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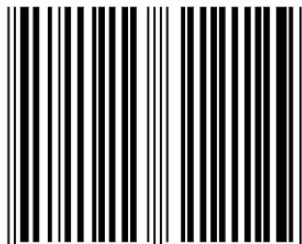
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The Challenges of Critical Thinking in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract

I argue that critical thinking is based on active learning, engaged independent thinking, and examining all information including recently impactful ChatGPT and other AI sources. Thoughtfully questioning what is being learned as well as critically and creatively analyzing and evaluating information such as AI is necessary to gain a deeper understanding as an effective thinker. Critical thinking pedagogy should also promote “portability” and citizenship, including information-based online multimedia literacy such as AI, as well as employment and professional information. This means becoming a critical thinker inside and outside the classroom and take what is learned into our personal, public, and professional lives. The article begins with an examination of four discrepancies or issues related to critical thinking in higher education. The critical thinking literature and Kenedy’s Model of Cyclical Critical Thinking will then be considered. This will be followed by the discussion and summary regarding suggested guidelines for critically evaluating AI. Finally, conclusions regarding further work including pedagogical models for teaching critical thinking in the era of AI and other future work are considered.

Keywords: Critical thinking, artificial intelligence, critical thinking pedagogy, active learning, effective thinking.

Introduction

We seem to be living in a post-truth world (Orwell, 1949, Postman, 1985) where students are exposed to pedagogical techniques that rely heavily on what Freire (2010) refers to as “banking” based on a student-teacher relationship of “depositing” content-driven course material and “fill[ing] the student with content” in order to “memorize mechanically the narrated content...as an act of depositing” (Freire, 2010: 71-72). This could be a reason that we are academically adrift in this banking-based memorization teaching and learning environment instead of pedagogical engagement

that promotes the critical thinking of all content (Arum & Roska, 2011). In other words, is the post-secondary education sector academically and pedagogically adrift in what Postman notes is a dystopic “sea of irrelevance” that is filled with meaningless and abundant content without any active learning or critical thinking (Postman, 1985)? In the era of AI, critical thinking is essential to evaluate all information due to “banking” and being academically adrift in a post-truth world where information is accepted *prima facie* from sources such as ChatGPT without any deep critical thought. Arguably, all AI output needs to be critically examined due to the limitations of Chat GPT and other AI programs (Exintaris et al, 2023; Plebani, 2023; Spector and Ma, 2019; Zhai, 2022, 2023).

I argue that critical thinking is based on becoming an active learner that is an engaged independent thinker examining all information including ChatGPT and other AI sources. The emphasis is on thoughtfully questioning what is being learned as well as critically and creatively analyzing and evaluating information from sources such as AI to gain a deeper understanding as an effective thinker. Critical thinking pedagogy should also promote “portability,” moving beyond the classroom into the realms of citizenship such as voting, engaging in everyday information-based online multimedia literacy including AI, as well as in a person’s employment and professional lives (Ajevski et al, 2023; Exintaris et al, 2023; Murray, 2023; Plebani, 2023; van den Berg & du Plessis, 2023). This means becoming a critical thinker inside and outside the classroom and take what is learned into our personal, public, and professional lives. To teach critical thinking, the pedagogical approach of Cognitive Apprentice (Kenedy, 2022) is introduced for future consideration.

In this article, I begin by examining four discrepancies or issues related to critical thinking in higher education including students receiving unprecedented levels of “education” without being taught to think critically; the tension associated with faculty members encountering resistance to critical thinking; the rise of AI and the priority of teaching critical thinking in order to evaluate the accuracy of AI outputs; the lack of “portability” regarding critical thinking skills to transfer these skills seamlessly to citizenship activities and employment impacted by AI. Then, the critical thinking literature and Kenedy’s Model of Cyclical Critical Thinking will be considered. This will be followed by the discussion and summary regarding the four issues, literature, and suggested guidelines for critically evaluating AI. Finally, conclusions regarding further work including pedagogical models for teaching critical thinking in the era of AI and other future work are considered.

Daly (1995) notes that there is a need to promote independent thinking necessary for academic and professional success, recognizing the portability of these skills outside the classroom. Infusing critical thinking pedagogy into post-secondary teaching is necessary and one of the reasons there are so many inconsistencies regarding critical thinking (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Bok, 2006; Casner-Lotto & Brenner, 2006; Gardiner, 1995; McMahan, 2005; Paul, 2011, 2012; Paul, Elder, & Bartell, 1997; Phillips & Green,

2011). One of the main issues is that critical thinking is not “being effectively taught nor even correctly understood” (McMahon, 2005, p. 1). Paul (2011) notes that research indicates critical thinking skills are not fostered in the typical post-secondary classroom, though faculty members usually believe otherwise (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Bok, 2006; Gardiner, 1995; Paul et al., 1997). While critical thinking is viewed as essential to promote analysis and evaluation, there is a lack a specific understanding of critical thinking (Paul, 2011). This is especially important in the era of AI and other challenges to independent and critical thinking, emphasizing analysis and creative thinking (Ajevski et al, 2023; Exintaris et al, 2023; Murray, 2023; Plebani, 2023; Spector and Ma, 2019; van den Berg & du Plessis, 2023; Zhai, 2022, 2023).

There are discrepancies with both post-secondary critical thinking pedagogy and conceptualizations of critical thinking. This work primarily focuses on four inconsistencies that have been noted in the literature to assist faculty members teaching critical thinking skills. After considering these four interrelated discrepancies around education, definitions, frameworks of critical thinking are reviewed to establish a clearer understanding of critical thinking. Then, my working definition and model of cyclical critical thinking is introduced.

The first discrepancy or issue is while higher education is providing students with unprecedented levels of “education” through course content, these students are not explicitly being taught to think critically about what they are learning. Second, there is a tension associated with faculty members trying to teach students to think critically in the classroom and the resistance due to exposure of large quantities of internet information and being “amused to death” outside the classroom. The third disjuncture is the popularity of AI and programs such as Chat GPT that has made teaching critical thinking even more important to be able to evaluate the accuracy of AI outputs. Finally, there is the lack of “portability” regarding critical thinking skills and the need for students to be able to transfer their use of critical thinking skills seamlessly throughout their formal education, as well as toward citizenship activities and employment that may be impacted by AI.

First Issue

Post-secondary education seems to focus on quantity over quality, as students are expected to learn large amounts of course content without necessarily acquiring critical thinking skills to be able to qualitatively analyze and evaluate the content. Tsui (2002) notes that students are supposed to be more highly educated, but not necessarily “better educated” (p. 740). Though higher education is providing students with unprecedented levels of information through course content, students may not be learning how to think. That is, the amount of information that students are acquiring has increased, but the quality of their learning has decreased (Arum & Roksa, 2011).

As a corollary to the issue of quantity over quality in learning, faculty members may note the importance of critical thinking and implicitly include it in their teaching without making it an explicit pedagogical goal. They also may not be properly defining critical thinking or including critical thinking as a pedagogical skill that is explicitly connected to course content. Paul (2011) notes that “[m]any college and university professors say they have little time to focus on the students’ thinking because of the need to cover content...they fail to see that undigested content is content unlearned or mislearned” (p. 19).

Course content is important, but the point is to use it as a vehicle for teaching students to explicitly think critically about the course material to offer better quality teaching and learning. This usually does not happen unless specific critical thinking strategies are integrated into the subject or course content to enhance students’ learning and critical thinking skills in terms of promoting more engagement and active learning. Rao (2005: 173) notes that the “...infusion of critical thinking skills into course content and their explicit introduction stimulates students thinking and improves their learning ability” in artificial intelligence courses.”

There are others who directly attempt to integrate critical thinking into their pedagogical approach without explicitly teaching students critical thinking skills. Paul (2011) notes that “[m]any academic departments and faculty presuppose that they are fostering critical thinking, when in fact their expressions of it are often vague and lack any demonstrations of it...” (p. 17). There is also the problem of “academic departments, faculty and administrators that tend to trivialize critical thinking, giving lip service to it in mission statements, course catalogues, and marketing material, while ignoring it in instruction” (Paul, 2011, p. 17). Students may implicitly learn critical thinking through the content, as post-secondary teaching implies learning these critical thinking skills, or the situation arises that faculty members will ask students to think critically without explicitly teaching them to do so or providing clear definitions of critical thinking. As a final note, Paul (2011) discusses findings from his 1997 study of university faculty members which found that, while 89% declared that critical thinking is a primary objective of their own teaching, only 19% could elaborate on what they meant by critical thinking, and that while 81% indicated that their department’s graduates achieved high levels of critical thinking while in their program, only 20% reported that their departments shared a common approach to critical thinking. This research clearly points to the need to promote deliberate teaching of critical thinking using explicit definitions and a clear pedagogical approach.

Second Issue

Students need to be critical thinkers as consumers of mass information in our rapidly changing world (e.g., social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental spheres) to evaluate an ever-increasing amount of information from the mass media, Internet,

AI generated documents, and other sources (Exintaris et al, 2023; Plebani, 2023; Spector and Ma, 2019; Zhai, 2022, 2023). For instance, in the media, there appear to be fewer instances of true investigative journalism or even simple fact reporting, and the rapid rise of editorializing (e.g., tweets, blogs, pundits, talking head news analysts) results in a greater need to develop self-reflection skills and open-mindedness when sifting through the deluge of information. Moon (2002, 2006) and Brookfield (2005) note the student resistance to learning how to think critically as the media often only encourages memorizing trivia without necessarily engaging in any deep learning through critical thinking (Paul, 2012). Tsui (2002) points out that rather than teaching students "...what to think, perhaps we need to do more to teach them how to think" (p. 740). Postman (1985) notes that the focus on information, triviality, and entertainment conveyed through the media has influenced knowledge, thinking, and education. Students are being given more information in ways that are entertaining without necessarily engaging with the information or thinking critically about it through analysis and evaluation. One of Postman's (1985) *Amusing Ourselves to Death* book covers shows a family on a couch watching television without heads. This poignant cover outlines the importance that some forms of entertainment content are mindless facets of life including what may be learned in the classroom. Based on John Dewey's observations, Postman (1985) states: "content of a lesson is the least important thing about learning...the most important thing about [what] one learns is always something about *how* one learns" (p. 144). Entertainment and television-based learning happens, in many cases, without any reflection, analysis, or evaluation of information. This may create an opportunity for faculty members to use entertaining media content as a means for teaching critical thinking skills to directly confront the "Huxleyan warning" of a "cultural burlesque" (Postman, 1985, p. 155) and the issue of entertainment reducing us into "passivity and egoism [and truth being] drowned in a sea of irrelevance" (p. XIX). The challenge is to confront passive learning of information promoted by some forms of television, the Internet, and AI to facilitate active learning and effective thinking through careful analysis and evaluation. For example, applying analytic or evaluative questions in lectures when discussing readings, through written assignments, or on tests to entertainment such as films or media-based content integrated into course material. The challenge is taking a critical thinking approach and turning a disadvantage into an advantage; in other words, using disadvantages of certain types of entertainment and turning them into a pedagogical advantage by taking an educative approach. This is essentially analogous to a martial arts expert using the weight or force of a charging opponent and deflecting the momentum by flipping the opponent over them rather than absorbing their full impact. In practical terms, a film has entertainment value that many students may appreciate and find more understandable than ideas from readings and lectures. In this case, students could analyze and evaluate the film's characters based on the concepts from the readings or lecture. Also, there could be an analysis of AI outputs from programs such as ChatGPT or other AI to ensure accuracy,

precision and facts and going beyond taking it prima facie as automatically accurate, valid, or reliable information.

Third Issue

With the rise of AI, there is disagreement amongst academics regarding the challenges and the educational role of AI programs such as ChatGPT. While some point out the advantages of AI, others are still cautious and believe critical thinking is necessary to evaluate ChatGPT outputs (Plebani, 2023; Zhai, 2022, 2023). Spector and Ma (2019:9) note that critical thinking habits promote the development of human intelligence with the "...use of AI to help learners perform at a higher level making adjustments based on differences of learners. This is the notion with which we conclude the future lies in using AI to improve HI [Human Intelligence] and accommodating individual differences."

Zhai (2022, 2023) acknowledges that AI it cannot completely substitute for our creative thinking skills, discussing how "education must prioritize the cultivation of students' creativity and critical thinking skills to adeptly tackle and solve diverse problems in the environment, resources, economy, politics, and other areas of future life" (2023: 2). Exintaris et al (2023: 2977) notes the importance of critical thinking "[w]hen discussing limitations of ChatGPT for problem solving, students commented on its failures to deal with niche or complex problems, it not performing required steps such as evaluation while taking some redundant steps, and its "inability" [ChatGPT limitations]." Yu (2023: 10) points out how "teachers should also focus on cultivating students' critical thinking and innovation abilities to adapt to challenges in the field of artificial intelligence in the future."

Arguably, critical thinking can be used as a means for evaluating ChatGPT results and information. Emmert-Strib (2023) discusses the usefulness of ChatGPT that is informed by critical thinking principles of assessment and evaluation of the information produced by ChatGPT, viewing it as a research tool that may be helpful, but ultimately needs to be scrutinized. Rao (2005: 173) discusses the infusion of critical thinking into an AI engineering course, pointing out that "All education consists of transmitting to students two different things: (1) the subject matter or discipline content of the course ("what to think"), and (2) the correct way to understand and evaluate this subject matter ("how to think"). We do an excellent job of transmitting the content of our respective academic disciplines, but we often fail to teach students how to think effectively about the subject matter, that is, how to properly understand and evaluate it."

Beyond the classroom, there needs to be critical thinking pedagogy "portability," that includes citizenship, employment, and professional lives. When considering AI, it is essential that components of critical thinking such as analysis are necessary to evaluate ChatGPT outputs in areas of journalism, medicine, law, teaching and other occupations or professions (Ajevski et al, 2023; Exintaris et al, 2023; Murray, 2023;

van den Berg & du Plessis, 2023; Tan et al, 2023). Ajevski et al (2023: 353) note that “ChatGPT is likely to have a significant impact on both work and education, including legal careers and legal education, as it provides easily comprehensible answers to a variety of different questions very quickly.” While AI is being used within legal careers, their work considers the potential impact in law schools, the legal profession, and how generative AI could be regulated and assessed. They discuss issues around integrity, copyright, and making sure law students and practicing lawyers assess AI such as ChatGPT, Google Bard, and other AI outputs. Murray (2023: 1) states: “I have previously written how the use of an AI system to perform legal research and draft legal briefs without supervision by the attorney can have disastrous consequences. This is because however clever and human-like an AI system can make itself appear through the words it generates, the system is only mimicking human language and human reasoning.” Whether AI is producing legal document, magazine articles, or various media works, proper evaluative critical thinking is necessary.

Tan et al. (2023), discuss the potential benefits of AI as an artificial lawyer to promote access to justice through providing legal information, understanding the strengths of ChatGPT and JusticeBot, and the integration of legal tools for self-represented litigants. They also point out that the disadvantages of AI lacking precise legal information regarding landlord tenant cases. While AI can be an advantageous legal self-help tool, they argue that critical thinking is necessary to evaluate AI outputs in legal contexts by assessing language comprehension, accuracy, completeness, trustworthiness, harm issues (discriminatory information), and user-friendliness (Tan et al., 2023). I would argue that these critical thinking assessment criteria are useful to evaluate AI outputs to ensure they are valid and reliable. This point will be considered later in the article.

Overall, the development of independent critical thinking skills to scrutinize AI sources is essential, as ChatGPT, Google Bard, and other programs may end up doing the work and thinking for students such as writing, test taking, and other skills in professional areas.

Fourth Issue

Critical thinking is an essential skill that should continue past a student’s post-secondary experience and contribute to their life-long learning (Terenzini et al., 1995). Halpern (1998) also points out the importance of critical thinking as a transferable skill beyond the post-secondary context. Citizenship may be the obvious place to apply critical thinking as an ongoing, transferable, and “portable” skill. Tsui (2002) notes that it is important for students to become “lifelong learners,” and for them to have “higher order cognitive skills...to tackle a multitude of challenges that they are likely to face in their personal lives, careers, and duties as responsible citizens” (p. 740). Students need to apply their critical thinking skills in civic forums to become both local and cosmopolitan thinkers, analyzing social, political, and global

issues. Brookfield (2005) notes that “at the heart of a strong participatory democracy is citizens’ capacity to question the actions, justifications, and decisions of political leaders, and their capacity to imagine alternatives to current structures and moralities...” (p. 49). Teaching critical thinking may help students to be more engaged citizens, rather than being mere observers, through experiential learning and activism inside and outside the classroom. This portable civic approach to critical thinking could take the form of possibly volunteering with various homeless shelters, poverty groups, environmental groups, animal rights groups, neighborhood associations, and anti-violence groups. It is also valuable to promote “ethical citizenship” associated with “thinking civically.” (Kenedy & Nunes, 2012). Paul (2012) discusses this type of fair-minded skilled thinking, that I would argue is related to higher order thought (Kohlberg, 1981) in terms of mutual respect and universal moral thinking, as well as thinking about the other (Gilligan, 1982). The importance of ethics and critical thinking need to be considered to promote a positive contribution in the community as well as in careers beyond graduation connected to emotional intelligence (discussed below).

