

Comparing and Contrasting Approaches to Education for Transition and Transformation

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Abstract

A comparative analysis of two approaches to education in two academic literatures in two languages is the basis for discussion of how education systems should respond to contemporary transitions in the world in an Anthropocene age. The first approach is based in francophone literature and argues for an 'individual pedagogical education' in contrast to the 'social normative education' which dominates mainstream education in France. The second anglophone approach focuses on how education can – and in experimentation has already – prepare learners for social action as denizens of their community even before they are formally citizens, with voting and similar rights. The combination of the two approaches suggests that current global transitions demand responses which involve substantial transformations in learners and that education systems must accept this responsibility.

Keywords : education, pedagogy, interculturality, transformation, citizenship, transitions

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to suggest how education systems ought to respond to changes or 'transitions' in the contemporary world and to do so by comparing different discourses and perspectives, from two academic literatures, one 'francophone' and one 'anglophone'. Note that the scare quotes around these terms indicate that to categorise literatures in terms of the language they are written in is a simplification which nonetheless serves to highlight the need to look across the limits which our languages may impose on our (academic) worlds (Mazenod 2018)¹.

We first analyse two perspectives on pedagogy within the French educational system, and in doing so suggest that comparisons should not be simply between systems (Schweisfurth et al., 2022) but within systems. The comparison is between a dominant social normative tradition and an individual-focused pedagogy, which is present in the system but only in a limited way. We critique the former and argue that the latter offers a better understanding of learners today. We then add an example research and practice from education in England, with its tradition of a more individualised pedagogy, and show how this work on citizenship education complements the call for individualised pedagogy in France and can also address the issues of transitions.

We then turn to 'transitions' and the need to respond to them with 'transformations'. Transitions are events in the contemporary world such as the impact of human beings on the environment, the effect of neo-liberal capitalism on societies, the mounting need for effective social justice, and more. Transformations refers to the potential responses from education systems as conceived in the vision of education of our combined French and English perspectives. It includes the proposal that people of any age in formal and non-formal education should be helped to understand the transitions and how they can immediately respond by developing their learning into activism in local and global communities, thus contributing to 'transformations in the world' whilst experiencing 'personal transformation'.

Two perspectives within the 'francophone' tradition

Inspired by Rousseau (1966, 39-44) who discusses two possible but not univocal educations of the human being, the work of Chalmel (2011, 2015), and Many (2016) identifies two educational processes with social aims (a 'didactic/didactique' approach focused on a social self) or individual aims (a 'pedagogical/pédagogique' approach aiming at the development of the individual self). Each of these processes of education - defined as the 'art of shaping a person (...) by developing their physical, intellectual and moral qualities, so as to enable them to face their personal and social life with a sufficiently fulfilled personality'² - has divergent aims with respect to identity, culture, and the relationship with the world and the planet and are fundamentally different paradigmatic conceptualisations.

¹ There is remarkably little concern with the difficulties of translation in comparative education studies. Phillips and Schweisfurth (2014) is an introductory text which devotes a page of commentary, but other such texts do not, and a search of major journals revealed no articles focussing on the issues. Alexander is, as we shall see below, an exception.

² Education. In Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et lexicales. <https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/éducation>.

First, let us clarify the meaning of the terms 'didactic' and 'pedagogic', for as Alexander (2009 p. 925) argues, comparativists need to be sensitive to the problems of translation because differences in meaning of apparently similar terms “subtly align the educational agenda along culturally-distinctive lines even before one starts investigating the detail of [policy and practice]”. Didactic/didactique refers to a scientific discipline focused on the transmission of knowledge which aims to make the learner acquire a given concept, operation or work technique (Palmade, 2018). The term pedagogy/pédagogie is seen as an 'art of teaching' coming from two words in Greek, *Paidos* (meaning 'child') and *Agein* (meaning 'bring') referring, in antiquity, to the slave bringing his master's child to school (Meirieu 1999; 2017). This image reflects the pedagogical symbolism of the relationship to the learner. Pédagogie is not a science but an articulation of educative theory and practice as well as being an ethic of being towards others and the world (Houssaye et al., 2002; Chalmel, 2015, 2018).

In this text, we shall demonstrate that the pedagogical approach refers to a personalised education involving relationships, subjectivity, theory-and-practice and ethics in learning, and we argue that, in France, schooling has an approach which is didactic and normative, focused on the development of the individual as a social being, a citizen and a social self. Based on our and others' research, we propose an alternative which is pedagogical and which emphasises the psycho-social development of the individual, the individuality of self.

