one of the fundamental discussions in educational theory, research and practice. 'The point of education is never that children or pupils [simply] learn, but that they learn *something*, that they learn this for particular *purposes*, and that they learn this from *someone*' (Biesta, 2012, p. 36).

Purposes—ends or aims—are central to what Pädagogik is about. It is not *all* there is to say about what Pädagogik is, but without the deliberation of ends, education is without a core aspect. Whereas the central contribution of research in student voice in general, *Lived Pedagogy* included, is to maintain that pupils can and should be asked about issues concerning their education, the aim of this paper is to insist that this *should* include the purpose(s) of education.

Deliberating what is Desirable: The 'Better Argument' as Tool for Discussing the Purpose(s) of Education

One persistent critique of the German Pädagogik is that it lacks an empirical research tradition (Egelund & Qvortrup, 2014). *Lived Pedagogy* offers an empirical framework and ways to inquire into classroom practice. The argument above is primarily about what the *object* of the research needs to include: how pupils are included in discussing what is educationally desirable. In the following, I will use Løvlie's educational reformulation of Habermas's theory of communicative action and specifically discourse ethics as a way to suggest improvements to *Lived Pedagogy*.

Discourse ethics and the 'better argument'

Løvlie's use of Habermas's concept of *communicative action* is an answer to criticisms directed at 'dialogical pedagogies'—that is, educational theories and methods that focus on the personal relationship between teacher and pupils. The problem with this kind of educational method or theory is that it glosses over the moral aspects of educational action; it 'hides' the moral character of the educational encounter (concerning the *reason* given for educational action) behind the psychological guise of avoiding or solving conflicts (in which the focus is 'getting along'). At the same time, Løvlie's use of Habermas's concepts is purely speculative in the sense that no empirical research has been conducted investigating this way of conducting lessons: opening up for discussing the purpose with pupils.

In an empirical example given by Niemi and colleagues, a single pupil has photographed a girl reading a book. Upon inquiring, the pupil explains that it expresses the desire for having more books read aloud. This sentiment spreads among the other pupils present. The authors write of the teacher's subsequent decision that she 'tried to arrange more time for reading aloud for the pupils. . . A single experience may become a shared experience. In this classroom, for example, the issue would not have been discussed without the presence of the photo' (Niemi, Kumpulainen, Lipponen, et al., 2015, p. 692).

The point, as I have tried to argue above, is not whether more or less reading aloud for the class is effective or whether it is desired by one or many pupils, but rather that what is important is whether it serves what is deemed educationally desirable, and furthermore, that the educational (Pädagogik) question is concerned with the *reasons* that may be given for that activity *in relation to* a notion of what is desirable. That pupils *desire* more reading aloud is not sufficient *reason*—and in the paper no indication is given as to what makes such a change *desirable* (which is not to say that no such reason may exist). This lack of deliberation of what is desirable may well be another way in which *Lived Pedagogy*, contrary to their intention, is enacting the 'canonical script of schooling'.

The idea of communicative action is to follow the way language itself moves towards intersubjective understanding by way of being open to giving reasons for actions (Borman, 2011). Discourse ethics is a way for parties with different horizons to come to a consensus about means and ends of a practice.

Central to Discourse Ethics is the view that the development of moral maturity primarily requires not the transmission or internalization of specific substantive moral values but rather the fostering of a *procedural understanding of what is epistemically entailed by the responsible holding of a moral belief or judgment*. To believe and to judge responsibly is to believe and judge on the basis of reasons. Our moral concept

of responsibility, like that of autonomy, is rooted in the epistemic requirements of coherent and justifiable belief. (Okshevsky, 2004, p. 180; emphasis added)

There is, therefore, on the outset, a belief that the participants are *capable* of giving reasons for their actions. In deliberating about a specific matter both parties must be oriented towards not strategically to come to agreement, but instead,

For both parties the interpretive task consists in incorporating the other's interpretation of the situation into one's own world in such a way that in the revised version "his" external world and "my" external world can—against the background of "our" lifeworld—be relativized in relation to "the" world, and the divergent situation definitions can be brought to coincide sufficiently. Naturally this does not mean that interpretation must lead in every case to a stable and unambiguously differentiated assignment. Stability and absence of ambiguity are rather the exception in the communicative practice of everyday life. (Habermas in Biesta, 1994, p. 310)

The result is not agreement, but *consensus*—the participants accept the reasons as valid for future action (at least until such time as an alternative and mutually accepted 'better' argument is presented). Habermas coined this type of deliberation as an 'ideal speech situation'. Drawing on some of the same understandings of Pädagogik presented above, Løvlie (1984) draws on Habermas's theory of communicative action to suggest ways that differences in opinion may be dealt with so that what is discussed is not a strategic 'how do I get what I want?' but a communicative 'how do we go forward in mutual understanding?'

For Løvlie (1984), the strength of Habermas's theory of communicative action is that it deals head-on with the issue of how to mediate between teacher and pupils given differences in power and knowledge. The core ideas are 'discourse' and 'consensus'. Løvlie contrasts 'discourse' in Habermas's sense from 'negotiation' (in game theory) and 'problem solving' (in recognition-based programs) arguing that neither of the latter two are able to tackle the unequal power relation or necessarily include the intention to discuss the purpose(s) of education.

One might add that a further strength of this type of deliberation is that it connects directly with the pupils larger world. The reasons that can be given for something counting as a purpose and certain activities as realizing (aspects of) that purpose are always bound up with wider societal concerns. *Lived Pedagogy* is well suited, taking the above arguments into account, to address the question of the participants' understanding of and experience with educational ends and with specific goals set for lessons or subjects. As the example with reading suggests, discussions of what is desirable are already taking place in the classroom. Therefore including this perspective—or shifting the research to focusing on these interactions—is, to my mind, quite reasonable within the concept of *Lived Pedagogy*.

Lived Pedagogy, Discourse Ethics, and the Purpose(s) of Education

In this paper, I have made the case that *Lived Pedagogy* as presently conceived has a number of problems stemming from contradictory interests that it tries to mediate and a less than clear interpretation of its theoretical base. As a suggestion for improvement, I have argued that although *Lived Pedagogy* aims at listening to pupils, it is harbouring a 'silent' division: educational practice may well be improved by pupils' being 'heard'—but this 'listening' has definite boundaries. There is, it seems, a suspicion that pupils should not be invited into deliberation about the purpose of their education, but only about how they like to fulfil it.

As I have claimed several times above, the main point of the present paper has been to argue that *Lived Pedagogy* may indeed be a valuable contribution to the *empirical* investigation of educational practice with its focus on how pedagogy is conducted in actual practice rather than as a separate ‘ideal’ that teachers hold for their teaching. Combined with a focus from Pädagogik on how the purpose of educational practice is essentially part of what pedagogy (Pädagogik) is, makes it imperative that pupils’ understanding of and participation in the deliberation of these purposes receive attention.

The question remains as to *when* and with regard to *which* decisions pupils of a young age can deliberate. The present paper has first and foremost argued that some of the concepts developed to precisely engage pupils—for instance, student voice research, pedagogy in practice (Hadar & Hotam, 2012; Hotam & Hadar, 2013), and *Lived Pedagogy*—fall short of addressing the issue. The issue is less with how pupils are asked to deliberate or not, but more with a lack of overall discussion of what constitutes the purpose of education. As the Danish phenomenologist Løgstrup (1985) says about ‘conducting school’: when discussing the main purpose(s) of school, what is most important is that we always keep in mind the most difficult one(s) in order not to forget them when addressing other issues in educational practice.

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