Beyond this, the portable aspects of critical thinking need to be considered in terms of what ten Dam and Volman (2004) see as a “citizenship competence” in civic life and helping students become active learners and community members in their everyday life. It is the post-secondary transition of critical thinking that is first facilitated in the classroom and then in the outside world. The point of portable critical thinking is to encourage autonomous evaluation of issues and controversies. Paul (2011) discusses how the “...nature of professional and everyday life increasingly demands critical thinking...the cost of generating a growing mass of uncritical thinkers as workers and citizens is staggering” (p. 19). He views critical thinking as an essential skill in teaching and learning as well as in all aspects of everyday life. With the rise and prominence of AI, it is especially necessary to encourage critical thinking skills to scrutinize AI legal, academic, journalistic, and other content.

The need for critical thinking skills will be considered in terms of a lack of these skills in new graduates, as noted by employers (e.g., through CERI surveys). While faculty members claim that critical thinking is one of the most important goals of an undergraduate education (Bok, 2006; Paul, 2011), many undergraduates do not significantly increase their higher order thinking skills and often leave with the same skill they arrived with in their first year (Arum & Roksa, 2011, Grayson and Kenedy, 2018; Grayson et al, 2019). The challenge is that students are not graduating with portable critical thinking skills, and employers want to hire students who are able to think critically and independently as “life-long learners” (Bok, 2005).

Overall, these four discrepancies need to be addressed in an updated framework that considers the importance of critical thinking and the centrality in post-secondary education. Having a framework that addresses these discrepancies and the recent challenge of AI is essential, as many are questioning why it is worth getting a post-

secondary education. AI now adds another reason when considering a post-secondary education when artificial intelligence can do the work for you.

Defining Critical Thinking: Concepts and Frameworks in the Era of AI

This is a practical overview of critical thinking definitions, taxonomies, and frameworks reviewed in order to examine common elements and differences. Defining critical thinking is important, as definitions influence pedagogy and assessments (McMillan, 1987). The definitions of critical thinking vary, but there seem to be commonalities that are associated with Bloom's revised taxonomy. Often critical thinking includes analysis, evaluation, and sometimes creative thinking (Chaffee, 2012; Paul, 2011, 2012; Paul & Elder, 2006; Ruggiero, 2012). Dewey (1916) noted that "thinking is a process of inquiry, of looking into things, of investigating" (p. 173). He viewed "critical thinking as being a combination of a suspension of judgment and healthy skepticism" (Simpson & Courtney, 2002, p. 91).

Paul (2011) notes that critical thinking dates back to Socrates' (470-399 BCE) who said we are not critical thinkers by "nature" and that our thinking is deeply flawed. Paul discusses the key influence of Socratic thought as being associated with intellectual integrity and empathy. Paul (2012) states that critical thinking is based on the ability to "analyze and assess our thinking and the thinking of others [...] through working to systematically improve the quality of our thinking, to raise the problem to the level of conscious realization" (p. 6). According to Paul and Elder (2006), critical thinking "...has three dimensions: an analytic, an evaluative, and a creative component" (p. XX). Paul (2011) is very clear about mapping critical thinking and guiding students to think critically. He notes that critical thinking should be taught explicitly; can be seen as global across disciplines; should be systematically integrated into courses and curriculum; and is Socratic in terms of being "fair-minded with integrity and empathy; and is open and understandable, using ordinary language..." (p. 13).

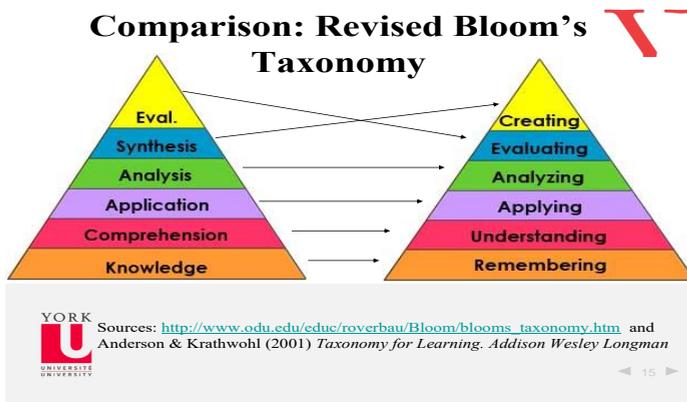
Generally, the common elements that many critical thinking frameworks and definitions have are a focus on assessing, evaluating, and analyzing ideas, facts, and information. Some authors provide taxonomies and definitions; others primarily offer definitions that are associated with pedagogy and do not have developed taxonomies. The central purpose of this section is to make the reader aware of the possible ways of viewing critical thinking as a theoretical construct that can be applied to teaching critical thinking pedagogy.

There have not been recent or significant changes to critical thinking taxonomies, theory, or definitions. The last update of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy was Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) revised taxonomy of critical thinking (See Diagram 1). Most definitions of critical thinking highlight the importance of analysis and some type of evaluation (Brookfield, 1987; Facione, 1990; Halpern, 1997; Paul, 2011, 2012; Paul & Elder, 2011; Ruggiero, 1989, 2009, 2012). While there may be disagreements about

the aspects of critical thinking and related definitions, most of them include the following themes: exploring and analyzing multiple perspectives and interpretations, examining and evaluating evidence, promoting self-reflection, and drawing conclusions (Dunn, Halonen, & Smith, 2008).

Bloom's (1956) work is often cited as being the foremost influential taxonomy on critical thinking. As noted, Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) updated Bloom's (1956) original work, placing "create" at the top of the pyramid or hierarchy. They integrated "synthesis" in the 1956 model into "create" in the 2001 update, as well as moving evaluation from the top of the original hierarchy to the second spot under creating. This revised cognitive taxonomy includes an ordering from the basic to the more complex forms of thinking: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. The revised taxonomy has been used for faculty development at many colleges and universities, where faculty members have created academic tasks highlighting different cognitive levels within the taxonomy. The focus has shifted toward differentiating between cognitive tasks that are proposed to be sequential in nature.

Diagram 1 Comparison: Bloom's Revised Taxonomy



A New Critical Thinking Paradigm: Affective or Emotional intelligence and Creative Thinking

Is there a better model of critical thinking? Are the current taxonomies, definitions, and models of critical thinking adequate? Is the potential paradigm shift located within the inclusion of expanding the analytic into the emotional? Brookfield (2005) points out that "...critical thinking elevates a Western form of cognitive, rational knowing above other forms of comprehension...there is little attention paid to affect, emotion, spirituality, or holistic modes of being and knowing" (p. 56). Elder (1997) has noted the connection between critical thinking and emotional intelligence. Since then, there has been limited literature that has expanded on this connection. Combining emotional intelligence with critical thinking seems contradictory or

diametric to any type of thinking. The closest change or shift seems to be creative thinking and the inclusion of some type of emotional intelligence. Paul (2012) notes the affective dimension of critical thinking involving the role of emotions and feelings, highlighting everything from thinking independently, to fair-mindedness, to developing intellectual humility, courage, good faith or integrity, and other important dimensions (see Paul, 2012, pp 11-12). This connection to emotional intelligence and a full explanation of the model will be discussed in future work.

Kenedy's Model of Cyclical Critical Thinking

This model is based on Bloom's Polygon (see Diagram 2) and viewing it beyond a polygon and more of a circular framework, moving away from Bloom's and Anderson and Krathwohl's static pyramid. The polygon suggests a direction that is more of a dynamic cyclical view of critical thinking connected to task-oriented questions and activities. When considering critical thinking, there seems to be a more fluid process involving increasing analytic complexity (see Diagram 1 left side). The model presented (see Diagram 3) includes creativity, and cyclically moves through re-thinking knowledge or ideas innovatively and possibly reworking them or our understanding of the critical thinking process. Re-thinking can also result in reflecting on ideas to examine and evaluate information or knowledge to develop a more in-depth understanding or altering knowledge in terms of a paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1962). It also includes the possibility of creatively using emotional intelligence and empathy to consider ethical and other issues that transcend rationality considering the Weberian concept *verstehen* or "understanding" a person's perspective (Tucker, 1965). Going a step further, it is an empathetic understanding of a person's actions that may take a creative approach to ethical concerns beyond rationality, related to emotional intelligence and critical thinking.

The model highlights a non-hierarchical type (unlike Bloom's taxonomy and Anderson and Krathwohl's revised taxonomy) of critical thinking and working with knowledge as higher level thinking skills including analysis, evaluation, and creatively engaging with course content and other information. This framework considers a critical thinking process that is cyclical, creatively rethinking possibilities and reexamining information in original ways that may result in a paradigm shift considering *verstehen*.

The cycle begins with thinking or re-thinking information. The model promotes active learning, viewing knowledge as higher level learning. Part of active learning is not only engagement but also thinking independently to be able to assess and evaluate knowledge to draw conclusions based on evidence. This cyclical model of critical thinking focuses on the production of knowledge as the highest goal of critical thinking in terms of creation and (re)thinking, based on analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The point here is to move toward a paradigm shift through creative re-thinking and new or modified ideas. In this model, the definition of critical thinking,

as noted above, is based on reflective thinking that is focused on interpreting, analyzing, critiquing, synthesizing, and evaluating information, arguments, and experiences with a set of reflective attitudes, skills, and abilities to guide thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and actions (Bloom, 1956; Paul & Elder, 2006, 2012; Ruggiero, 1989, 2009). Beyond analysis and evaluation, critical thinking also has a creative component, which promotes thinking to formulate original ideas (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Krathwohl, 2002; Paul, 2011, 2012; Paul & Elder, 2006; Ruggiero, 2012). The outcome of this model is a way of understanding the learning cycle and critical thinking as ongoing and involving rethinking facts, information, concepts, and ideas.

Thinking, in the first three parts of the cycle, highlights applying critical thinking skills of focusing on the learning process through understanding information or content. Comprehension involves acquiring a rudimentary understanding of concepts, ideas, facts, or information to grasp basic ideas. This first step highlights recognition of concepts and definitions related to facts and information. Description is being able to explain information and convey it to others; it is the ability to show some understanding of the concepts or ideas in terms of explaining or discussing information. There is also the expectation of interpreting information and summarizing it clearly. Application is the process of taking an idea, thought, or way of thinking and being able to apply it to various contexts or scenarios; this may include classification of information, preparing or reporting information in various contexts. These first three parts of the critical thinking cycle are stages before analysis necessary to analyze ideas, contexts, or ways of viewing the world. There needs to be a foundation of understanding before analysis can take place. These foundational aspects of critical thinking, once understood, allow for analytical and deeper thinking.

The next four parts of analytical thinking is being able to analyze facts, information, and concepts, and draw inferences and conclusions. Analysis is a more advanced stage of learning that depends on a basic understanding of facts and information to interpret the information in your own words. Synthesis brings together many facts and various types of information, as well as being able to combine ideas and concepts into various frameworks. It is also being able to compare and contrast concepts and notions. This may include reorganizing ideas, revising them, and designing frameworks. Evaluation is one of the highest forms of thinking and is based on making judgments and evaluating information or facts. Evaluations or judgments may be based on a deeper critique of ideas or facts that could lead to recommendations for future re-evaluations or re-examination of information. For instance, judges interpret, evaluate, analyze and synthesize ideas and arguments. Creation is introducing new ideas as a result of deep analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Through the process of re-evaluating and re-examining ideas, concepts, or theories new ideas may emerge (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). There may be new and possibly original ways of looking at or thinking through ideas, as well as creating new frameworks or paradigm

shifts (Kuhn, 1962). These are original ways of examining or looking at ideas, such as the shift artistically from realist art to impressionist art, it could be ethical ideas based on emotional intelligence, or *verstehen* as a creative approach to empathetic knowledge and a deeper understanding. It is a new way of looking at ways of thinking, such as Einstein's theory of relativity or other scientific breakthroughs, involving analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and critique to create ideas or revolutionize thought about a subject area. Krathwohl (2002) notes that creative thinking is about putting together elements in a novel form to create an original product or idea.

Re-thinking ideas is part of the notion of the paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1962). As a result of the critical thinking cycle, there is the possibility of new ideas that revolutionize thinking and create a new paradigm, ethics, or artistic ways of re-examining past and future knowledge. The new framework becomes the basis for knowledge and will impact comprehension, description, and application. It will also influence analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of ideas. In short, it could be argued that the highest level of critical thinking is creation and re-thinking ideas, which, as a process, goes beyond conventional logic, science, or accepted academic thought and allows for re-examination and possibly original ideas. Independent evaluations beyond ideological perspectives are vital to engage in independent critical thinking. The re-thinking process may also result in a deeper understanding through *verstehen* that may include emotional and ethical understanding.

Arguably, the highest level of thinking involves considering what others have not thought was possible or was even considered impossible. It is being open to all possibilities, regardless of how improbable or unrealistic they may be. This type of thinking focuses on the unthinkable, in terms of creative problem-solving that questions current knowledge, practices, art, and other established thinking and can create a paradigm shift. To teach critical thinking, a teaching model may include Dynamic Purposeful Learning and Cognitive Apprenticeship that will be considered in the conclusions.

Diagram 2 Bloom's Polygon of Critical Thinking

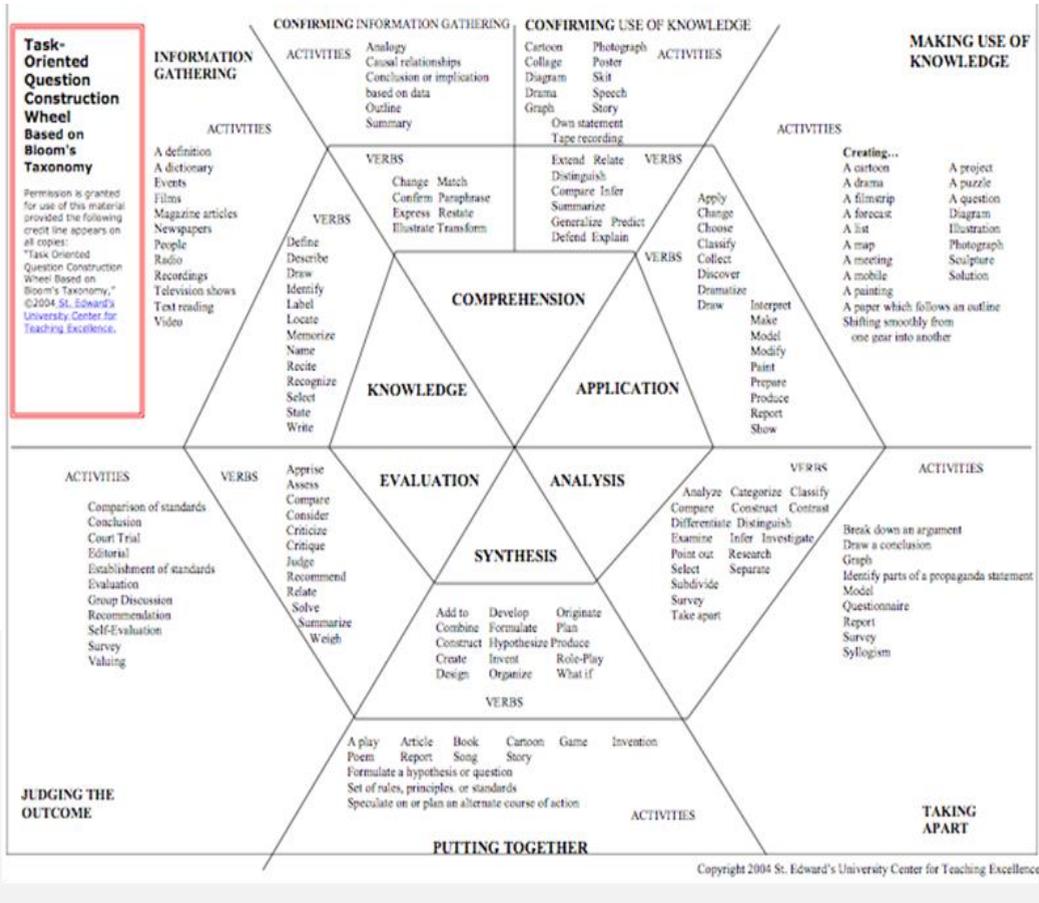
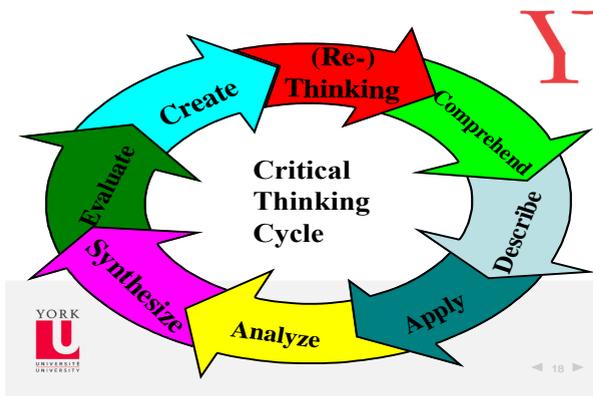


Diagram 3 Kennedy's Model of Cyclical Critical Thinking



Discussion and Summary

In the era of AI, critical thinking has become even more relevant. With the introduction of ChatGPT, Google Bard, and other AI applications, it is even more necessary to consider a cyclical model of critical thinking and address the four challenges noted above. I argue that critical thinking is based on becoming an active learner that is an engaged independent and effective thinker examining all information including ChatGPT and other AI sources. I have argued that critical thinking pedagogy should also promote “portability,” into citizenship such as voting, engaging in everyday information-based online multimedia literacy including AI, as well as in a person’s employment and professional lives. Artificial intelligence is one of the latest challenges, as it offers many positive breakthroughs requiring analytic scrutiny such as research, writing papers, legal briefs, medical imaging, and diagnosis, and replacing us as actors, images, voices, and other human mimicry that may impact copyright and other legal and ethical areas of our lives.