Social normative education

Dominant in the French education system, social normative education favours 'the construction of the social ego by impoverishing the aspirations of the ego' (Chalmel, 2015, 10) through a process of conforming socially from a young age. It is prescribed by a rationalist, scientific (Desmet and Pourtois, 1997) and neo-liberal capitalist system of thought leading to didactic and technocratic orientations (Chalmel, 2015), where individuals are destined to become 'citizen individuals, the 'social ego' (Chalmel, 2011) or 'cultural being[s]', the core of whose ego is subject to and obedient to social conformity' (Devereux, cited in Policar, 2009, 102). As a consequence individuals risk psychosocial involution (becoming a 'marginal self', Chalmel et al., 2020), and regress on affective, cognitive, social and ideological dimensions when their psychosocial needs are not satisfied or they lack personal, social, material, resources (Desmet et Pourtois, 1997). The intensity of normative and coercive demands can lead them to no longer engage in a process of affiliation, to no longer resort to a form of fulfilment or to deny themselves any form of autonomy or adherence to a corpus of shared values, eventually leading them to a 'collapse of identity' (Humbeeck and al., 2012, 12). Their educational socialisation puts emphasis not on their individuality but on a normative 'unity and coherence of the whole process' (Chalmel, 2018a, 127-135). From this perspective of social uniformity, the value of their identity becomes dependent on their knowledge and know-how (performance, skills,) and their social being (behaviour, appearance, status, reputation, heritage, skills).

Being the product of an ideological historical construction, notably with the Platonic school, the philosophers of the Enlightenment and the current of Modernity (Many, 2016; Houssaye, 1988; Desmet and Pourtois, 1997, 2004), social normative education is inspired by a social ideal 'where the notion of the subject has no place' (Desmet and Pourtois, 1997, 29) and a bureaucratic ideal 'where members of a system are protected, directed, oriented' (Houssaye et al., 2002, 61-62). Based on the Kantian morality of duty (Avanzi, 2011), social normative education is realised in practice by the didactic approach, a scientific discipline centred on the production and transmission of knowledge, know-how and interpersonal

skills to be intellectually assimilated in accordance with institutional norms and criteria. It is a matter of transferable knowledge, know-how and interpersonal skills as deductive data and of models which can be generalised, are independent of learning contexts, and are based on reference systems. These elements are assessed not according to the learners' progress but according to their conformity to norms established by institutional systems and by the expert (teacher). Their action is thus based on the authority of the expert teacher and on the probity of science, that serves as law (Houssaye et al., 2002, 17-63). With no regard for the relational, subjective, emotional and contextual dimensions of learners and a focus on the teacher's superior position as expert, the learner becomes an object of knowledge with little consideration of reflective work, critical approaches, creativity, risk-taking and acceptance of failure. This didactic approach proceeds in a functional (Chalmel 2011, 74-75; and technocratic manner in educational, socio-educational, medical and managerial fields.

The initial humanist vocation of enlightening and developing free and autonomous minds (Bernatchez, 2007; Houssaye, 1988) has given way to the prescription of knowledge intellectually tested in the laboratory or in the natural environment by econometrics without 'real repercussions in a person's life' (Wallenhorst and Piéron, 2019, 149), and has also been the focus of post-colonial critiques (Macintyre et al., 2023). Founded on rationalism initially thought of as emancipation for the human being in order to escape his obsession and his confinement 'in individualism, nationalism and fundamentalism', normative social education has contributed to the development of this 'instrument of power and domination' over the self (Desmet and Pourtois, 1997, 29) by transforming the relationship of self to the other and to the world into 'knowing' and 'doing', by separation from 'being'.

Normative social education has thus produced an ontological transformation of people into individuals who become 'objects and products': of 'knowledge' (in Education) of 'care' (in Medicine) and 'human capital' (in Management). Normative social education also affects the professionals who become 'technician educators' (in Education and Social Welfare) 'caregivers or performers' (in the medical world) and 'institutional promoters' as far as managers are concerned, for example the 'Heads of Service' in socio-educational environments. Yet, in all of these, there are people who are 'accompanied' and others who are their 'accompaniers', by which we mean learners, patients who benefit from medical or social arrangements, employees etc and the corresponding teachers, educators, caregivers, managers etc 'Accompaniment' (in French 'accompagnement') has thus a general sense of a form of 'mentoring', of 'buddy-system', of 'mediation', and 'coaching' depending on context. It is in 'individual pedagogical education' that 'accompagnement/accompagnement' is fully recognised.

Individual pedagogical education

Education of an independent self focuses on the knowledge, appropriation and progressive evolution of the individuality of the subject (ego) who through their engagement in both educational theory and practice creates their own theorisations and is active in their own transformations (Chalmel, 2010, 144) in the context of their psychosocial development (Desmet and Pourtois, 1997) which leads to the development of capabilities (Nussbaum, 2012). Stemming from a lineage of 'pedagogues' (Comenius, Pestalozzi, Hameline), education of an independent self aims to develop an emancipated, fulfilled, autonomous and mature adult committed to bringing about a desirable and sustainable world. The value of one's identity is based not on the perspective of becoming someone (efficient, important, beautiful, successful,) but because one is who one is, in one's identity and one's original,

singular, complex value as a human being (in one's roots, one's personality, one's talents and resources, one's aspirations and limits).

Here, there is a process of differentiation, a 'positive socialisation', which allows the individual to blossom into who they are, by taking into account their psychosocial needs and 'accompanying' them towards processes of affiliation, fulfilment, and social and ideological autonomy. Through different pedagogies, each of these processes leads the person towards the satisfaction and development of their affective, cognitive, social and ideological needs. These processes support the development of their identity, 'the blossoming and inclusion within the human community with which [they] share a set of values' (Humbeeck and al., 2012, 10) with the 'culture en soi' (understanding of one's own psychic life) complemented by 'culture' (understanding of the culture and society in which one lives (Polcar, 2009, 102). Daubigny captures this as follows: :

Culture in itself is a means of unification that favours the survival and development of human potentialities and it is culture that is the source of the symbolic activities that (...) liberate their aptitudes for individuation, differentiation and socialisation (2007, 17 – our translation)

The emphasis is on the (trans)formation of learners through their role as 'the driving force and creator of culture and of the interaction of language and culture in the construction of meaning' (Venel-Guignard, 2012, 80). This approach contrasts with the teaching of culture as monolithic, intellectualist, technicist and culturalist products (Venel-Guignard, 2012; Abdallah-Pretceille, 1999) through knowledge which has to be assimilated in abstract and stereotyped ways as 'culture', however varied the latter actually is (Dervin and Tournebise, 2012; Abdallah-Pretceille, 2003; Dervin, 2009, with Debono, 2012). This 'intercultural approach' thus supports the promotion of an intercultural pedagogy (Abdallah-Pretceille, 1999), which emphasises the universal and unique recognition of people, and in which it is not the accumulation of knowledge and information which is determining, but a procedure which is empathetic and based on experience of encounters and otherness. It is a matter of understanding the other and the relationship to the other through the promotion of a cultural knowledge in action.

In general, individual pedagogical education is a global, interactional, contextualised, reflective and theoretical-practical education based on complexity in reality and knowledge (Morin, 2016; Galvani, 2008) which is proposed to and discussed with individuals with a view to developing their cognitive ergonomics (specific and oriented knowledge, construction of meaning), their knowing how to act (mobilising and transposing their knowledge in a given context) and an ethical attitude (acting with truth, justice, fraternity, goodness). It is about learning legitimate, didactic (disciplinary) and pedagogical (theoretical-practical) knowledge (Houssaye et al., 2002, 5). The learning spaces or possibilities are empowering (Fernagu Oudet, 2012) and transferable through the 'three stages of learning necessary for the acquisition of capabilities: understanding, acting, transferring' (Chalmel, 2018a, 15) leading the person towards their metamorphosis from agent to author-creator.

The pedagogue is a theorist-practitioner of contextualised educational action, who constantly (re)questions by accepting to let go of their certainties in the face of complexity (Morin, 2016; Morin et al., 2015) and who follows an inductive logic by combining practices, experiences, theories allowing them to invent models, concepts or processes. He is in a position of educational benevolence and proposes to the 'accompanied' person an interaction in an educational reciprocity of 'heart-head-hand' in the Pestalozzi sense (Brühlmeier, 2010). At the heart of the educational and relational processes, the

'accompagnier' must look out for possible relational and cognitive resistance, manage the levels of educational constraints due to institutional frames of reference, and be a coherent figure enabling the other person to find their bearings (Chalmel, 2015, 13-24) at the heart of the postmodern paradigm which resounds with lack of reference points and existential certainties (Ibid., 298-299).

Education of an independent self is an 'ethic, a way of being towards the world and others' (Chalmel, 2015, 9) linked to human development (substantial freedoms, possibilities of choosing and acting offered to everyone, according to Nussbaum, 2012 and Sen, 1999). More than a social duty which is related to power and constraint, (Chalmel 2018b), the personal conscience and ethic of accompaniment must be based on an ethic of conviction and responsibility (Weber, 2004) through virtuous action. It is because the individual subject will feel accepted and accompanied in their free will with 'care' and 'attention' in an educational framework which is personalised and offers security, that they will learn for themselves in order then to demonstrate to others - and themselves become - an ethical model.

In practice, in addition to the work of teacher-researcher pedagogues (Meirieu, 1999, 2017; Houssaye, 1988, 2002; Macaire, 2020), in France educational activities and reflections related to the individual pedagogical approach are usually to be found among 'militant' teachers in ordinary or alternative schools who have broken away from traditional forms of teaching, or parents who do home schooling (Leroy, 2022). The approach is still to be grounded in mainstream schooling where, despite transitions over many decades of modernist institutional policies are still dominant.