Post-secondary learning and writing promotes authorship as students learn ideas and incorporate them into their own understanding. Writing your own work in terms of authorship may be a creative act when marshalling information, quotes, and reworking them into a new way of viewing the information. This includes evaluating and scrutinizing ChatGPT and other AI outputs. Tan et al. (2023: 4-5) provides evaluative criteria for critically assessing Chat GPT outputs considering language comprehension, accuracy, completeness, trustworthiness, harm, and user friendliness. The latest challenge of AI is scrutinizing if the language outputs are “clear and understandable.” Is the AI output accurate, correct, or up to date? Is the information complete, including all relevant and necessary information? Is the AI information trustworthy, from reputable sources, and reliable? Is the AI information toxic, offensive, dangerous, or violating privacy information? Finally, is the information user-friendly and easy to use? These guidelines for using AI may be helpful to critically evaluate outputs.

Conclusion

More work is necessary to understand the inconsistencies and discrepancies noted in the literature related to critical thinking pedagogy and conceptualizations related to critical thinking in the era of AI. Through a review of critical thinking definitions and frameworks, Kenedy’s cyclical model of critical thinking is introduced as one way of analytically evaluating AI outputs with the caveat of more work being necessary to establish a future approach and research to creatively rethinking the impact of AI. Connected to this approach would be future consideration of Kenedy’s model of Dynamic Purposeful Learning, Cognitive Apprenticeship, and other pedagogical models promoting critical thinking related to AI. Future publications will explore the connection between critical thinking and emotional intelligence, outline models offering faculty members guides to bridging the gap between general and deeper

learning associated with critical thinking and AI. The presentation of a pedagogical model would also include critical skills course material, critical thinking syllabi, assignments, critical thinking related to AI, and evaluation tools supporting a pedagogical critical thinking model in the era of AI.

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The Impact of Learning Business Pragmatics Competence in Developing the Communication Skills among University of Baghdad's Students

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Abstract

The main objective of this research is to investigate the impact of learning practical business competence in developing communication skills in English as a foreign language at University of Baghdad. Sixty university students participated in this research. An experimental has been conducted through using quantitative and some qualitative research elements. There is a questionnaire for students that reflects the learners' attitude towards the methods applied in learning practical business competence, pre-tests and post-test that examine students' development in their communication skills, and direct observation of both experimental and controlled groups. The results of the study were analyzed within the framework of SPSS statistical editor for quantitative data to answer the research questions. The results indicate that there is a progress ($>0,5$) and combining both explicit and implicit teaching approaches is the most effective solution to learning practical business competence, and that EFL teachers should create opportunities for students to see, use, review and experience English in communication contexts. So once students become accustomed to teaching practical concepts, once they understand how important each word is in building meaning, in building relationships, in achieving goals, they will be able to apply these concepts to all speech acts and speech events and speech types. Finally, the aspects discussed in this study have opened the way for a number of issues to be explored in the field of practical business efficiency.

Keyword: pragmatic, pragmatic competence, speech acts, communication skills, explicit and implicit teaching

Introduction

Nasser (2021) asserts that English has adopted different words from other languages and formed new words to express new ideas. Furthermore, Grossi (2009) mentioned

that native speakers often forgive the phonological, syntactic, and lexical errors made by L2 speakers but usually interpret pragmatic errors negatively as rudeness, impoliteness, or unfriendliness with a negative impact on the professional level (Alcón,2005). Therefore, everything that researchers do to develop students' pragmatic competence will be related to the specific constraints/within the framework of business contexts.

Researchers have realised that not only students with a low level of English who do not have the linguistic resources to adapt to a diversity of situations but also students with a high level of language proficiency do not know and do not realize the importance of these speech acts, and are not able, often, to choose appropriate linguistic resources. Any successful communicative event, at least one that extends beyond expressions of simple, immediate need, will require that L2 speakers have developed some mastery of the syntax, morphology, phonology, and lexis of the English language (Aajami, 2019). Yet, as many English teachers recognize, and as many language learners have experienced first-hand, speech acts that are grammatically and phonologically correct sometimes fail because the learner's pragmatic competence—his or her ability to express or interpret communicative functions in particular communicative contexts—is undeveloped or faulty. Pragmatic incompetence in the L2, resulting in the use of inappropriate expressions or inaccurate interpretations resulting in unsuccessful communicative events, can lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication and can even leave the native-speaking interlocutor with the perception that the L2 speaker is either ignorant or impolite. Safont (2016) considered that it is of particular importance in non-native speakers' (NNS) high stakes conversations to consider how different ways of speaking and understanding become judgments of character or ability.

To be successful, they must understand their own personality, their strengths, and weaknesses, as well as personalities of their business partners. Zaraie & Tondaki, (2005) assured that a successful career in business means awareness of cultural differences, being tolerant to others and using this knowledge to the benefit of the one's company. He also emphasised the need of businesspeople to know and understand their own cultural background, their attitudes, and priorities, so that only those businesspeople who can set ambitious goals for themselves are likely to go up the career ladder.

To satisfy pre-experienced students' new needs, some teachers are paying more attention to developing communication skills, social skills (socializing, telephoning, small talk), business skills (negotiating, participating in meetings, delivering a business presentation, etc.), pragmatic competence, and cultural awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences. The global business environment requires that businesspeople should do their best to make themselves more attractive for the employer and thus increase their employability and promotion opportunities (Aajami, (2020). Helping pre-experienced language students acquire transferable

business and communication skills in the medium of English we help them to perform better in their future professional roles and to earn more money (Nasser, 2019).

The main purpose of this research is to bring into focus an area of great importance for the teaching of pragmatic competence. The research discusses different approaches to teaching pragmatic competence and suggests some teaching activities that could be used in the classroom to develop pragmatic competence and as well develop the students' communication skills as second foreign language learners.

Literature Review

Definitions of Pragmatics

In researching pragmatics, researchers discovered that there are many definitions for the concept of pragmatics in the field. Liu (2007) introduced the first modern definition of pragmatics, and since then many other specialists have continued to conceptualize this branch of linguistics. Morris originally defined pragmatics as "the discipline that studies the relations of signs to interpreters, while semantics studies the relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable" (Liu, 2007, p. 6).

More recently, Kasper (2008) defined the term as "the study of people's comprehension and production of linguistic action in context" (p. 3). This brief definition states the elements of context and production as relevant elements of pragmatics that are fundamentals of any speech act in a language. Context, as Kasper viewed it, consists of the social and cultural circumstances in which communication occurs. These circumstances play a critical role in how messages are constructed, conveyed, and how they are received. Kasper also uses a broad term, "linguistic action," (p. 3) which is a somewhat general term used to describe the capacity of producing utterance that a learner has. Also noteworthy is the emphasis on comprehension as well as production, a distinction that is particularly relevant for second language learners' daily lives.

The Importance of Pragmatic Awareness

Studies of cross-cultural pragmatics report that the way speech acts are realised varies across languages. This variation can sometimes cause misunderstandings, or what Grossi (2009) called pragmatic failure, which occurs when learners transfer first language (L1) pragmatic rules into second language (L2) domains. This transfer of rules can lead to stereotyping about speech communities, as speakers may be perceived as being rude or inconsiderate. Teaching communication according to the sociocultural rules that govern speech acts in each speech community is a valuable way to make students aware of what is valued within a culture and how this is communicated.

Raising pragmatic awareness can foster what Fukuya (2019) calls 'intercultural competence', where speakers of other languages can become aware of what she terms

'the third place'. Ionel (2011) argues that the classroom is a place where pragmatic instruction can occur. A further aspect of students' pragmatic competence is their awareness of what is and is not appropriate in given contexts. Vitale (2009) reported that Hungarian and Italian EFL learners recognized grammatically incorrect but pragmatically appropriate utterances more readily than pragmatically inappropriate but grammatically correct utterances, and this was true for learners of all proficiency levels. This finding strongly suggests that without a pragmatic focus, foreign language teaching raises students' metalinguistic awareness, but it does not contribute much to develop their metapragmatic consciousness in L2. This depends on the explicit and implicit of teaching.

The distinction between explicit and implicit teaching has also been addressed by Schmidt (2013). According to her, explicit teaching involves directing learners' attention towards the target forms with the aim of discussing those forms. In contrast, an implicit pedagogical approach aims to attract the learner's attention while avoiding any type of metalinguistic explanation and minimising the interruption of the communicative situation (Aajami, 2022). Thus, Zarei & Tondaki, (2015) state, in all types of explicit instruction rules are explained to learners, whereas in implicit instruction there is no overt reference to rules or forms. From this perspective, a few studies have examined the effect of implicit instruction for pragmatic learning using different implicit techniques.

Speech Act Theory

Stott, N. (2017) defined speech act as linguistic action, or an utterance that serves a function in communication. They mentioned that it can exist only if there is a match between manifested intention and a display of uptake, either in non-verbal reaction to what has been said or more often in what another speaker says next. Also, Takahashi (2019) stated that speech acts are created by the joint action of the participants in a conversation, and he designed a classification system of the various speech acts. Austin classified these language- related speech acts into three main categories: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts.

Simard & Wong, (2020) posit that directives fall into the following six subclasses:

- I. Appeal to the hearer's sense of moral obligation. Examples include: appealing, begging, and pleading.
- II. Appeal to the hearer's sense of mutual cooperation. Examples include: asking, requiring, and requesting.
- III. Appeal to the hearer's sense of well-being. Examples include: urging, suggesting, and advising.
- IV. Appeal to the hearer's sense of pride. Examples include: daring, challenging, and defying.
- V. Appeal to the hearer's sense of lack of status. Examples include: ordering, commanding, and requiring.

- VI. Appeal to the hearer's sense of fear. Examples include: demanding, insisting, and enjoining.

The Experiment

The aim of this research is to study the impact of the effective teaching of Business Pragmatic Competence on developing the communication skills of EFL Business students through one semester – the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023 - in the University of Baghdad, College of Economic Sciences and Business Administration, Iraq.

To achieve this aim, our research was conducted in two intact classes. One of them was the experimental group with a specific treatment condition and a second group was a control group. Two non-native English instructors from the Department of English in the Baghdad University participated in the study; the instructors taught both the treatment group and the controlled group for three periods (3 hours) a week along 12 weeks. The study is built on an exploratory qualitative approach with some elements of quantitative analysis of information to find answers to the research questions.

Participants

The study is intended to address the population of the students whose ages ranged between 18 and 25 and who are studying English (Business English) as a foreign language in their second semester at Baghdad University of Economic Sciences and Business Administration. Each group included about 35 students: males and females. The treatment group was referred to as an explicit group, group A (n = 35) for 6 weeks, and an implicit group, group B (same student of group A, groups are named A & B for facilitating statistics' reading and analysis) for the next 6 weeks, while the control group, that is group C (n = 32), did not receive any kind of instruction on the use of business speech acts.

The tools used in this research are the questionnaire, the pre-test, and the post-test. The results were analyzed using the SPSS Statistical Editor program.

Procedures

A questionnaire was given to the experimental group. It included close-ended questions with limited answers that required only recognition and a choice from among the answer options. This questionnaire will be made up of two parts. The first part consisted of demographic information about the learners' gender and age while the second part consisted of ten items about learning English communication skills. The students will answer the questionnaire after the teacher's explanation of each item.

Third, a pre-test was made for all groups, the traditional and experimental groups, at the beginning of the semester. The test examined the students' communication skills

in English. The duration of the pre-test was 20 minutes, and it consisted of eight situations.

Within three months, the students – the whole population- covered the following business communication skills: Meet Business Partners, Get Things Done, Deal with Problems, Make a Recommendation, Brainstorm Solutions, Present an Argument, Participate in Meetings, Negotiate, and Business Writing. The teacher of the traditional group just used the course book “Intelligent Business”. The traditional group concentrated on memorizing a lot of vocabulary and grammatical aspects. They used to read texts, listen the audio scripts of the book, learn communication skills and study speech acts without relating them to their own culture.

However, in the experimental group, during the explicit teaching period (the first 6 weeks), the teacher followed a sequential method which consisted of a sequence of activities ranging from awareness-raising tasks to production tasks.

Learners’ attention was also directed to the pragma linguistic aspects involved when making speech acts. After presenting students with two different business videotaped situations and engaging them in the same type of activities, in the third session learners watched the four videotaped situations again and their attention was drawn to several examples from these situations that contained different speech acts. In the fourth and fifth sessions, two different videotaped situations were presented and several tasks involving students’ individual written production on suggestions were introduced as semi-practice activities. Finally, in the sixth session, students were presented with the last videotaped situation, and they were given opportunities to practice the use of suggestions in pairs by performing a variety of role-plays.

For the next 6 weeks, the teacher used different teaching techniques for pragmatics to enhance his students’ communication skills using different appropriate speech acts. The treatment for the implicit teaching condition consisted of a parallel method which involved combining two implicit techniques, that is, input enhancement through the video presentation and video scripts, and recasts during the role-play practice. Thus, the students receiving the implicit treatment were engaged in three types of tasks during each of the six instructional weeks. The first task was designed as a listening comprehension.

Data Analysis

First, the results of the structured questionnaire that reflected the learners’ attitudes of the experimental group were positive toward the usage of teaching pragmatics for developing their communication skills.

To analyse the data obtained from the rating assessment tests, researchers paid attention to the participants’ performance by examining their judgments when rating the appropriateness of the suggestions employed in the different situations on a 5-point rating scale (1 = inappropriate; 5 = appropriate). The tests were created in such

a way as to offer four appropriate situations (situations 1, 5, 6 and 8) and four inappropriate situations (situations 2, 3, 4 and 7). Therefore, the rating we expected to be accurate in the appropriate situations was 5 and the correct rating in the inappropriate situations was 1. These values were confirmed after piloting the tests with NS, whose answers tallied with the scores we had predicted as being accurate. Furthermore, the responses given by learners to justify the rating of each situation were also considered for a qualitative analysis. As far as the statistical analysis is concerned, all the data were coded and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 11.0) for Windows, and an alpha level of $p < .05$ was chosen as the significance level. We started by examining normality tests to find out whether our data were normally distributed. Results from the Kolmogorov–Smirnova showed a probability of .000, which indicated the need to resort to non-parametric tests in the study. We chose a Wilcoxon test to answer our first research question, which focused on whether there was any improvement from the pre-test to the post-test because of instructional effects. In this sense, we were comparing the performance of each group (i.e., explicit, implicit and control) in relation to two different moments in time, that is, before and after each instructional period. Regarding our second research question, which centred on the effectiveness of the treatments employed (i.e., explicit, and implicit) in developing learners' awareness of using proper speech acts, we made use of a Mann–Whitney test.

The result can conclude that both teaching conditions, implicit and explicit, proved effective in fostering learners' awareness of speech acts and their combination is effective in promoting noticing, since the systematic use of both provided learners with the three theoretical conditions necessary for language acquisition (i.e., input, output, and feedback). Firstly, learners were presented with appropriate input using the videotaped situations that contained speech acts between participants with different status relationships. Secondly, opportunities for learners' output were also arranged by making them enact role-plays during all the instructional sessions and, finally, the role-plays also facilitated the provision of feedback on learners' inappropriate and inaccurate use of speech acts when necessary.

Conclusion

This research has shown the benefits of teaching pragmatics and raising learners' pragmatic awareness of business speech acts in ESL classroom in improving students' communication skills.

The current study has also demonstrated the effectiveness of the two different treatment conditions (i.e., explicit, and implicit), which were operationalized by adopting a sequential method consisting of a variety of activities ranging from awareness-raising tasks to production tasks for the explicit condition, and a parallel implicit method.

More, this study has highlighted the important role of the teacher as a director, a motivator, a dynamizer, a stimulator, and a creator of a positive classroom atmosphere, and not a lecturer to audience. The student is always eager to motivation to share in the learning process. Such a teacher- student interaction is so essential in the process of teaching- learning of communication skills; especially in case of university students who shall be successfully prepared to fit the demand of the global market.

It is worth noting that this study was limited to Baghdad University students. Consequently, the results cannot be generalized because of the restrictions that the limited number of participants imposes. Additionally, most of the English instructors in the Baghdad universities are not updated to the new approaches of teaching language to achieve better learning strategies.

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Aesthetics and imagination in the works Adorno and Bachelard

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Abstract

This essay connects the late critical theory of Theodor W. Adorno with the philosophy of imagination by Gaston Bachelard. I argue that these two theories are compatible with each other, can help mutually enlighten one-another's insights, and strengthen each other's philosophies of aesthetics and reverie. Specifically, I connect Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory* with Bachelard's *Air and Dreams*. By reading Adorno with Bachelard's philosophy of imagination - and focusing on what Bachelard calls the dynamic imagination - I develop an interdisciplinary critique between a negative dialectical theory of art and a phenomenology of imagination, that put concepts and the imagination into motion in a healthy way. I argue that one of the overlaps between Adorno and Bachelard is the significance they place on unreality, specifically the unreality principle, which counterbalances the reality principle. Aesthetics for Adorno and reverie for Bachelard are presented as antidotes for human suffering in modern late capitalism and sites of utopian possibilities.

The Crisis of the Single Market. EU Legislation For the Response to Emergencies and Crisis on the European Market

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Abstract

A well-functioning and resilient single market remains a fundamental resource for the European Union economy to create and distribute wealth to its citizens. The facts demonstrate that in recent years the crisis and the problems of many countries have interrupted the normal functioning of the common market, with inevitable consequences on the social and economic cohesion of the European Union. The supply challenges that have occurred over the years in several critical sectors, including, in particular, the healthcare sector, have drawn the attention of the European institutions to the importance of strengthening the sustainability of the common market and industrial ecosystems by addressing, in particular, the weaknesses of the sectors in a strategic way and mitigating disruptions (even preventively) in a more efficient and coordinated way. During the pandemic crisis, unilateral measures adopted by Member States and the lack of transparency have damaged the fundamental freedoms of the common market, with significant and already evident economic and social consequences. This situation represented the "challenge" that has so far put the European Union system in the greatest difficulty in recent history, which in order to deal with this crisis due to the spread of covid 19, member states have intervened autonomously, adopting non-homogeneous measures that have been imposed and implemented at the national level, including border closures. After this phase of uncertainty, states began to find common solutions and promote common policies with soft law instruments, and as such, on the one hand, fast, flexible and easy to use but with more important legitimacy deficits, which have been approved by deviating from the legislative procedure foreseen by the treaties and by the absence of a judge.

Keywords: European Union, SMEI, European Commission, IPCR, ERCC, European Convention

Introduction

The common policies and soft law instruments were instruments of a predominantly indicative nature which were soon followed by a further and substantial set of non-binding acts adopted in the various policies of the Union (M. Dawson, F. De Witte, 2013).

As regards, specifically, the safeguarding of the single market - considered by the Union itself to be its most precious resource, on the one hand, the legal instruments for governing the crisis already existing in the panorama of the European Union were used, as well as the Protection Union Civilian. The Union institutions have made use of legal instruments such as the technical-scientific instructions of the Community Agencies), the recommendations of the Council and the instructions of the Commission, as well as having approved numerous legislative initiatives for financial assistance, for market recovery and for the European Union's socio-economic changes: the European Union as a whole has started to recover despite the depth of the impact of the pandemic, the ongoing effects of climate change and resulting natural disasters, as well as global economic and geopolitical instabilities , The European Union is called upon to better prepare for future crises that are already almost certain, which could further endanger the single market for many years.

To achieve the objectives of increasing the true elasticity of the unique - that is, to help understand what is happening, to try to democratize with equal skills and to try to challenge with, the European Commission on 19 September 2022 published the proposal of a package of binding legislative instruments, the so-called "Single Institution for the market emergency" (hereinafter SMEI), which aims to deal with rapid and effective action against crises, affirming the correctness of the functioning and the truth of the fears, to the benefit of the people and businesses of the European Union.

After identifying the existing vertical and horizontal tools in the EU to respond to emergencies (which would be integrated if the project came into force), this contribution seeks to examine the SMEI as a whole - and for this reason. For example, there is no objectivity in the reasons and in the proposal, both due to the compatibility of the principle of proportionality - and by focusing on the regulatory instruments of individuals, as well as on the new and special notion of "strategic relevance" read in the ritual. of the concept of "autonomous strategist", you will be able to fool someone who has taken on a horizontal extension in the definition of Union policies. Analyze your color and analyze your color before the first time.

Existing tools in EU emergency response legislation

For the governance of crisis situations (the so-called horizontal instruments) the European Union has various legal instruments that contain provisions of a general nature. Recently, regulatory instruments have been added to them, proposals from

the European Commission still in the approval phase, containing more targeted measures and some of a transversal nature, others linked to specific sectors, including the internal market itself (the so-called vertical instruments.) (*The External Dimension of the EU Disaster Response* F. Casolari 2016)

Before the Treaty of Lisbon, the civil protection sector - despite being included among the objectives of the Community by the Maastricht Treaty (art. 3, letter t), TEC) - was not equipped with relevant material rules aimed at defining its scope and the specific conditions for the exercise of this competence. (Tizzano , *Law manual of the European Union, Turin*, 2020). However, a complete forecast was dictated starting from 2007 with the introduction of Article 196 TFEU, through which today the Union encourages cooperation between Member States to strengthen the effectiveness of prevention and protection systems against natural disasters or caused by man.(This is a parallel competence, as provided for in article 6, letter. f), TFBE, which aims exclusively to encourage, support and integrate the action of the Member States, without being able to replace the competences of the latter and with the usual exception of any legislative harmonization initiative.)

Referring to the studies for a more in-depth and specialized examination of this provision, (M. C. Baruffi , *Short commentary on the Treaties of the Union european*, 2014) here it is important to underline how this primary rule acts as a legal basis for various legislative instruments, including the so-called. "Union Civil Protection Mechanism". The latter - in relation to which we limit ourselves to highlighting its characteristic features - established by Decision 1313/2013/EU amended several times, most recently in 2021,(Decision no. 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 17 December 2013, on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, in OJEU L 347, of 20 December 2013, p. 924 ss., lastly amended with Regulation 2021/836/EU, of 20 May 2021, in OJEU L 185, of 26 May 2021) was created with the main objective of improving the effectiveness of prevention, preparation and response to disasters, natural or man-made, inside and outside the Union: while the primary responsibility for disaster prevention and response lies with the Member States, ensuring the implementation of solidarity between Member States in accordance with of Article 3 (3) of the TEU. The mechanism ensures Union protection not only for people, but also for the environment and property, including cultural heritage, in relation to any type of natural and/or man-made disaster, including environmental disasters, marine pollution and serious health emergencies occurring within or outside the territory of the Member States¹.

For the purposes indicated, this mechanism makes use of a central structure active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the Emergency Response Coordination Center (hereinafter "ERCC"), managed by the European Commission. The ERCC is responsible for real-time coordination, monitoring and emergency assistance,

¹ See art. 1, paragraph 2, of decision no. 1313/2013/EU, cit.

working closely with national civil protection authorities and relevant Union bodies to promote a cross-sectoral approach to disaster management. The Member States involved commit the resources to be made available, while the ERCC has the task of directing the aid interventions and defining the directives and specifying the tasks entrusted to the modules or other response means. Based on lessons learned over time, it has been found that voluntary offers of mutual assistance, coordinated and facilitated by the civil protection mechanism, have not always guaranteed the availability of sufficient resources to satisfactorily respond to the primary needs of people affected by disasters. (F. Rolando , *Health protection in European Union law and the EU's response to the Covid-19 emergency, in The Covid-19 health emergency and European Union law. The crisis, the cure, the prospects*). For this reason, first in 2019 with the creation of additional resources, and then in 2021 with the modification of the trade union mechanism, the European Union tried to make up for the shortcomings of the system, today even more visible due to the pandemic crisis, natural disasters during which it is estimated that the mechanism was activated 216 times.

In order to improve disaster preparedness and response capacity at Union level, the Regulation also expanded the competences of the ERCC already foreseen in Article 7. Precisely to address a wide range of emergencies within and outside the Union, the Centre's operations, analytical, monitoring and information management capabilities and communication capabilities between the competent authorities have been mainly strengthened. Finally, to address the lack of transport and logistics resources – identified as a fundamental obstacle to the ability of Member States to provide or receive assistance – Regulation (EU) 2021/836 sets the objective of ensuring full financing, with funds which will be charged to the Union budget, in all cases of large-scale disasters¹. These changes aim to make them more supportive, but above all more flexible, with respect to crises, the extent of which is difficult to fully identify in advance.

These changes aim to make the mechanism more supportive, but above all more flexible, with respect to crises, the extent of which is difficult to fully identify in advance. However, the role of the ERCC does not end in the civil protection sector. This center acts, in fact, as a central point of contact at Union level with the competent authorities of the Member States also in relation to another horizontal crisis response instrument, namely the so-called "Integrated Political Crisis Response Mechanism". (hereinafter "IPCR"). These are integrated mechanisms aimed at enabling timely coordination and response, including at political level, by the Union to crises that have a broad political impact or importance, both internal and external to the territory of the Member States. The IPCR, in fact, provides the Council with the tools and flexibility necessary to decide on the management of the Union's response, including rapid

¹ See recital 32 of Regulation (EU) 2021/836, cit

consultations and possible proposals for actions. The political control and strategic direction of all phases of the IPCR process are placed under the guidance of the Presidency of the Council, taking full account of the powers of the Commission. The IPCR also aims to monitor how the solidarity clause is implemented.

To these two general horizontal emergency management mechanisms, another horizontal instrument was added in 2020, created specifically to achieve better application of market rules in the event of a crisis: the so-called Task Force for the implementation of the single market (hereinafter "SMET"). Made up of Member States and the Commission, the Task Force has the task of holding periodic meetings to assess the state of compatibility of national legislation with the rules of the single market, to prioritize the most urgent obstacles, to address cases of "over-regulation" unjustified. , discuss horizontal implementation issues and follow up on the implementation of the action plan approved in March 2020 under the European Industrial Strategy.

SMET also acts as a liaison between the institutions, regularly briefing the Competition Council and the European Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection. During the pandemic, SMET played an active role in addressing and counteracting the emergence of obstacles to normal operations. of the single market, (in particular, preliminary qualification checks for the provision of temporary services. The above-mentioned crisis response mechanisms are complemented by other more targeted "vertical" measures, i.e. focusing on specific aspects of the common market, such as the free movement of goods or common export rules.

One of these is Regulation (EC) no. 2679/98 (known as the "Strawberry Regulation" because it originates from a dispute between Spain and France over these fruits) ¹ which establishes a response mechanism to address obstacles to the free movement of goods attributable to the behavior of a Member State, whether positive or attractive, capable of causing serious disruption to the free movement of goods or serious harm to the private individuals concerned, and which therefore require immediate intervention.

SMEI innovative package proposal

The European Commission has recently proposed the innovative PMII package, a package which is based on the assumption that the effect of a crisis in the single market can be twofold: on the one hand, it can lead to obstacles to free movement within the market from only, interrupting its normal functioning; on the other hand, the crisis could aggravate any shortages of related goods and services in individual Member States. The legislative instruments that constitute the initiative should be

¹ Regulation (EC) no. 2679/98 of the Council of 7 December 1998 on the functioning of the internal market in relation to the free movement of goods between Member States, OJ L 337 of 12.12.1998, p. 8

able to prevent both types of consequences¹ through the adoption of a regulation aimed at creating a global response architecture to the crisis, taking into account the different levels of impact on the single market and a regulation and a directive aimed at modifying the harmonized standards established in some existing sectoral frameworks in the European legal system. In this sense, the proposal of this package aims to be a clear attempt by the EU to overcome the sometimes informal management of crises, i.e. through soft law instruments, through the development of codified, binding instruments, approved in a transparent and above all, in compliance with the requirement of legitimacy (including democratic) of the power exercised, profiles that are somehow missing in the "soft" tools. (E. Mariolina, S. Oana , *The Elusive Legitimacy of EU Soft Law: An Analysis of Consultation and Participation in the Process of Adopting COVID-19 Soft Law in the EU*).

Important implications arise from this: first of all, the choice to adopt legislative acts is subordinated to a part of the activity European regulatory institutions to procedures aimed at complying with Member States; furthermore, the binding nature of these regulatory instruments would also allow their implementation "from above", i.e. through the judicial bodies of the individual member states, as well as direct control by the European Commission, also in relation to a possible appeal to the Court of Justice. Justice. Justice for failure to fulfill obligations under Union law on the basis of Articles 258 and 260 TFBE.

Otherwise, the level of informality of the soft tools determines the lack of a clear definition of the competences - and the related responsibilities - between the Union and the individual member states, and a consequent "weak" effectiveness as it is obtained through what is often defined as "voluntary compliance" by states and citizens. (E. Mariolina , S. Oana , *The Elusive Legitimacy of EU Soft Law: An Analysis of Consultation and Participation in the Process of Adopting COVID-19 Soft Law in the EU*).

As stated by the Commission itself, the implementation of emergency and supervisory measures, mandatory in all Member States, can facilitate the coordination of response actions in the event of a crisis, thus avoiding the occurrence of violations of freedoms. Looking specifically at the framework regulation, which can be defined as the backbone of the SMEI, a series of measures would be established aimed at anticipating, preparing and responding to the impact of crises on the common market, with the aim of maintaining the free circulation of information. of goods, services and people and ensure the availability of strategically important goods and services as well as crisis-relevant goods and services in the single market. The proposed measures take into account the different levels of impact of the crisis on the market and can be classified into five main subcategories: (a) the establishment of an advisory group, (b) the adoption of measures for the receipt, exchange and exchange

¹ See, recital 6 of the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an emergency single market instrument, cit.

of relevant information, (c) develop a contingency planning framework, (d) develop a single market surveillance framework and (e) develop a single market contingency framework.

The role of the Advisory Group (a), chaired by the Commission and composed of a representative from each Member State, would be to advise the Commission on appropriate measures to prevent or address the impact of a risk of disruption or crisis on the single market, ensuring at the same time adequate coordination. More specifically, the Advisory Group would help the Commission to assess the intensity of the risk or crisis and the need to activate supervisory or emergency arrangements respectively in the single market. It would also analyze crisis-related information collected by Member States, the Commission or received from economic operators and facilitate its sharing with all relevant crisis bodies at EU level and, as appropriate, with third countries. Both individual Member States and the Commission, for this purpose, should equip themselves with central liaison offices to coordinate contacts and exchanges of information between States and European institutions.

The Commission may also recommend Member States to ensure the availability of essential goods and services by facilitating the expansion or conversion of production lines or by accelerating the authorization of such goods. Finally, the Commission may recommend that Member States facilitate the targeted distribution of strategic reserves. In addition to these measures, the regulation provides for other measures, even more "extraordinary", which could in fact be activated by the Commission only following an act which is further applicable, possible and subsequent to the activation of the emergency regime, and this is precisely the reason for "double activation", which will be discussed in more detail below, especially in relation to compliance with the principle of proportionality in the application of the legislation Article 5, paragraph 4, TEU of the measures identified in the proposed package.

Among the measures listed in a specific dedicated title is the possibility for the Commission to request information from economic operators through a formal binding decision (Article 24 of the Framework Regulation). They also provide for the possibility for the Commission to invite companies to accept orders classified as priority for goods relevant to the crisis and, in exceptional circumstances, to ask companies to comply with such requests or to explain serious reasons justifying a possible refusal. article 27 of the framework regulation).

The measures also include the possible adoption of the foreseen derogations from the harmonized product legislation (Article 26 of the Framework Regulation) The Framework Regulation - and, in particular, priority orders, measures facilitating the conversion of production lines and measures facilitating the expansion of production capacity - would therefore harm some rights directly protected by the primary sources of the European Union. First of all, the right to freedom of enterprise,

mentioned in Article 16 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which can therefore be limited during a possible emergency of the single market.

Conclusions

During the analysis of the proposed SME package, the term “strategic” was used several times. This is a new concept in European disaster response law, and therefore deserves specific study. It should be remembered from the outset that the classification of a case in crisis (or emergency) conditions is by no means irrelevant for European Union law. Despite this, to date, a unitary definition of "crisis" has not yet been formulated by the European legal system. The same difficulty can be found in relation to the more specific concept of disaster (or catastrophe). It therefore seems even more interesting to try to analyze the new definitions presented in Article 3 of the proposed framework regulation, including "goods and services of strategic importance", "strategic reserves" and "sectors of strategic importance".

First of all, it can be concluded that the concept "strategic" was not conceived simply as a synonym of the term "relevant": both adjectives are used in different contexts, these concepts can also be found as "strategic autonomy" of the Union otherwise, the first, due to the limited "reserves" taken into consideration, the second, to identify the group of "goods and services" subject to different rules in the event of a crisis. And it is precisely this prediction that facilitates the understanding of the strategic concept: all goods and services linked to the crisis are goods and services of strategic importance, they are also irreplaceable. Precisely this last characteristic could make it necessary, in the Commission's opinion, to establish what it defines as "strategic reserves", i.e. stocks of goods of strategic importance aimed at preparing for a single market emergency.

Finally, we need to understand what “irreplaceable” means. To this end, it may be useful to recall the more detailed definition of "areas of strategic importance", which identifies areas of critical importance for the Union and its Member States as those of systemic and vital importance for public safety, security, public order or public health and the collapse, failure, loss or destruction of which would have a significant impact on the functioning of the single market.

Specifically, the SMEI provides that if the Commission, with the implementing act, activates the supervisory mode, at the same time it must prepare the list of goods and services that it considers to be of strategic importance, to be monitored and in relation to which it can decide, on as appropriate, reserve reserves.