Complementing with an example from an 'anglophone' perspective

The example from the 'anglophone' position to which we turn next recognises and accepts the *individual pedagogical education* presented above. It does so relatively easily since, at the anglophone system level 'the focus remains on the individual child and their innate abilities' in contrast to the emphasis in France on 'the need for equity and common experience' (Osborn et al., 2003 p. 40 and p. 41). We shall demonstrate how this 'anglophone' work on 'intercultural citizenship' can complement the relative lack of practice in the French system, and is particularly relevant because it offers an approach to transitions and transformations.

Intercultural citizenship is not such a sharp contrast to dominant mainstream education in England as the position we have taken vis à vis the dominant tradition in France, although there is an implicit critique as we identify needs for improvement and change. It also has a different kind of origin, arising from the specific developments of intercultural education in language teaching and intercultural citizenship across the curriculum rather than from a broad perspective on education in general although it can be related *post hoc* to work on critical literacies and pedagogies (Porto 2022). It is, furthermore, found in practical experimentation in a number of countries, and not confined to England.

'Education for intercultural citizenship' was a development from the aims and purposes of foreign language teaching in mainstream education. The perspective has broadened in recent years to encompass other subject areas and to promote similar educational aims in other subjects.

The aims and purposes of foreign language teaching in England were first articulated in a national policy in the 1970s. Up to that point there had been no national direction or policy-making and curricula were determined by teachers and schools, strongly influenced by the syllabi and examination contents proposed by examination authorities. Syllabi were lists of what was to be learnt and did not usually include clear statements of educational aims; these remained implicit; this was a social, normative approach. A review of education put in place by Prime Minister James Callaghan in the early 1970s led to national policy documents stating, for the first time, educational aims for the dominant subjects in schooling, and the content and methodology to be used (Batteson, 1997).

The document for foreign language teaching emphasised that it should lead to learners having communication skills in a language and, secondly, tolerance and understanding of people of other countries, in effect an articulation of what was commonly understood as the purposes of language teaching by most if not all language teachers. In practice the first aim – of developing learners' communication skills – continued to dominate since it was the focus of examinations. Research demonstrated that, despite teachers' stated intentions, language teaching had no measurable and little observable effect on learners' attitudes towards or understanding of other peoples and countries. As a consequence, a model of 'intercultural communicative competence' was developed to help teachers define intercultural competences – which included attitudes to and understanding of other peoples and countries – in such a way that they could be used for systematic planning in teaching and assessment. This model included however not only competences in skills, attitudes and knowledge of a didactic approach but also autonomous critical thinking and analysis of cultural phenomena in other social groups and one's own of an individual pedagogical approach. This was labelled 'critical cultural awareness' and defined (in 1997, 53) as 'an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries' and in a revised version as 'an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of an explicit, systematic process of reasoning, values present in one's own and other cultures and countries.'

As a second step and in a later publication, 'critical cultural awareness' was linked to an emphasis on young people taking political action in their community as they might be encouraged to do in education for citizenship. However, it was argued that education for citizenship is focused almost exclusively on the skills, knowledge and attitudes of national citizenship, any reference to an international perspective being slight and under-developed. It was further argued that combining the aims and teaching methods from foreign language learning and citizenship education would expand the focus to include transnational concerns and a sense that 'community' is not simply local and national but also international. The label 'intercultural citizenship' was used because intercultural communicative competences would be needed in teaching and learning activities where young people would take into consideration transnational perspectives in their response to, and activity to change and improve upon, societal problems. Intercultural citizenship education was described as:

- causing / facilitating intercultural citizenship experience, and analysis and reflection on it (and on the possibility of further social and/or political activity, where 'political' is taken in broad sense to mean activity which involves working with others to achieve an agreed end)
- creating learning/change in the individual: cognitive, attitudinal, behavioural change; change in self-perception / spirituality; change in relationships with Others i.e. people of different social groups; change which is based in the particular but is related to the universal.

(Alred et al., 2006, 122)

A number of projects have been developed and evaluated based on this perspective. Teachers and researchers in Europe and the Americas have cooperated at all levels of education to experiment and implement the concept of intercultural citizenship, and have subsequently published their work (Wagner et al. 2018).

The inspiration for 'critical cultural awareness' as an aim of language teaching and then across the curriculum came from the German tradition of 'politische Bildung' and 'Demokratie Lernen' (Gagel, 2000; Himmelmann, 2001, 2003). It was also influenced by contemporaneous work on 'citizenship education' in Britain (Crick, 1998) which emphasised that young people are not 'citizens-in-waiting' but, as denizens of their society, can and should take action to make societal changes for the better. 'Action in the community' as practised in citizenship education is further reinforced by the theory of 'service learning' and the concept of 'intercultural service learning' (Rauschert, 2014).