Instead, it will be the task of the Member States to create and maintain an inventory of the most important economic operators, established in the national territory of reference, which operate along the supply chains of goods and services of strategic importance identified in the implementing act. , the competent national authorities, however, will be required to direct supply requests to the voluntarily identified

operators. The competent national authorities should then transmit the relevant findings to the Commission and the Advisory Group via their central liaison office without delay, including for the purpose of assessing the need to create buffers. Therefore strategic reserves, if requested by a Member State, must remain significantly below individually defined objectives. The Commission may then take further measures, such as requiring that country to build up its strategic stocks of the product by a certain deadline, trying to avoid creating disproportionate pressure on the supply chains of the identified goods due to the accumulation of reserves.

Finally, Article 32 of the framework regulation regulates the hypothesis in which the strategic reserves established by the Member States, despite the adoption of the measures illustrated so far, prove insufficient to meet the needs linked to the emergency of the single market.

The Commission could, at this point, recommend that States distribute strategic reserves in a targeted way, where possible, also in geographical areas particularly affected by disturbances in the common market and in compliance with the principles of necessity, proportionality and solidarity, deciding, perhaps with the introduction of relevant restrictions and controls, and the more efficient use of these reserves, to end the single market emergency. Everything explained so far is clearly influenced by the aspiration to "autonomy", which has to do with the protection and security of the Member States, has now acquired a horizontal extension in the definition of the Union's policies, also extending to the economic sphere -technological.

It is clear that SMEI is absolutely aligned with the quest for strategic autonomy, if not the first concrete, broad-spectrum manifestation of the actual intent of this objective. In particular, from the provisions of the proposal dealing with the storage of goods and services of strategic importance, the monitoring of reserve stocks and interventions in the event of shortages, the main theme is the EU's desire to work towards achieving and maintaining its economic. autonomy in relation to the supply of essential goods and services, thus avoiding the emergence of asymmetric interdependence with third countries, thus protecting the economic system of the Union from the effects of the extraterritorial application of sanctions and other harmful practices by third countries.

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The Cryptocurrency Market and The Regulatory Framework of EU Legislation

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Abstract

Cryptocurrencies belong to a global market without national or regional boundaries, the location of whose users is often unknown. In most jurisdictions, they do not fall within the regulatory scope in force and in any case there are no specific provisions. The EU is the first legal system that defines a framework for cryptocurrencies, a complete and timely legislation even though it does not fully achieve all the objectives it sets itself. On crypto-asset markets the European Commission published the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on 24 September 2020 as part of the broad digital finance strategy package, which is destined to have significant and long-term effects on the system global financial as it aims to provide regulatory certainty for companies offering financial services of this type in the European legal space. Overall, the package deals with the retail payments strategy and digital finance. The first includes four legislative proposals, including MiCA2, where the Retail Payments Strategy sets out a series of specific measures for payments which, taking into account the pace and scale of technological change in the sector, go beyond the horizontal scope of the digital finance strategy. This is the first legislative initiative at European level which describes a market with ethical and secure boundaries, capable of achieving innovation and responsible competition among financial service providers by introducing a harmonized and comprehensive framework for the issuance, application and provision of crypto-asset services.

Keywords: European Parliament, Cryptocurrencies, MiCA, European Commission, Digital Finance, European Central Bank.

Introduction

The EU is the first legal system that defines a framework for cryptocurrencies, a complete and timely legislation even though it does not fully achieve all the objectives it sets itself. In most jurisdictions, they do not fall within the regulatory scope in force and in any case there are no specific provisions. Cryptocurrencies belong to a global

market without national or regional boundaries, the location of whose users is often unknown.

The cryptocurrency market is creating an ongoing popularity which now represents a fundamentally global reality with characteristics that increasingly resemble traditional financial markets. Crypto-assets pose a threat to financial stability but also represent high-risk speculative investments, and in this sense must be included within a regulatory perimeter in accordance with the prevailing standards in the financial system.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union has the power to establish appropriate provisions regarding the institution and functioning of the internal market (Article 114 TFEU) assuming that crypto-assets represent one of the most important applications of blockchain in the financial world. The aim of the European action is to define a regulatory framework in which a cross-border market can be developed by nature by defining an applicable legislation for the issuance, trading, clearing and regulation of financial instruments being harmonized mainly at EU levels.

The wave of public interest in cryptocurrency investments has led the Union to take responsibility for the risks that unregulated virtual assets pose to investors and markets and, among these, in particular, the risks of money laundering and terrorist financing. On June 29, 2022, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament reached a provisional agreement on the proposal aimed at expanding the scope of application for cryptocurrency transfers¹⁸. The European Central Bank on October 2, 2020, published a comprehensive report, approved by the Governing Council, on the possible issuance of a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)(F. Panetta 2021).

Cryptocurrencies are digital assets that depend on cryptography and DLT Distributed Ledger Technology. This technology, and blockchain in particular, has the potential to revolutionize the way financial assets are issued, accessed and shared via digital networks. (Blockchain is a form of distributed ledger where transaction details are stored on the ledger in the form of blocks of information. A block of new information is attached to the chain of pre-existing blocks via a computerized process by which transactions are validated. It is a technology that has proven to be excellent at preserving large databases while allowing widespread access and preventing malicious attacks.)

It is involving small investors connecting with the financial system, which is becoming a source of concern for the regulators since, in the Member States, the risks of the uncontrolled development of virtual currencies are important both from a macroeconomic point of view and from a microeconomic point of view, since they have to do, on the one hand, with consumers and investors(P. Cipollone 2020), and on the other hand with financial and political monetary stability. The stability of

global finance can also be affected by their distribution in the savings of small investors and by the inclusion, in particular, of cryptocurrencies in the assets of investment funds. Given that autonomous private decisions regarding the monetary supply can reduce the ability of banks central to effectively implement monetary policy all cryptocurrencies are controlled by private individuals, therefore the issue of influence on the monetary system becomes very important.(S. Lucarelli 2019)

In the case of cryptocurrencies that fall outside the scope of the proposed regulation, national regimes that aim to regulate the cross-border provision of cryptocurrency services may, due to different approaches, harm the level playing field, as some risks will be mitigated in Member States that introduce a specific regime for crypto-assets, consumers, investors and market operators, while, in other Member States, the latter may be exposed to more significant risks in terms of, for example, fraud, cyber-attacks, market manipulation. The definition of a single digital market presupposes, on the other hand, the reduction of risk related to the interconnection and stability of financial systems

Proposals and regulatory framework of services for crypto-assets

The provision of crypto-asset services within the EU can only be carried out by legal entities that have a registered office in the EU and are authorized as cryptocurrency service providers in accordance with Art. 55 of the MiCA proposal. In this regard, according to the article. 53, par. 3, an authorization of a crypto-asset service provider is valid throughout the single market and allows crypto-asset service providers to provide the services for which they are authorized throughout the Union, thanks to the right of establishment, by including through a branch, or through the freedom to provide services. In order to provide crypto-asset services, which include the operation of a trading platform or other crypto-assets, the relevant enterprise must be authorized according to a process that includes a significant control over the company's own activity, executive management and control systems.(G. CARELLA 2022)

A crypto-asset service provider is any person whose profession or activity consists of providing one or more crypto-asset services to third parties on a professional basis ensuring that the upcoming regulation applies to most crypto-asset companies. assets, especially in relation to market points that are not yet well defined and to buy all types of crypto-assets that currently fall outside the scope of EU financial services legislation. Investor protection remains a focal point and therefore additional obligations relating to safekeeping of funds, corporate structure and management qualification must be met. Crucially, providers offering cryptocurrency services on a cross-border basis are not required to have a physical presence in the host Member States or in the Member States where they wish to provide services if they are different from the home Member State. Therefore, the authorization must be mutually

recognized and the competent authorities at national level ensure that it specifies the crypto-asset services that the providers are authorized to provide.

Based on the article. 54, par. 1 of the MKR proposal, legal entities intending to supply crypto asset services must apply for authorization as service providers from ESMA. Third country businesses due to the inherently digital nature of crypto-asset services are often able to provide services to clients without any physical or legal presence in the Union. This presents a significant risk of circumvention of the rules in the regulation, as well as a competitive disadvantage for crypto-asset service providers authorized in the Union compared to competitors from third countries. So, based on what paragraph 51 clarifies, no natural or legal person shall be authorized to offer crypto-asset services to citizens of the Union on a non-casual basis without having a legal representative in the EU and without being authorized under the proposed regulation, including when these services are provided exclusively at the initiative of EU customers. Regarding service providers for significant crypto-assets, ESMA, according to art. 53, par. 1 of the proposal requires that the suppliers themselves obtain the authorization before they start providing the services. In the same cases, ESMA is responsible for supervision in close cooperation with the competent authority of the Member State.

The proposed regulation also sets out the framework for regulated "crypto-asset services" in which a crypto-asset service is defined as any service and activities related to: custody and administration on behalf of third parties; for managing a trading platform; for the exchange of crypto-assets with a fiat currency that has the status of legal tender; for exchanging crypto-assets with other crypto-assets; for the execution of orders on behalf of third parties; for placement; after transfer; for receiving and transmitting orders on behalf of third parties; for providing consultancy; for the exchange of crypto-assets with financial instruments.(F. Annunziata 2022)

The Regulation aims to create a comprehensive regulatory framework, continuous monitoring will remain necessary as a system, through new models and risks. Consequently, it evolves rapidly, possibly requiring further regulatory interventions over time, which may be modified under the influence of new knowledge. For example, a more widespread adoption of cryptocurrencies could expand the interrelationship between the cryptocurrency market and the traditional financial market.

Conclusions

The cryptocurrency market has raised concerns especially regarding high price volatility, abuse and risk of money laundering, and, in fact, much of the growth of crypto markets in recent years can be attributed to exponential growth of decentralized finance (N. Borisov 2021).The EU is the first legal system that defines a framework for cryptocurrencies, a complete and timely legislation even though it

does not fully achieve all the objectives it sets itself. In most jurisdictions, they do not fall within the regulatory scope in force and in any case there are no specific provisions.

Cryptocurrencies belong to a global market without national or regional boundaries, the location of whose users is often unknown. With the entry into force of the act, we will have the hypothesis of regulated and unregulated decentralized finance, with the risk of "leakage" to countries outside the EU where the EU market appears more punitive than others.

However, despite the highlighted limitations, the proposed legislation seems fair and balanced, especially after the changes made by the European Parliament since the year which harmonizes the European cryptocurrency market, creating a level playing field for issuers and service providers. Given the size and importance of the single market, the proposal, by setting regulatory standards, has the potential to create an innovative market and, with the reported adjustments in terms of greater proportionality, to attract non-EU market participants. These positive consequences also benefit consumers, guaranteeing them protection and choice from competition.

By introducing a mandatory licensing regime for providers offering services for crypto-assets together with a European-level passporting mechanism, the text envisages regulation similar to that applicable to the financial instruments market. Regarding the objective of the regulation, for defining the limits with other financial instruments, there remain areas of uncertainty and overlap.

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The Challenges of Curriculum Reforms for Countries in Transition, 1991-2010

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Abstract

Post-Soviet republics have undergone a variety of political and economic changes following the collapse of the Soviet Union to transform themselves into market-oriented open societies. Transitional countries have faced various problems, including social inequality, political unrest, economic hardship, and ethnic conflict. The countries had to introduce reforms in education in response to changing conditions to produce a new generation with ideas and skills that support pluralistic societies and market economies. Some countries opted for rapid, drastic reforms; others chose to restructure their economies while retaining centralized governments. Using examples from post-Soviet countries, the study examines the challenges and strategies in reforming the curriculum for states in transition. The study investigates the ideological aspects that have influenced curriculum revisions in post-Soviet nations.

Keywords: education, curriculum, challenges in transition, post-Soviet countries, reforms

Introduction

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, post-Soviet republics embarked upon a wide range of political and economic reforms aimed at transition to democracy and market economy. Countries in transition faced multifaceted challenges associated with economic hardship, political turmoil, ethnic conflicts, and social disparity. Under new circumstances, the post-Soviet republics had to launch educational reforms to foster a new generation of people whose skills would be relevant to a market economy and whose ideas would be conducive to democracy. Some countries opted for rapid changes, others favored a more cautious approach, and third ones decided to reform economic structures while preserving centralized government.

This paper analyzes the ways and obstacles in redesigning curricula for states in transition and draws examples of post-Soviet countries. The paper investigates the ideological problems, such as nationalism and the persistence of the Marxist legacy, which impacted the curriculum reforms in the post-Soviet countries. While curriculum reforms are aimed at market economy and political liberalization, the paper focuses only on those aspects of reforms associated with liberal education (leaving aside a range of issues related to redesigning curriculum for the needs of the market economy).

We maintain that three aspects are essential for successful reform in the curriculum: teacher training, ideological content and management. This conclusion is linked with the theoretical works of Markee (1997), Caltaks (2003), Hartley (1998), and other scholars in the field. In the first part, we analyze the context and initial experience of curriculum reform and then reflect on its three aspects. We also summarize that financial resources might be useful if only the political will directs curriculum reforms toward market-oriented and liberal education.

Challenges of Transition

At the beginning of educational reforms in post-Soviet countries, many experts came to some common agreement that reforms should have been aimed at dismantling the Soviet type of education and installing Western ones. The first decade of transition (the 1990s) manifested that merely the replacement of subjects of curriculum (e.g., History of Communist Party to History of Social Movements) was not going to make significant changes. At the beginning of the transition, reforms, in many cases, ended up with cosmetic results.

Liberal education in Western countries aims at consolidation, fixation, and promotion of socioeconomic achievements of the developed countries. In contrast, the task before post-Soviet countries was completely different – the countries' educational establishments needed to promote ideas about an open economy and society among those who have lived for decades under the communist regime. This task was complicated due to ethnic conflicts, financial shortages and social tensions. Moreover, the educators had difficulty switching from the legacy and mentality of Marxism to a liberal one. They resisted the power change in the management and conceptual shifts in the curriculum.

In the 1920s, John Dewey, a great educator of democracy, propagated his liberal ideas in China. However, Marxism later prevailed in China due to several factors, and Dewey's legacy was forgotten (Hoyt, 2006). The failure of Dewey was attributed, besides other reasons, to social habits and traditions in Chinese society. Even though the post-Soviet area was not a homogenous space (e.g., Moldova is quite different from Uzbekistan), 70 years of communism left a set of similar political and social

habits. "A preacher" with Dewey's ideas would have failed in post-Soviet countries as Dewey failed 80 years ago in China.

"Curricular innovation always takes place within a matrix of cultural, political, economic, institutional and administrative variables that directly influence the ability of project participants to innovate in meaningful ways. The extent to which adopters accept or reject innovations is influenced by personalities and previous experiences of participants." (Markee, 1997: 172). That experience in the USSR was tailored in every way to Marxism.

In 1991, the post-Soviet society had several generations of people who were educated within the codes of Marxist-Leninist ethics. However, some experts argued that the post-Soviet societies were ripe for changes even before the collapse of the USSR, and the problem was in the financial shortage and structural approach. Ahmad Abdinov, Deputy Minister of Education of Azerbaijan, wrote in 1996, "Now that Marxism has been rejected, a void or vacuum exists, which must be replaced with something new. Educators must rethink their perspectives. They will need supportive materials in the classroom, books, newspapers, and journals to do this. Admittedly, this is one of the most difficult problems we face today. We desperately need new material for a new ideological approach." (Abdinov, 1996, para 19)

Gunters Caltaks maintains that the problem is not of a financial nature but of a managerial one. "If there is coherent and concerted action between teacher-training universities, the ministries of education, and curriculum development and examination institutions, much can be achieved -even without substantial financial resources. A 'good' educational reform is not only the privilege of rich countries or brilliant intellectuals but rather the outcome of an organized political will, wide contacts, and the collaboration of human skills." (Caltaks, 2003: 16)

In the 1990s, the curriculum was negatively affected by the sharp decline in public funds and the delay in reforms was justified by financial problems. The 2000s brought some wealth to several countries - Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan among them, due to oil exports. However, the educational system still suffered from the slow pace of reforms caused by the rigidity of structures and traditions of the past decades.

The leadership of many post-Soviet countries, including those with the centralized system, realized the necessity of a certain degree of liberalization as countries entered the global economy and competed in the global market. Moreover, other countries which went through the so-called "colour revolutions" -Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, faced challenges in education to promote ideas of the open market.

As Caltaks (2003: 6) points out, it was also soon realized that human capital remained a key asset for reform. Experience in Central European countries, which have acceded to the European Union, manifested that reforms were poorly coordinated even though it was based on reliable outside competence, consultation and finance from

Western Europe. Therefore, in Eastern European and Central Asian post-Soviet countries, various segments of the educational sector had to be put in one coherent curriculum design to propel educational reforms. Those segments of the curriculum were teacher training, ideological context, and management.

Sharvanidze's study (2003) of educational reforms in Georgia focused on the abovementioned aspects of the curriculum, mainly exploring the linkage between education and market demands. The linkage between national curriculum and teacher training was studied in Hartley's (1998) article about the reforms in British schools. He also emphasized the role of the government in redesigning the curriculum.