In the course of experimentation, the application of the concept of intercultural citizenship began to include work in classrooms and subject areas other than foreign languages. National citizenship education is often located within social sciences, but it has been shown that an intercultural citizenship project can be planned with contributions from mathematics education and science education as well as social studies (Wagner and al., 2019).

From the 'francophone' perspective described above, it might be thought that, because it draws on traditions of citizenship education which emphasise acquiring the attitudes, skills and knowledge of (national) citizens, intercultural citizenship education could be an element of social normative education and encourage learners to become 'citizen individuals, the 'social ego' or 'cultural being[s]', the core of whose ego is subject to and obedient to social conformity'. Biesta too critiques the socialisation function of education which 'has to do with the many ways in which, through education, we become members of and part of particular social, cultural and political "orders"' (2009, 40). He contrasts this with 'subjectification' which is *not* about the insertion of 'newcomers' into existing orders', comparable to Chalmers's 'normative socialisation' (2018a), but 'about ways of being that hint at independence from such orders; ways of being in which the individual is not simply a 'specimen' of a more encompassing order' (ibid. emphasis in original). Biesta thus echoes the position taken in the critique of social normative education described above. However, 'critical cultural awareness' and intercultural citizenship is much more than a 'hint at independence'. It leads learners to critique and evaluation of social phenomena within the culture of a social group – whether large or small, whether a family group or a national group, for example - and irrespective of whether it is a group to which 'we' belong or another. The critique involves judgement about the values attached to social practices by members of a group, and this raises the question of whether there is a universal moral basis for evaluation or whether there can only be a moral relativist stance. A middle way is sought in the work of Isaiah Berlin and his concept of 'value pluralism' (Berlin, 1990), and is complemented by drawing on the theory of human capabilities of Martha Nussbaum (2011, 2012).

The concept of 'criticality' is based on the work of Gagel (2000), who suggests that the central, unifying purpose of *politische Bildung* (political education in the narrower sense) and *sozialwissenschaftliche Bildung* (social science education more generally) is the concept of *politisches Bewusstsein* (political awareness or consciousness) defined as critical awareness, independent judgement and political engagement. The pre-condition for political engagement is that the citizen becomes conscious of the relationship between the life of the

individual and social processes and structures. Political awareness is formed through the recognition of one's own interests and through the experience of social conflicts and relationships of governance. The politically conscious and informed person should not be a passive object of politics, but as a subject should participate in political activities as a citizen (Gagel, 2000, 27). 'Action in the community' is thus inspired by both German and British theoretical writings.

Comparisons and complementarities

Our over-riding purpose, as stated initially, is to consider how education systems should respond to transitions in the world, and to do so we decided that a comparative approach would help us to re-analyse our ideas hitherto and to use the heuristic function of comparison/juxtaposition to take them further. The first effect of this, as we have seen, is to make us aware of the difficulties of translation in comparative analysis, and of how the discourse and writing traditions in one language (in this case French) challenge the discourse and writing traditions in another (English) and vice versa,³. Key examples are the (French) 'accompagnement' and the difference between 'pédagogie' and pedagogy', addressed above.

Once these difficulties have been overcome, as far as is possible, we can turn to Wolhuter et al. (2022) who offer an approach to comparing different perspectives on or 'narratives' about education, albeit without reflecting on the languages in which those narratives are created and what happens to them when they are translated (in fact, they cite only anglophone literature and thus avoid the issues, perhaps unconsciously.) They identify four narratives: human capabilities, neoliberal economics, human rights, and social justice.

From the Francophone mainstream educational perspective described above, education has been greatly influenced by 'economic orthodoxy' (Ben-Abid and Bennaghmouch-Maire, 2018, 49-59), particularly with the concept of efficiency, whose indicators measure academic performance, learning outcomes, etc. Its frame of reference refers to 'the way in which it is assessed and therefore to a certain vision of society' through 'competency-based pedagogies, introduced in schools in order to measure the achievements of pupils, [which] are derived from the labour market (...) which means, in passing, that the school is subservient to the business world' (Weisser, Op. Cit., 55). Social normative education can thus be compared and aligned with the Neoliberal Economics narrative (Gohier and Fabre, 2015) that determines the direction of education from the central principle of economic productivity (Robeyns, 2006). This views human beings as units of production and consumption, with notions of economic performance and production being the 'summum bonum' (Wolhuter and Van der Walt, 2019). It is a narrative model that advocates education based on notions of quality assurance, efficiency and management developing useful and relevant competences (op. cit., 2019) and educational outcomes for economic purposes. The social aims of social normative education also focus on competences that are in line with and subordinated to this logic.

Individual pedagogical education, on the other hand, seems to be in line with two types of narrative – concerning Human Capabilities and Human Rights – as described by Wolhuter et al. (2022). It is comparable to the central theorem of Nussbaum (2012) and Sen (1999)

³ There is a growing interest in and awareness of the role of languages, language repertoires, interpretation and translation in empirical research (Holmes et al 2022) but here we refer to the problems of conceptual research which may easily be forgotten too.

concerning the ethical and social issue of defending the creation of the educational conditions (freedoms, opportunities,) for individual goals of fulfilment and optimal psychosocial development of human beings (Algraini, 2021). It also follows these same narratives in their objectives of individual (not social) excellence and social citizenship (Robeyns, 2006; Nussbaum, 2000; Biesta, 2013) and the perfectibility of man, his fundamental, natural and inalienable rights as well as his right to education for peace (UNESCO, 2006; United Nations, 2011) in line with the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789, embodied in the French Constitution since 1791.

The 'anglophone' model of intercultural citizenship described above does not initially declare affiliation with any of these narratives but seeks to be 'neutral' in the definition of critical cultural awareness as 'an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of an explicit, systematic process of reasoning, values present in one's own and other cultures and countries'. This definition is then further refined as the ability to 'identify and interpret explicit or implicit values in documents and events in one's own and other cultures' and to 'make an evaluative analysis of the documents and events based on a conscious process of reasoning'. However, since 'evaluate' is used in the sense of 'to express in terms of something already known' (Oxford English Dictionary), there is a need to establish what is 'known', and teachers who have implemented this model have turned to human rights as their 'narrative'. Wolhuter and al. (2022, 10) point out that a 'Human Rights' position can be critiqued as universalist and sullied by association with a neo-liberal agenda. This makes the issue of whether the anglophone model should actively promote a specific set of values, such as Human Rights, all the more difficult to decide. A 'value pluralist' stance (Berlin, 1990), and an appeal to Nussbaum's (2011) 'capabilities' has thus far been the response.

Berlin (1990, 11) defines value pluralism as different from moral relativism. It is:

The conception that there are many different ends that men (sic) may seek and still be fully rational, fully men, capable of understanding each other and sympathising and deriving light from each other, as we derive it from reading Plato or the novels of medieval Japan – worlds, outlooks, very remote from our own.

Value pluralism has several important characteristics. First, there is the idea of 'core values'. Although there is a vast range of values and behaviours observable in human individuals and groups of individuals, there is a fundamental commonality which distinguishes the human from the non-human. However, 'core values' are not all shared by all; every social group has its own sub-set of such values. Secondly, value pluralism recognises that core values are incommensurable; 'liberty' and 'duty' for example cannot be compared and ranked as one more important than the other; they are simply different each from the other. In any set of values shared by a particular group of people, there are contrasting and clashing values which cannot be resolved into a hierarchy. Thirdly, since different groups have different sub-sets of values, in principle there is no *a priori* position from which to pass judgement on a group. This is what makes value pluralism sound like relativism except that there are the core values, and they can be used to call into question the culture of a group. The absence of some values, e.g. individual liberty, in one group and their presence in another makes the second a better place to live. The more core values are present in a group's way of life, the better. Such judgements also include analysing our own values. This then allows us to make judgements about groups – including our own – and their ways of living, whereas in relativism there can be no judgement made at all.

Fourthly, although there must be some values from the core in the sub-set held by each group of people, they are not necessarily the same ones. The particular combinations of values in different groups is – and this is our suggestion – a matter of 'family resemblance'. There are some characteristics shared by some members of a family but not all, and yet there is overlap which makes it possible to see that all are of the same family. This 'overlap' allows us to use our creative imagination to 'live into' other groups' ways of life and values and this gives us a better foundation for making judgements. In other words, 'by the force of imaginative insight' (Berlin, 1990, 10) – not least through various genres of creative literature – it is possible to engage with other people's ways of being and seeing the world.

In the francophone literature, the 'accompaniers' of pedagogic education believe that the values and moral positions of individuals are a matter of personal conscience and ethics of each individual based on their own free will and a positive attitude towards others with the concern to do good (Chalmel, 2018b). They are necessarily transmitted by a memory, a history, an affiliation that allow subjects to be inscribed in a human history and to become the author of their own life (Bertrand, 2008, 394-395). More than theoretical precepts on behaviour, these narratives proceed from what is expressed or known but also from what has been transmitted through ideological commonplaces (currents of thought such as the Judeo-Christian heritage, the philosophy of the Enlightenment or the postmodern current acting as theories, metanarratives). According to these influences, doing good was based on philosophical and religious principles to which individuals, over the centuries, have attached a 'truth value' that has guided their educational foundations as much as their moral or ethical postures ((Soëtard and Le Bouëdec, 2011).