Markee points to several principles of curricular innovation. It is a complex phenomenon involving two aspects: firstly, the primary goal of any project in the curriculum is to promote professional change, which specifically involves engaging teachers in developing new materials and skills; secondly, political, economic and cultural context (1997: 172). Further, it requires good communication among project participants (1997: 174) and a strategic approach to managing change (1997: 175). The first two aspects correspond to the definition in the paper – teacher training and ideological context accordingly; the other two are related to management.

One of the problems in post-Soviet countries was the acute need for teacher training. Training of a single teacher within the Western educational standards requires a sufficient amount of funds. It was necessary to conduct professional development courses in each country. Having acquired new textbooks, many teachers still employed old Soviet techniques, particularly in rural areas.

“It was easier to create a new curriculum and textbooks than to create new teaching competencies. In all aspects of learning, teachers tend to reproduce the same social communication practices they experienced while learning in the classroom. Unfortunately, even giving credit to a high level of teaching knowledge in general, the teacher-training universities and colleges of the former socialist countries lacked the skills and practices of interactive learning and the practical application of knowledge.” (Caltaks, 2003: 8).

Teachers might have known the facts about liberal education, but they could not apply relevant techniques for encouraging competitive and opposing views in classrooms. A smooth transition to a market-oriented society required not only the acquisition of specific knowledge but also the development of actual skills and attitudes in favor of open, pluralistic public life in the broad sense. “Both the content and delivery of education needed to be changed in order to make curricula more flexible, more student-centered and more focused on problem-solving and the application of concepts, rather than the pure memorization of facts” (Caltaks, 2003: 9)

The Asian Development Bank study on six post-Soviet countries concluded about the problems in curriculum reform, "Education is mainly focused on the absorption and reproduction of facts rather than on the development of problem-solving and critical thinking skills; the content of education is predominantly theoretical and of limited relevance to everyday life; and the relationship between teachers and pupils tends to be hierarchical, the teacher being seen as the owner of knowledge and pupils expected to reproduce it, rather than personal in which teachers attend to an individual pupil's own distinct abilities and needs." (2004: 10)

A much more complicated problem was the ideological influence on curriculum. Ismailova (2004), in her research about educational reform in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, explored the issue of indigenization of the curriculum on history. The indigenization of the curriculum was aimed at the assertion of Kyrgyz identity, but at the same time, it led to the marginalization of the non-Kyrgyz population in the country. This process was a part of the wave of nationalism in post-Soviet countries exacerbated by ethnic conflicts.

In many other post-Soviet countries, textbooks on history and literature were replete with inflammatory texts and distorted facts due to interethnic conflicts. Under such circumstances, education for an inclusive, pluralistic society was overshadowed by nationalist rhetoric. "Tasks of building the new nation, including a shared vision among citizens about their future in the region and the world, required a new ideological background for the whole education system. The universal challenge to find the right balance between preserving the national identity complicated by recent local history demanded skillfully designed curricula with a strong emphasis on democracy, and intercultural, communicative and value aspects of education." (Caltaks, 2003: 9).

The ideological struggle in post-Soviet countries was multifaceted. This process was complicated by the return of religion in post-atheist societies and the global geopolitical tension characterized by the clash of civilizations. Western democracy was frequently associated with the chaos of the market economy and a rage of wild capitalism. Alieva claims, "communist ideology, predominant until recently, with its ideas of justice and brotherhood, oddly enough promoted a spreading of bourgeois Western values rather than democratic values." (1999: 2)

In this regard, Heyneman (2000) points to the necessity of proper education for social cohesion. In his opinion, former socialist countries are finding that nation-building in the 21st century is significantly different than in the 17th century when it could be enforced by using a single authoritarian control. Today, people have multiple local initiatives and open access to uncensored information online. "Many authorities find themselves without sufficient experience and without the traditions for compromise and consensus necessary for success." (p. 186)

Recipes for overcoming problems were many. Some scholars suggested using an American model (Ozcan, 2006). Ozcan points out, "...education for democracy is a significant component of the public school curriculum both in the United States and Europe. In US schools, in addition to the civics and government courses, many extracurricular activities prepare youth as democratic citizens." (p.2) However, Ozcan does not view the current crisis with democracy in the US and does not appreciate the different political, economic, and cultural contexts in America compared to post-Soviet countries. However, his reasoning about using the American model was based on certain principles of the US educational system. The important features are the lack of centralization, which gives more power to local educational establishments, limited interference from the federal government, and some common guidance for forging national unity and teaching pluralism. Schools in the US are closely linked with local communities and municipal authorities.

Relations between educational establishments and civil society in post-Soviet countries were radically different. "In order for schools to become relevant to people's needs, they have to open themselves to society, which in practice means more connections and shared responsibilities with the local community. (Caltaks, 2003: 10)

However, for example, in the case of Azerbaijan, the experience proved that sometimes centralized control could reduce corruption and increase the quality of education. Thus, a standardized entrance examination to universities introduced in Azerbaijan since 1992 received highly positive remarks from many international organizations.

The reformation of the post-Soviet educational system was not about the problem of loose or firm power but the nature of power and managerial skills. The six countries study conducted by the Asian Development Bank (2004) revealed the problem with coordination and cooperation as key obstacles. In Azerbaijan, the study concluded regarding the causes of resistance to change: "A common problem is that different aspects of education reform may move at different paces. This can lead to poorly coordinated and contradicting policies, misunderstandings, and tensions among people. In some instances, regulations may not change as quickly as in actual practice. In other instances, new regulations may not be enforced and come into actual practice. Among the central challenges of the education reforms is the need to develop stronger management capacity at all levels of the administration." (Asian Development Bank, 2004: 7).

However, with the arrival of income from oil resources, Azerbaijan's Ministry of Education embarked on a wide range of reforms, especially the introduction of a new curriculum. Education programs have achieved some notable progress as the transition period transformed into a new era, leaving behind the limits of "post-Soviet" as a notion applied to countries (Samadova, 2016). However, the government and society in many transition countries (and now thirty years after the

independence, we should probably speak about post-transition) must overcome the habits and traditions formed over the past decades.

Conclusion

The curriculum transition in post-Soviet countries had been challenging but brought positive results. While financial resources had been an essential element of educational reforms, especially for teacher training, the other two aspects – ideology and management required political will, strategy and coordination. Even though many post-Soviet countries continue to face problems in the field of education, it should be noted that, in general, the educational system, particularly in Azerbaijan, has undergone significant positive changes. At the same time, there is still a need for more reforms of the education management system, both at the macro level and at the level of individual educational institutions. This applies to both secondary and higher education.

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Correlation between extracurricular, curricular exposure to English and FLA success in students learning English for more than 13 years

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Abstract

Today's generations have been introduced to foreign language (FL) learning from an early age. In fact, in Croatia, English as a foreign language is mandatory from the 1st grade of the primary school and in some European countries even from kindergarten (Poland, Cyprus, some communities in Spain). However, children are also acquiring foreign language unintentionally through the exposure to different media such as TV, Internet and social networks as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok. Successful L2 acquisition is often contributed to the age factor and individual differences between L2 learners (social, cognitive, affective), but contextual factors that include wider community, language policy, education system and formal, non-formal and informal opportunities for L2 development should not be neglected. Three different contexts of acquiring second language can be differentiated: *at home context*, where the new language is studied as foreign language, *immersion context*, which is characterised by the immersion in the language of the environment, and *study abroad context*, which takes place in the L2 setting (Collentine and Fred, 2004). Since at home context refers to formal learning of language in a formal environment, the terms such as local context and local environment in which a language is learned are used more often. In the present research, a questionnaire was administered to 40 university students of food technology with the aim of determining the correlation between curricular, extracurricular and students' success in FLA based on the secondary school¹, secondary school leaving certificate and the university grades. The following conclusions that will be discussed later in the paper have been reached: the students' final grade in English on the secondary school exit exam and at the 1st year of studying does not differ to a great extent (although there was a 38 % decline in the final grade in English at the university level); the students have been exposed to English primarily through watching films with the English subtitles, listening to English songs, using social networks, listening to podcasts, playing video games and reading

¹ After the finished primary school (duration - 8 years), children enroll the secondary school, which lasts for 4 years

books; most of the students think that their success in mastering English can be contributed to both curricular and extracurricular exposure to English; students mostly spend up to 10 hours weekly being exposed to extracurricular contents; most of the students started learning English in the first grade of the primary school; weak correlation was found between very early exposure to English (kindergarten) and the highest grade (A) in English; stronger correlation was found between the exposure to extracurricular contents and the final grade in English (A in English on secondary school exit exam and 1st year of studying), leading to the conclusion that extracurricular exposure to English is a factor contributing to higher achievements (when final grade is concerned) in English and as such should not be neglected.

Keywords: foreign language acquisition, age factor in SLA, contextual factor in SLA

Introduction

Success in the second language acquisition (SLA) is often contributed to the age factor and individual differences between learners (social, affective, cognitive). However, contextual factors such as wider community, language policy, educational system and formal and informal opportunities for learning a language should not be left aside as they interact with the above-mentioned factors and modify them to a great extent (DeKeyser, 2012; Erk, 2021; Nikolov and Mihaljević Djigunović, 2019). Collentine and Fred (2004) differentiate between three basic contexts of second language learning: *at home context*, where new language is learned as foreign language in formal, institutional conditions, then *immersion context*, characterized by an immersion into the language of a community, and *study abroad context*, which is temporary when compared to immersion context, but takes place in L2 setting. Since at home context implies learning a language in a formal context (environment), terms such as local context of learning (Ushioda, 2013) or local environment where a language is learned are used more often (Benson, 2017). Previous studies of foreign language acquisition (FLA) were based on a formal context of language learning, neglecting thus the experiences and the exposure to language in a non-formal, out-of-school context. However, informal context is an important factor interacting with the age factor and formal way of teaching, contributing to the heterogeneity of the final outcome in the language learning.

English language is the language of international communication. It is, thus, learned as a foreign language in Croatia. Since the knowledge of English language plays a pivotal role in the realization of economic and political interests, especially in countries where internationally non-recognizable languages are spoken, certain countries introduce a policy where the usage of English language in the media is encouraged (also known as unintentional language acquisition). It is evidenced in some European countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, where

high levels of receptive knowledge of English have been witnessed, which is indirectly related to the presence of English in the media in such a great extent, so that the English has become an integral and indispensable part of every-day life. It was confirmed by a study conducted by Verspoor et al. (2011), which showed that a lack of exposure to English through media can exhibit negative, long-term consequences on the language development. Another study by Lindgren and Munoz (2013) showed that watching films in English was an important predictor for the development of receptive language skills. The best results were accomplished by Croatian and Swedish students, which was not a surprise considering long-term and extensive exposure to English through different media. However, such an extensive exposure can lead to a big gap between informal and formal (classroom) exposure to English. It would be ideal if these two sources of exposure could complement, since very early onset and extensive exposure, combined with formal learning of language may lead to faster and high level of language acquisition. That is why the present study aimed at estimating the correlation between extracurricular, curricular exposure to English and FLA success in students learning English for more than 13 years.

FL learning in Croatia

Since English has been recognized as language of international communication, English language proficiency is generally regarded as a condition providing better education and opportunities. That is why English has been a mandatory subject in Croatia from the first grade¹ of primary school since the school year 2003/4. It is taught twice a week (one school hour lasting for 45 min). At the pre-primary level, there is a possibility of learning English as a foreign language in foreign language schools provided that the parents pay for a language course or the children may attend Helen Doron school once a week.

In other European countries, teaching FLs (mostly English) begins at the age of six (Austria, France, Italy) or later (Denmark – at the age of seven, Hungary – at the age of nine), whereas some countries have opted for an earlier start (Poland – mandatory formal learning of EFL to all children aged five from 2015/16 and was even lowered to the third year of the child's life in 2017, Cyprus – EFL mandatory for all three-year-old since September 2015, Malta – EFL has been mandatory since the age of five). However, a lot of studies have demonstrated that a FL start at a pre-primary (kindergarten) level fails to lead to the assumed long-term advantages compared to a later start, i.e. at the upper primary or secondary level (Garcia Mayo and Garcia Lecumberri, 2003; Mihaljević Djigunović, Nikolov and Otto, 2008; Pfenninger, 2014; Erk and Ručević, 2021). That is why Murphy (2014) concluded that earlier is not better in settings of minimal contact with the target language (TL) where the learning is limited to formal instruction of the language as a school subject. Accordingly, the present study aimed at finding correlation between very early exposure to English

¹ In Croatia, children start attending the first grade from 6,5-7,5 years of age

through formal instruction and the highest grade¹ in English achieved by students (based on secondary school, secondary school leaving certificate and the university grades). On the other hand, correlation was also sought between the exposure to extracurricular contents and the highest grade in English. The students were also asked to express their opinion about what contributed to their English language proficiency, exposure to extracurricular, curricular contents or both.

Methodology

For corpus analysis, a questionnaire (Table 1) was administered to forty 2nd year undergraduate students of food technology. Most of these students have been studying English for min. 13 years (Table 1). Their success in English was measured based on the grades in the 4th grade of the secondary school, secondary school final exam and the university grade (1st year of the undergraduate study of food technology). Students' success was estimated based on the grades under the assumption that their grades objectively measured their knowledge, which was confirmed by this study, since students' final grade on the secondary school final exam and the 1st year of studying does differ to a great extent (although 15 students were reported to have a lower grade at university which is due to the fact that they are taught English for specific purposes, which is more demanding).

Table 1. Questionnaire - exposure to English

Question	Answer
1. Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female
2. Age	_____
3. How long have you been studying English? When did you start learning English (in kindergarten, 1 st grade of primary school or later?)	_____
4. Which grade in English did you have?	a) in the 4 th grade of the secondary school? b) Secondary school final exam c) 1 st year of studying?
5. Do you think that	a) The exposure to curricular contents contributed to your English language proficiency?

¹ Croatian national grading system consists of five grades with numerical equivalents from highest to lowest grade as follows: 5 - excellent; 4 - very good; 3 - good; 2- sufficient; 1 - fail (insufficient)

	<p>b) The exposure to extracurricular contents contributed to your English language proficiency?</p> <p>c) Both</p>
<p>6. How were/are you exposed to English in extracurricular environment/what affected your English language proficiency the most?</p>	<p>a) Watching film</p> <p>b) Listening to songs</p> <p>c) Playing video games</p> <p>d) Listening to podcasts</p> <p>e) Tutorials</p> <p>f) Reading books</p> <p>g) Online contents (social networks)</p> <p>h) Other _____</p>
<p>7. How many hours a week do you spend being exposed to different media in English?</p>	<p>_____</p>

Results and discussion

The results of this study reveal that most of the students (26 out of 40 students) have been learning English from the 1st grade of their primary school, which means for 13 or more years. The others have been learning English from the kindergarten (10 of them) or from the 4th grade of the primary school (3 of them). Most of them had the same grade in the 4th grade of their secondary school, secondary school final exam and the 1st year of studying (17 students). Most of the students think that both, formal instruction and exposure to English in non-formal environment through media, contributed to their proficiency in English (26 students – 65 %), followed by 11 students (28 %) who think they are good at English owing to the exposure through media, and only 3 students (7 %) think that only formal instruction contributed to their English language proficiency. Students mostly watch films in English (with the Croatian subtitles) – 37 answers, then listen to English songs – 32 answers, followed by using social networks – Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, listening to podcasts, playing video games (mostly male students) and then reading books. Students mostly spend up to 10 hours weekly being exposed to different media. Furthermore, this paper also aimed to determine correlation between very early exposure to English (kindergarten) and the FLA success. Only two out of ten students (20 %) who started learning English in the kindergarten (pre-primary level) have been reported to have obtained the highest grade in English. It can be noticed that the FL context of the participants failed to adequately support their EFL development in the long run. On the other hand, five out of eight students (63 %) who have been reported to spend

more than 6 hours a day being exposed to extracurricular contents have obtained the highest grade in English (in the 4th grade of their secondary school, secondary school final exam and the 1st year of studying). This study, thus, revealed that the informal exposure to English through media (unintentional language acquisition) contributes more to the FLA success than very early onset. However, in this study, English language proficiency was only measured by the grades achieved in the secondary school or university and in order to obtain better insight into FLA success, it would be recommendable to test the students' knowledge measuring different language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, use of English). Consequently, it would be interesting and relevant to conduct research about the efficiency of teaching other FLs in the Croatian context (Italian, German and French) to determine whether the instruction itself contributes to FLA success since the students are not exposed to other foreign languages to such a great extent as they are to English.