Currently, it is no longer traditional markers that identify individuals but their plural participation in different cultural and social universes (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2005, 38-41). As a result, norms and morals can be dissonant or posited as equivalent (cultural relativism), which generates 'the inability to choose and therefore to act' of individuals. This situation is linked to the weak transmission of heritages, traditions and implicit values as well as to an 'ethical vacuum' in French civil and secular society, which could generate the return of fundamentalism. It is in this sense that Abdallah-Pretceille advocates the 'objectification of norms and values' which is the fruit of a deliberate common agreement by all the actors of an objectified, rational and secular ethical philosophy. This position thus defends the principle of secularism in France – the neutrality of public services and institutions, separation of church and state and freedom of conscience – as a value (i.e. attitudes adopted by individuals whatever their ideological positions) and not as an ideology, a dogma or political religion that replaces current ideologies. Not dependent on an instrumental logic, this social ethics would be the foundation of a society that 'it would be advisable to hand over to the actors themselves because ethics is not imposed, it is embodied through behaviours and actions' (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2005, 40), and here we see the common ground with 'action in the community' of the anglophone perspective.

Furthermore, both 'anglophone' and 'francophone pedagogic' educational perspectives value critical awareness and analysis as part of responsible, supportive and transformative citizenship. In addition to creative literature (Berlin, 1990), 'identity interrogation' (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2005) based on the recognition of self and others is another way to engage with others' ways of being and seeing the world. Venel-Guignard (2012, 77) locates it in 'a mirror game' through the 'intercultural awareness' of what otherwise remains implicit. In other words, it is thanks to what the Other sends back that the subject becomes aware of his or her own cultural conditioning, values and frames of reference in order to then be able to get to know the other's culture. This reciprocal familiarization and socialization through cultural

diversity makes it possible to communicate, understand and act with respect to what each person reveals as a product and producer of many cultures (Venel-Guignard, 2012, 80). Without 'denying a part of their own being' that remains committed to one's own culture, this work on self and with others can assess similarities and overlaps in values (Berlin, 1990) and foster 'adherence to shared values' (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2005).

Responses in Practice to Transitions and Transformations

For the past few decades, we have been experiencing both paradigmatic transitions (end of Modernity to the Postmodern era) and geological transitions (Kuen, 2002; Wallenhorst and Piéron, 2019; Desmet and Pourtois, 1997) since we entered the Anthropocene era, a new geological period and 'the name of a weakening of the living fabric of the world, the repercussions of which affect human life in society' (Wallenhorst, 2020, 9). These periods of transition generate existential anguish, deconstructions of meaning, uncertainties about the quality of life and about a possible future. The dissolution of ideologies, utopias, and meaning - relativism and dissensus of values, an unsustainable dominant economic model, the destructive hybris of human beings - forces individuals to adapt and find their own meaning within themselves (Desmet and Pourtois, 1997). These transitions are, among other things, the result of an anthropocentric humanism that despoils nature (Wallenhorst and Piéron, 2019), of systems of thought that alienate individuals (Hétier, 2021, 2022), and of a one-dimensional science (Morin, 2016) leading to a closed educational thinking about what 'being human' is.

There is therefore a question of responsibility seen as an 'ethical imperative', and the call for sustainability of our world and the human adventure (Crispi, 2015; Renouard et al., 2020; Wallenhorst and Piéron, 2019) and we see 'interculturality' as one of the educational means of creating 'transformations in the service of transitions' in the terms of the Interculturalities Chair (University of Haute-Alsace, France - www.chaire-interculturalites.uha.fr).

Interculturality is a 'processual vision, in movement, of the work of co-constructions that take place between people from 'different countries' when they interact' (Debono and Dervin, 2012, p. 6) in spaces of encounters (profiles, themes and cultures,) which are experienced in the process of mirroring⁴ and cultural knowledge in action. It is also a process of research (epistemologies, disciplines, knowledge, levels of reality,) understand in a 'dialogue of knowledge' (Galvani, 2008, p. 13). Whether in practice or in education, it is based 'on respect for the other and his or her culture where the aim is to arrive not only at coexistence but above all to understand each other and to produce things together' (Rafoni, 2003, p. 24).

It is within this framework that the Interculturalities Chair/Department has offered Study Days and a process of reflection and exchange between teacher-researchers in an intercultural and active approach. The aim of these days was to identify different issues and research perspectives on transitions (ecological, social, etc.) in an attempt to respond to contemporary societal challenges. For most of them, it was a question of 'reshuffling the deck and teaching differently' based on scientific knowledge - interdisciplinary and collaborative work comparing points of view – (citizen initiatives, meetings with local leaders, and the connection with ethical issues, etc). It is therefore a perspective which is

⁴ Following Venel-Guignard (2012, p.71) 'The gaze of the Other, through a game of mirrors, makes it possible to begin reflection on the relationship between language, culture and identity, which is necessary for the acceptance of the Other in his diversity'.