Conclusions

The aim of this research was to determine what is of prime importance when acquiring English as foreign language. Is it the non-curricular or curricular (formal, classroom environment) exposure or both or is it maybe the age of onset? The success in FLA was estimated based on the grades the students have achieved in the 4th grade of their secondary school, on the secondary school final exam and after 1 year of university studying. It was assumed that the grades the students have achieved during their education have been objectively formed, which was confirmed by the results indicating that their final grade did not change to a great extent (although there was a 38 % decline in the final grade in English at the university level, which can be ascribed to the fact that English for specific purposes is taught at university, which is more demanding). The results of the study reveal that the students who have been exposed to English for more that six hours a day were the most successful regarding their final grade (A on all three levels tested). They reported to have been exposed to English through different media, mainly through watching films and listening to songs in English. On the other hand, only two out of ten students who started learning English as a foreign language in the kindergarten have obtained the highest grades in English, which is accordance with the study conducted by Erk and Ručević (2021) who concluded that there is no evidence to confirm that the low-intensity EFL programmes at pre-primary age lead to a lasting positive impact on EFL acquisition in Croatia. The question is then what ensures English language proficiency. This study demonstrated that an extensive exposure is one of the factors contributing to EFL acquisition success, but it should be paired with the formal instruction, which leads to the faster progress and higher level of acquisition. However, due to the fact that FL is learned in an environment which is monolingual, and considering the local circumstances of EFL, there seem to be no significant g ins for very early learners of EFL in comparison to young learners. To conclude, the age of onset, formal instruction

and informal exposure to English as well as individual differences of learners interact and should be considered when trying to predict FLA success.

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Integration of Artificial Intelligence on Teaching the Course of Didactic Methodology: A Case Study

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Abstract

The potential of artificial intelligence is exploding in various aspects of daily and working life, improving the standard of living for people worldwide. In this light, it is clear that the field of education cannot remain unaffected. New research is bringing to light the advantages and challenges of integrating artificial intelligence into education with increasing frequency. With technological advancements and new opportunities emerging, the potential applications of artificial intelligence continue to expand. In order to maximize learning outcomes and promote holistic development in students, teachers must leverage AI effectively. The purpose of this paper is to examine the use of artificial intelligence in teaching the course of Didactic Methodology as part of the pedagogical education of Secondary school teachers. Using insights from relevant studies, the study examines whether Artificial Intelligence enhances the educational process. Artificial Intelligence for educational purposes will be reviewed in terms of its advantages and challenges. In the following case study, an entire didactic lesson will be described and learning materials will be provided. As part of this project, Artificial Intelligence (AI) was asked to create learning materials for a whole lesson within the course. Based on the course needs, learning materials were collected and structured. After generating the learning material, it was analysed and studied accordingly. The evaluation of the learning material will be done in relation to the course objective and the degree to which this has been achieved will be judged by the students' learning outcomes. As demonstrated in this study, Artificial Intelligence is able to provide satisfactory answers, and it can be used to customize teaching materials to meet the needs of teachers. This paper is intended to meet teachers' needs as well as those of contemporary digital societies in the 21st century.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, education, new technologies, learning material

Introduction

In the realm of education, emerging technologies have also been empirically demonstrated to lead to favourable outcomes. In a way that goes beyond mere didactics, new technologies profoundly change the educational system. Over the past decade, Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED) has grown rapidly (Crompton, Jones & Burke, 2022; Popenici & Kerr, 2017). This is due to the fact that it is an emerging field of education technology (Zawacki, Richter et al., 2019).

Artificial intelligence in education presents many research challenges across many disciplinary areas. Developing AI-driven learning models and frameworks is part of this approach. Researchers also want to assess student performance and learning experiences. As AI plays a variety of educational roles, there is a need to reevaluate and re-define educational theories. In addition to AI-backed educational materials, innovation in learning strategies and evaluation approaches will be the key. Another area of exploration is integrating big data analytics into education. Researchers are also working on large-scale learning platforms utilizing AI. A crucial focus is placed on ethical AI deployment, emphasizing ethical principles (Hwang, Xie et al., 2020).

The latest developments in artificial intelligence offer education a host of potential applications. It can act as an intelligent tutor, tutee, learning partner, or policy advisor, all of which are facilitated by the latest advances in artificial intelligence. Through AIED, students can receive a personalized tutor in a contemporary context, while collaborative learning can be enhanced through features like adaptive group formation, expert facilitation, intelligent virtual agents, and intelligent moderation. Additionally, virtual reality experiences with intelligent content can be used to enhance learning in authentic environments. A study conducted recently found that artificial intelligence can be enhanced in higher education, resulting in personalised learning, intelligent tutoring, facilitation of collaboration, and automated grading (Crompton & Song, 2021). The advantages and potentials of artificial intelligence, however, are similar to those of any other technology, but there are also a number of challenges to overcome in education. With chatbots, gamification elements, interactive challenges, and personalized feedback can be used to create an engaging and enjoyable learning experience. It is rewarding for learners to interact successfully with chatbots when they receive immediate feedback and feel accomplished. A previous study found that students perceived chatbots to be useful and easy to use in online activities that supported goal setting and social interactions (Hew, Huang, Du & Jia, 2023). In a study examining the impact of social presence on learner motivation, a chatbot was used as a medium. Also, the majority of learners reported being satisfied with their first blended learning experience. Students' engagement and

interest in reading were positively impacted by the chatbot implemented in another study (Liu, Liao, Chang & Lin, 2022), and social connections contributed to their engagement. Learners will gain confidence, improve specific learning points, receive direct feedback, and accomplish more than they could if they only had human teachers or peers to help them learn by using this chatbot (Wahyuni, 2022). This chatbot will provide learners with adequate time and location to learn, and will enable them to build their confidence, improve specific learning points, and receive direct feedback (Wahyuni, 2022). As a result of a negative perception or misuse, artificial intelligence can negatively affect education (Crompton, Jones & Burke, 2022). It is due to this lack of understanding and inefficiency that teachers are unable to teach technology skills. Therefore, they must view it positively. There are hardware and software challenges related to developing specific AI programs. Ethics privacy is about the privacy of a person's data. For educators to integrate AIED into their classrooms, AIED needs more research to implement it in education, purchase technology, and develop specific AI programs. Best practices and frameworks for integrating artificial intelligence will help teachers in the future (Crompton, Jones & Burke, 2023).

AIED research remains interested, but little is being done to integrate deep learning. Traditional artificial intelligence tools were used in education, but advanced techniques were rarely applied. Robots and artificial intelligence can help teachers, learners, and decision makers. Using digital technologies (Hrastinski, Olofsson, Arkenback, et al., 2019), teachers and students were better able to understand how they worked. GPT-3.5 relies on extensive language datasets for optimal operation, so teacher guidance can be vague. Artificial intelligence is evaluated in relation to student-teacher "didactic methodology" courses in terms of authenticity, attribution, and authorship.

Teaching with artificial intelligence and chatbots: teachers' perceptions

The effectiveness of chatbots is also an issue for educators (Quiroga Pérez, Daradoumis & Marquès Puig, 2020). In a study (Pokrivcakova, 2022), many future teachers were unaware that chatbots provided interactive exercises and improved learning effects. In the absence of digital education, most respondents rated their interactions positively based on their previous or first experiences with chatbots. The survey respondents rated the conversations as enjoyable, appropriate in formality, linguistically accurate, easy to maintain, fluent, and entertaining. Although nearly half of respondents said they would not use chatbots in the future, educators and students both expressed an enthusiasm for ChatGPT.

Autonomous learning and chatbots

A growing number of educators are using chatbots to foster autonomous learning. A chatbot allows learners to interact with each other 24/7, receive instant feedback, and customize their learning experience. As learners actively seek out learning

opportunities, chatbots encourage curiosity and intrinsic motivation. AI holds great promise in education, but ethical concerns, student privacy, and responsible management with human educators must be addressed. Participants were enthusiastic, happy, and motivated during this training due to the fact that this application was still new to them. In addition, this application provides participants with indirect learning opportunities, regardless of their location (Oktadela, Elida & Ismail, 2023). Instead of using chatbots exclusively for language acquisition, learners may find it more effective to use them as a supplement. Students found that the chatbot's responses were unanthropomorphic, which was a limitation (Liu, Liao, Chang & Lin, 2022).

Why using artificial intelligence, for teaching the course of didactic methodology? There are many reasons: To monitor performance, to create learning material easier, to create personalized learning materials adapted to each audience, to add additional material, exercises, to create activities easily, to save time and to help teachers who have never taught the course before.

As part of pedagogical education for secondary education teachers, this paper examines the use of artificial intelligence in teaching Didactic Methodology. In this study, insights from relevant studies are used to determine whether Artificial Intelligence enhances education. It will be discussed in terms of its advantages and challenges to use Artificial Intelligence as a teaching tool. This case study provides an overview of a didactic lesson and learning materials for the entire lesson within the course. In order to complete this project, Artificial Intelligence (AI) was asked to create learning materials for a whole lesson within the course. As a result of collecting and structuring learning materials, they were analyzed and studied after they had been generated. Using the course objective as a guide, the learning material will be evaluated, and students' learning outcomes will be used to determine the extent to which the objective has been achieved. Using Artificial Intelligence to customize teaching materials has been demonstrated in this study, as well as providing satisfactory answers.

The present study focuses on the Annual Pedagogical Training Program (EPPAIK) program at Higher School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPATE) and is addressed to those who have graduated from university schools. In a modern learning environment, the program offers experiences that allow the development of teaching competence within the framework of the curriculum through experiential learning. Teachers and teacher candidates are invited to attend and participate in the Pedagogical Training Program regardless of their specialization. This course is designed to foster a comprehensive comprehension of the intricate and diverse nature of the teaching phenomenon. Participants will develop a heightened awareness of its crucial significance in education. The overarching goal is to establish a robust theoretical foundation and cultivate the skills necessary for effective

planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of the teaching and learning process, including the planning, organization, and evaluation of teaching practices.

Methodology

Anthropic Claude AI and ChatGPT, two of OpenAI's platforms used to interact with leading large language models, were used in conjunction with other chatbots. Open AI - ChatGPT 3,5 and Google Bard can be used to generate human-like conversations without requiring any coding. The two platforms successfully switched between topics and conversed. This case study intricately examines the seamless transition between topics and the adept conversational engagement facilitated by OpenAI platforms. It delves into the mechanisms and methodologies employed by these platforms to navigate diverse subject matters, offering a detailed exploration of their capabilities in maintaining coherent and contextually relevant conversations across a spectrum of topics. It also explored the effectiveness of these chatbots in providing a human-like experience. Finally, the study examined the potential of these chatbots to be used for the course of "Didactic methodology". Defining the context of this case study is the first step. The primary audience for this course comprises individuals aspiring to become educators in Secondary Education Schools. The topic of the discussion was "Integration of Technology in Teaching".

The first Prompt gave the definition of the context - framework of the course "Didactic Methodology" (Principles and course philosophy, learning objectives, Course outline, Teaching and learning methods).

ChatGPT's response concerned the course philosophy and methodology that prioritize the development of a holistic understanding of teaching, fostering critical thinking, and promoting innovative and effective teaching practices.

The second Prompt was: "Based on the following outline of the course "Didactic Methodology», prepare a 13-week laboratory course, each week separately, 2 hours per week, for trainees who, after obtaining a university degree, are interested in becoming Secondary school teachers:"

ChatGPT's response was: "Certainly, let's break down the 13-week laboratory course for prospective secondary school teachers, aligning each week with the specific topics outlined in the "Didactic Methodology" course. Each session will last for 2 hours, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the essential aspects of teaching and learning". Then, it gave the topic and the titles of sessions for each week as it is described below:

Week 1: Introduction to the Phenomenon of Teaching and Learning (2 hours)

Session 1: Overview of the course objectives and expectations.

Session 2: Understanding the historical and conceptual foundations of teaching and learning.

Week 2: Principles of Teaching and Learning (2 hours)

Session 3: Exploring the fundamental principles and conditions for effective teaching and learning.

Session 4: Discussing the importance of goal-setting and educational objectives in the teaching process.

Week 3: Understanding Teaching Models (2 hours)

Session 5: Analyzing various teaching models and their applications in a secondary school setting.

Session 6: Examining the relationship between teaching planning, curriculum development, and effective instruction.

Week 4: Effective Teaching Techniques (2 hours)

Session 7: Understanding the importance of effective communication in the classroom, both verbal and non-verbal.

Session 8: Integrating innovative teaching methods and the role of technology in enhancing learning experiences.

Week 5: Classroom Dynamics and Interactive Teaching (2 hours)

Session 9: Establishing a positive classroom atmosphere and managing classroom dynamics effectively.

Session 10: Implementing interactive teaching strategies, such as group work and cooperative learning, to foster student engagement.

Week 6: Evaluation of Teaching and Learning (2 hours)

Session 11: Exploring various techniques for evaluating student progress and understanding the learning process.

Session 12: Assessing the impact of prior student perceptions and experiences on the teaching and learning process.

Week 7: Innovative Teaching Approaches (2 hours)

Session 13: Investigating cutting-edge teaching methodologies and their practical applications within the contemporary educational milieu.

Week 8: Developing Personal Teaching Identity (2 hours)

Session 14: Reflecting on personal teaching styles and philosophies.

Session 15: Understanding the role of the teacher in creating a dynamic and effective learning environment.

Week 9: Integration of Technology in Teaching (2 hours)

Session 16: Exploring the potential of various educational technologies in enhancing teaching effectiveness.

Session 17: Practical applications of technology in lesson planning and instructional delivery.

Week 10: Promoting Critical Thinking and Creativity (2 hours)

Session 18: Encouraging critical thinking and creativity in the classroom.

Session 19: Fostering a culture of open-ended inquiry and intellectual exploration.

Week 11: Effective Classroom Management (2 hours)

Session 20: Strategies for maintaining discipline and managing diverse classroom environments.

Session 21: Creating a conducive learning atmosphere that supports student development and engagement.

Week 12: Differentiated Instruction and Inclusive Teaching (2 hours)

Session 22: Understanding the importance of differentiated instruction to meet diverse learning needs.

Session 23: Promoting inclusive teaching practices and accommodating students with varied abilities and backgrounds.

Week 13: Professional Growth and Ethical Responsibilities (2 hours)

Session 24: Cultivating continuous professional development and lifelong learning in the field of education.

Session 25: Addressing ethical considerations and responsibilities in the teaching profession.

The third Prompt was: "Integration of Technology in Teaching". ChatGPT provided detailed instructions about the topic and the sessions as it follows:

Week 9: Integration of Technology in Teaching (2 hours)

Session 16: Exploring the Potential of Various Educational Technologies (2 hours)

Introduction to the diverse range of educational technologies available for enhancing teaching effectiveness.

Examination of interactive learning platforms, educational apps, and digital resources.

Case studies highlighting successful integration of technology in different subject areas and teaching contexts.

Discussion on the benefits and challenges associated with the use of educational technologies in the classroom.

Critical evaluation of the role of technology in promoting student engagement, collaboration, and personalized learning experiences.

Consideration of emerging trends in educational technology and their potential impact on future teaching practices.

Group activities or presentations where participants explore and present specific educational technologies that can be integrated into their teaching practices.

Session 17: Practical Applications of Technology in Lesson Planning and Instructional Delivery (2 hours)

Overview of effective strategies for integrating technology into lesson planning and instructional design.

Demonstration of how to incorporate multimedia elements, such as videos, interactive presentations, and digital simulations, to enhance lesson content and engagement.

Hands-on practice with educational software and tools for creating interactive activities and assessments.

Collaborative workshop on designing technology-enhanced lesson plans that cater diverse learning styles and abilities.

Guidance on how to leverage technology to differentiate instruction and personalize learning experiences for students.

Discussion on the importance of aligning technology integration with learning objectives and curriculum standards.

Reflection on the potential challenges and troubleshooting techniques related to the use of technology in classroom.

Group discussions or case studies exploring real-life examples of successful technology integration in various subject areas and grade levels.

The fourth Prompt concerns the theory for week 9 focusing on the integration of technology in teaching: “compose the theory to teach for week 9”. ChatGPT provided an overview, the key Concepts and a conclusion.

The fifth Prompt analyze the key concepts outlined in the theory of integrating technology in teaching: “analyze key concepts”. ChatGPT provided the key concepts outlined in the theory of integrating technology in teaching (Pedagogical Benefits of Educational Technology, Effective Integration Strategies, Digital Literacy and Equity, Future Trends in Educational Technology).

The sixth Prompt concerns the creation of an activity: "Activity for Integration of Technology in Teaching ". ChatGPT provided activity description and learning outcomes as it follows:

Activity Title: "Interactive Lesson Design Challenge"

Activity Description:

1. Divide participants into small groups of 3-4 individuals.
2. Provide each group with a specific topic or subject relevant to the secondary school curriculum.
3. Guide each group to design an interactive lesson plan utilizing educational technology tools and resources.
4. Encourage participants to consider diverse learning styles and the integration of multimedia elements.
5. Allocate time for groups to explore various educational technology options and platforms.
6. Guide participants on incorporating interactive activities, assessments, and multimedia content into their lesson plans.
7. Emphasize the importance of aligning technology integration with learning objectives and curriculum standards.
8. Encourage groups to present their completed lesson plans to the rest of the class.
9. Facilitate a peer review session where other groups provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.
10. Conclude the activity with a group discussion on the benefits, challenges, and best practices for integrating technology effectively into teaching practices.

Learning Outcomes:

- Enhanced understanding of the practical applications of educational technology in lesson planning.
- Improved proficiency in utilizing various technology tools and resources to create engaging and interactive learning experiences.
- Increased awareness of the importance of aligning technology integration with learning objectives and curriculum standards.
- Strengthened collaborative and problem-solving skills through group-based lesson design challenges.