'multidisciplinary' with mutual recognition and decompartmentalization of disciplines and 'paradigmatic', challenging and redefining concepts that contributes to the re-founding of a framework for interpreting knowledge education 'in' the Anthropocene with the aim of educating, informing and introducing participants to the place of humans in their relations with themselves, others and nature.

At the heart of these paradigmatic transitions, this reinterpretation also signals an intercultural approach through a 'multi-referential' education (Desmet and Pourtois, 1997, pp. 305-311) whose pedagogical principles focus on subjectivisation, complexity, creation and mediation. Through a holistic and interdisciplinary focus, critical self-analysis and 'intersubjective communication in which others constitute a form of mediation between existing knowledge and the subject's basic knowledge', this 'postmodern education' aims at transforming subjects not into social agents but into authors, actors and creators.

In a parallel development, theory of intercultural citizenship developed at the University of Durham, has been used in experimental projects in several countries. The early work emphasised the importance of 'action in the community' and the re-definition of 'community' as encompassing not only local and national groups and identities, but also transnational groups and identities formed through cooperation – usually across the internet – among learners of different countries. The advent of Covid-19 led to extensions of this work to take into consideration the emotional development of learners facing extreme and unknown circumstances (Porto et al., 2021). All of which has led to theoretical reflections on ethical matters, in particular the 'transformation' of learners in ways which go beyond familiar processes of learning.

A question then arises peculiar to the (European) contexts in which the theory of individual pedagogical education and education for intercultural citizenship have developed: How such transformation creates a responsible citizen at the heart of the heterogeneity of a European civilisation? For example, in intercultural citizenship projects which bring together learners from different European countries. For it is the aim of such projects that learners acquire an additional identification with a transnational group as they work together on a transitional phenomenon which they see in their own societies and which they can better analyse and understand through transnational cooperation and action.

For the sociologist Edgar Morin (cited in Abdelmalek, 2004), the identity unity of the subject must not be diluted by multiplicity, by change or by a transnational identity stemming from a 'primary European essence or substance' (European Man 'homo-europeanus', Op. Cit., 99) because of the 'dialogical' and 'recursive' principles of living systems within a 'multiple and complex' Europe. Secondly, this learning is inevitably inscribed in a reality, which is both complex and contextual, through the learner's action (Op. cit., 111-116). Learning to be a citizen thus engages each subject in his or her identity process, which is 'affective, cognitive, and the representation of oneself in one's environment, associated with a subjective feeling of permanence [which] allows one to perceive one's life as an experience that has continuity and unity and to act accordingly' according to one's ethic of conviction and responsibility (Weber, 2004). In this way, the individual's identity develops both at the level of their individuality (identity lineage inscribed in the legacies of the past, identity, roles, etc.) and their social identity in a 'process of attribution, intervention and positioning in the environment', both social and civic. Civic action – 'action in the community' in intercultural citizenship - should contribute to the independence of subjects in terms of free will, autonomy and freedom in this transformative perspective on individuals, as indicated by the

educational presuppositions of intercultural citizenship education (Council of Europe, 2019, 11).

Both intercultural citizenship education and the individual pedagogical perspective focus on theoretical-practical learning situations in contexts and pedagogies that promote critical awareness and the development of critical thinking. These two points in common are key elements in these two educational perspectives because they support the idea of transforming individuals, not to force them and assimilate them into other narrative models, but to promote their understanding, their psychosocial progress (knowing, acting, being) and their active responsibility for themselves, the other, the social group and otherness, regardless of their origins, languages and contexts.

Conclusion

We have sought to demonstrate how a comparative analysis of educational traditions, theories and practices enriches an analysis of the relationship of education systems to their societies and, in particular, how educationists can respond to major societal transitions. Our combined perspectives suggest that education systems whose purpose is only to shape individuals as socially conforming members of a polity betray both their subjective uniqueness and their potential as critically creative beings who take action to respond to societal transitions. We have simultaneously shown that comparative study must take careful account of language, of how translation – not least between closely related languages – requires precision and explication which may be overlooked in monolingual discourse.

Our specific focus on interculturality and the educational practices derived from it is, we believe, not just an accidental common concern, but a response to a crucial moment in global evolution, the Anthropocene age. Recognising the limits of the effectiveness of education unless pursued in a societal context where other agencies work in the same direction, we nonetheless believe that an education based on a pedagogical approach which encourages and allows young people to realise their potential, is the only viable way forward.

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Declaration of interest.

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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