The seventh Prompt involves a fill in the blanks exercise (task). "Compose an exercise "fill in the blanks" for week 9 and give the correct answers". ChatGPT provided the title of the exercise and five items with the correct answers.

Exercise: Fill in the Blanks

1. The integration of technology in teaching can significantly enhance _____ and foster student engagement.
2. Effective alignment of technology use with specific learning objectives ensures that technology serves as a tool to enhance _____.
3. Digital literacy is essential for ensuring effective participation in the _____.
4. The concept of the _____ emphasizes the importance of providing equal access to technology for all students.
5. Emerging trends in educational technology, such as augmented reality and adaptive learning platforms, have the potential to transform _____.

The eighth Prompt involves a multiple-choice exercise. "Compose a multiple-choice exercise with 10 items for week 9 and give the correct answers". ChatGPT gave instructions for the multiple-choice exercise, followed by the correct answers.

Exercise: Multiple Choice

1. What is one of the key benefits of integrating technology in teaching?
 - a) Increased paperwork for teachers
 - b) Reduced student engagement
 - c) Enhanced learning experiences
 - d) Limited access to educational resources
2. What should educators consider when integrating technology into lesson planning?
 - a) Ignoring learning objectives
 - b) Aligning technology use with learning objectives
 - c) Relying solely on traditional teaching methods
 - d) Disregarding student diversity
3. Why is digital literacy important in the modern era?
 - a) To discourage student participation
 - b) To limit access to information
 - c) To promote effective participation in the digital age
 - d) To discourage technological advancements
4. What does the concept of the "digital divide" refer to?
 - a) Equal access to technology for all students
 - b) Limited technological advancements
 - c) Unequal access to technology among students

d) Embracing digital inclusivity

5. Which of the following is an example of an emerging trend in educational technology?

a) Traditional textbooks

b) Chalkboards

c) Augmented reality

d) Rotary phones

6. How can technology support differentiated instruction in the classroom?

a) By limiting student engagement

b) By promoting standardized learning experiences

c) By tailoring learning experiences to individual student needs

d) By discouraging collaboration

7. What is one potential challenge associated with technology integration in education?

a) Improved student engagement

b) Enhanced learning outcomes

c) The digital divide

d) Bridging the generation gap

8. What role does educational technology play in creating dynamic learning environments?

a) Hindering student creativity

b) Limiting student engagement

c) Fostering collaboration and critical thinking

d) Discouraging student participation

9. How can educators stay updated with the latest trends in educational technology?

a) Ignoring technological advancements

b) Attending professional development workshops

c) Avoiding digital resources

d) Disregarding student interests

10. How does technology contribute to student engagement in the classroom?

- a) By discouraging active participation
- b) By limiting learning opportunities
- c) By fostering interactive and immersive experiences
- d) By hindering critical thinking

The ninth Prompt concerns the creation of an exercise with open-ended questions. More specifically, the Prompt was: "Compose 10 open-ended questions for week 9 and give the answers. ChatGPT provided 10 open-ended questions as they follow:

1. How can educational technology enhance the learning experiences of students in the classroom?
2. What are some effective strategies for aligning technology use with specific learning objectives and curriculum standards?
3. Why is it essential to promote digital literacy among students, and how does it contribute to their overall educational development?
4. In what ways can educators address the issue of the digital divide in educational settings, and why is it important to ensure equitable access to technology for all students?
5. How do emerging trends in educational technology, such as virtual reality and adaptive learning platforms, impact the future of teaching and learning?
6. What are some effective ways educators can leverage technology to support differentiated instruction and meet the diverse learning needs of students?
7. What are some of the potential challenges educators might encounter when integrating technology into their teaching practices, and how can they overcome these challenges?
8. How does educational technology contribute to the development of critical thinking and collaboration skills among students, and what are some effective examples of its implementation in the classroom?
9. How can educators ensure that the integration of technology in teaching remains purposeful and meaningful, rather than just a trend or a novelty?
10. What role does educational technology play in fostering a student-centered learning environment, and how can educators create a balance between technology use and traditional teaching methods?

For each question ChatGPT gave one sample answer.

The tenth Prompt is about creating a "match-the-pair" exercise. The Prompt given is as it is described below: "Compose a match-the-pair exercise for week 9 with 10 items". ChatGPT has created the exercise followed by the instructions the correct answers:

Match the items in Column A with the corresponding items in Column B.

Educational Technology (a) Bridging the digital divide

Digital Literacy (b) Personalized instruction

Technology Integration (c) Interactive learning experiences

Augmented Reality (d) Future trends in education

Adaptive Learning (e) Equitable access to technology

Student-Centered Learning (f) Fostering critical thinking

Digital Divide (g) Understanding digital resources

Personalized Instruction (h) Integrating technology effectively

Critical Thinking (i) Immersive learning environments

Future of Education (j) Tailoring learning experiences

The eleventh Prompt concerns the Bibliography of the topic. The Prompt given was: “provide bibliography for Integration of Technology in Teaching”. ChatGPT provided the following existing references:

1. Roblyer, M., & Doering, A. H. (2007). *Integrating educational technology into teaching*. USA: Pearson, 2007.
2. Koehler, M. J., Mishra, P., & Cain, W. (2013). What is technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK)?. *Journal of education*, 193(3), 13-19.
3. Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers college record*, 108(6), 1017-1054.
4. Richey, R. C., Klein, J. D., & Tracey, M. W. (2010). *The instructional design knowledge base: Theory, research, and practice*. Routledge.
5. Reiser, R. A., & Dempsey, J. V. (Eds.). (2012). *Trends and issues in instructional design and technology* (p. 408). Boston: Pearson.
6. Bates, A. T., & Sangra, A. (2011). *Managing technology in higher education: Strategies for transforming teaching and learning*. John Wiley & Sons.
7. Siemens, G., & Long, P. (2011). Penetrating the fog: Analytics in learning and education. *EDUCAUSE review*, 46(5), 30.
8. Dede, C. (2010). Comparing frameworks for 21st century skills. *21st century skills: Rethinking how students learn*, 20(2010), 51-76.

Results

This short study examined (1) how a teacher of the course “didactic methodology” communicates or collaborates with an AI Chatbot and (2) how well an AI chatbot responds to the intended goals of the experienced foreign language teacher. As a

result of reviewing the ChatGPT and Bard responses and considering courses' framework, the target audience, and the produced teaching material, the following conclusions have been drawn: ChatGPT:

gave the definition of the context - framework of the course "Didactic Methodology".

- prepared a 13-week laboratory course, each week separately, 2 hours per week.
- provided detailed instructions about the topic and the sessions.
- composed the theory to teach for week 9".
- provided the key concepts outlined in the theory of integrating technology in teaching, provided activity description and learning outcomes.
- created a "fill in the blanks exercise for week 9 and provided the correct answers.
- Created a multiple-choice exercise with 10 items for week 9 and provided the correct answers.
- provided 10 open-ended questions followed by the instructions the correct answers.
- provided existing references.

Except for some individual points that the teacher had to identify, such as the bibliographical references, the answers given and the material as a whole were quite satisfactory.

It is important to emphasize, however, the importance of the teacher's prior experience in order to be able to check and correct or give dedicated prompts in a different manner, in order to produce the desired result.

Conclusions

The Open AI tools ChatGPT or Google Bard can be used to create personal teaching materials based on the parameters you specify. Based on the results of the study, Open AI - ChatGPT and Google Bard were useful for answering questions from the teacher of the course 'Didactic Methodology' about creating learning objects. Additionally, it has been possible to significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to develop and find teaching materials and activities. Overall, prompts provided satisfactory responses. This could lead to more efficient use of time and resources, improving educational outcomes.

People have long been fascinated by artificial intelligence research, and this interest seems to be growing. As it is a rapidly developing field with enormous potential and challenges, it needs to be explored for several scientific fields and everyday life. Creating personalized, customized teaching materials with Open AI - ChatGPT or Google Bard.

In addition, the present study indicates that prompt responses are satisfactory, reducing the time it takes to develop teaching materials and finding them. As artificial intelligence becomes more and more sophisticated, an empirically based study of

foreign language pedagogy becomes increasingly important. The teachers of foreign languages will therefore be able to formulate objectively informed directives tailored to their needs as a result. Further, research needs to be conducted to explore how artificial intelligence can be used in the broader field of education, with a focus on teachers' and students' distinct roles. Ethics must also be considered when it comes to this deployment.

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How to Read Spinoza Without Pentimento: An Alternative to Strauss¹

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Abstract

I critique the theological-philosophical assumptions that Leo Strauss uses to justify his controversial method of reading Baruch Spinoza, and I conclude by justifying an alternative interpretive method. Strauss's method suggests that Spinoza's texts intentionally contradict themselves so to couch his more controversial views in established dogma, thereby skirting the censorship of authorities. Strauss argues that reading "between the lines" allows the more astute of Spinoza's readers to decipher an encrypted pentimento that reveals an esoteric or hidden aspect of his philosophy. Although Strauss's method is divisive within the scholarship, Edwin Curley – a leading Spinoza translator and commentator – has, on more than one occasion, signaled his support for Strauss's method despite expressing a sympathy with Strauss's critics. I argue that Curley's analysis of the issue does not fully engage the problem posed by Strauss's elitism. I deny that Strauss and his proponents offer a viable strategy for interpreting Spinoza's writings because they recapitulate the interpretive principles of Plato's "philosopher-king" which Spinoza explicitly rejects in the *Theological Political Treatise* (TPT) through his critique of Maimonides. I argue that Spinoza's writings should be interpreted according to the same method of biblical interpretation that he pioneers in the TPT. Accordingly, a text – whether sacred or profane – cannot be adequately interpreted on the basis of standards extrinsic to the text itself, including the unilateral judgement of the reader. But neither can a text be adequately interpreted without the judgment of the reader, as if its truth were hidden within the text itself independent of the minds that strive to interpret it. Therefore, in exactly the same way that Spinoza interprets the Bible through a socio-historical method, so also should Spinoza's writings be interpreted through a socio-historical method that encounters and modifies the differences between author, text, and reader through a logic that is common to all three and private to none.

¹ This work is an adaptation of a chapter from my (2023) book *Spinoza's ethics of interpretation: Interpreting the paradoxical singularity of Spinoza's ontological argument*, Ethics International Press.

Keywords: Spinoza, Leo Strauss, method, reason and faith, interpretation.

Introduction

The socio-political context in which an author writes has significant implications for the way scholars interpret their work because it can offer an evaluative standard with which to better understand what the author has in mind.¹ In Spinoza's case, however, there is relatively little that is known about his private life and so it is notoriously difficult for scholars to ascertain particular aspects of his writing. We know that Spinoza was excommunicated from the Jewish community of Amsterdam at the young age of twenty-three; that the anti-Cartesian movements in the Dutch universities,² and the Remonstrant controversies of the Dutch United Provinces would have been in full swing during his adult years;³ we know that Spinoza published the TPT

¹ Unless specifically noted otherwise, all references to, and quotations from, Spinoza's writings are taken from Edwin Curley's two volumes of *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, of which Prof. Curley is also the translator and editor. When citing passages from texts other than the *Ethics*, I shall provide the chapter and paragraph number. I make an effort in my quotations of Spinoza's texts to correct for gendered language where possible without obscuring Spinoza's original meaning. See note 79 of this study for an explanation of this approach.

Titles shall be abbreviated as follows:

E *Ethics*
TPT *Theological-Political Treatise*

The *Ethics* citations shall be abbreviated as follows:

A	Axiom	Post.	Postulate
D	Definition		
P	Proposition	DA	Definition of the affects of Part III
Schol.	Scholium		
Cor.	Corollary		
L	Lemma		
Dem.	Demonstration		

² While describing this set of circumstances, Steven Nadler connects Spinoza's excommunication and the anti-Cartesian movement to a widespread concern to suppress the deviation from expected orthodoxies:

"[The Jewish community of Amsterdam's] use of the ban, in addition to its function in maintaining internal discipline, was a public act that was meant to communicate to the Dutch authorities the message that the Jews ran a well-ordered community; that they – in accordance with the conditions laid down when the city granted them the right to settle openly – tolerated no breaches in proper Jewish conduct or doctrine...The Jewish leaders may also have wanted to make it clear to the Dutch that the community was no haven for Cartesians either. In the 1640s, open battles over Descartes's philosophy raged in the Dutch universities. The conflict eventually spread across intellectual, religious, and political society at large and created schisms not unlike those caused by the Remonstrant controversy ... In 1646, The University of Leiden followed [Utrecht's condemnation of Descartes's philosophy], decreeing that only Aristotelian philosophy should be taught to its students. The university's senate forbade its professors in the faculties of philosophy and theology from even mentioning Descartes and his novel ideas in their theses and debates" (Nadler, 2018, pp. 177–78).

³ The Remonstrant controversies refers to a period of religious and socio-political instability in the Dutch United Provinces during the 17th century. The first half of the controversy was characterized by a popular uprising in the cities of Utrecht and The Hague in 1610 that would exacerbate the socio-political tensions fomenting in the republic. "Johannes Wtenbogaert and forty-three other followers of Jacob Arminius submitted a remonstrance to the States of Holland. In it they declared their adherence to a formulation of the doctrine of predestination that left more scope to human free will than any other formulation then current within the Dutch Reformed Church. ... Protesting their own orthodoxy, Wtenbogaert and the others asked the States to protect them against attempts by the majority of Reformed ministers and elders to discipline them. This request opened a new phase in a controversy already raging within

anonymously, and requested that his magnum opus, the *Ethics*, be published posthumously. These events give us a glimpse into the socio-political conditions of Spinoza's thinking, but they also raise what Edwin Curley (a leading Spinoza translator and commentator) describes as "a major interpretive issue" (2016, p. 53). How should Spinoza's readers relate the socio-political context of Spinoza arguments to the actual arguments themselves? Given the considerable persecution that Spinoza faced in communicating his ideas, Curley asks "to what extent can we take Spinoza to be writing candidly" (p. 53) in works like the TPT? This question of interpretation was first proposed by Leo Strauss, and it has had what I consider to be undesirable vestigial effects in the scholarship. In this section of my study, I critique the theological-philosophical assumptions that Strauss uses to justify his method, I argue that its proponents perpetuate the problematic elitism of Maimonides' theory of interpretation that Spinoza explicitly rejects in the TPT, and I conclude by justifying the interpretive method that I prefer.

In his editorial preface of the TPT, Curley (2016) cautions the reader against taking everything in Spinoza's text with equal weight because the socio-political conditions of persecution meant that Spinoza would not have written with perfect candor.

In *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Strauss 1988) Leo Strauss argued that Spinoza was writing at a time when he ran the risk of persecution if he ventured too far from orthodoxy; so he had to deploy the art of "writing between the lines," that is, writing in such a way that readers would have to read between the lines to fully understand what he was saying. The reader might find Spinoza saying things apparently quite orthodox, which he nevertheless doesn't believe, but expects his most astute readers to recognize that he doesn't believe. (p. 53)

Curley (2016) acknowledges that "many contemporary Spinoza scholars – probably most of them – reject Strauss's position. They find his arguments weak and think that encouraging people to read between the lines of Spinoza's works gives them too much license to attribute to Spinoza doctrines he did not hold" (p. 53). But Curley does not count himself as one of these contemporaries, although he admits a "good deal of sympathy with that reaction" (p. 53). Even so, Curley sides with Strauss on the basic issue: "I think Strauss often argued badly for his views, and made oracular pronouncements which a more self-critical author would not have made. But I do think he was right about the fundamental point he was trying to make" (p. 53). Although Curley further develops this position in support of Strauss's method in his article "Resurrecting Leo Strauss" (Curley, 2015) his defense there is basically the same. Curley writes that he does not "endorse *everything* that Strauss seems to have in mind," (p. 130) and that he is even aware of "an unpleasant elitism" (p. 131) implied

erudite circles. Remonstrant and Contra-Remonstrant parties formed, clashing in print and sermon, in the council chamber, and eventually on the street" (Kaplan, 2011, p. 230).

by Strauss's arguments, but his description of the case against Strauss's method does not fully engage how problematic Strauss's elitism actually is.

In my view, Strauss's method is problematic not simply because of some slippery-slope of misrepresentation, it is problematic because it perpetuates antiquated and fundamentally unethical models of thought that Spinoza is explicitly critical of. In particular, Strauss's method perpetuates the delusional pretensions of infallible authorities, the only difference is that it exchanges pontiffs for philosopher-kings. So, instead of overcoming the very modes of thinking that produce oppositions and hierarchies, Strauss and his proponents seem to interpret Spinoza as a thinker who accepts and simply reverses the terms of an inherited opposition. I suggest we leave Strauss's method of interpretation behind and support the method proposed and practiced by scholars like Nancy Levene (2001, pp. 57–110) and Brayton Polka (2007). Their studies show that if readers do not closely follow how Spinoza's ideas are modified by later developments, readers will misunderstand the way Spinoza resolves apparent contraries into divergent expressions of a unity, and they will tend to wrongly explain this divergence through the imposition of hierarchical relations. The issue with Strauss, however, is not so much one of misrepresentation, although that is a secondary concern, it is mostly a problem of appropriation. The problem with Strauss' method of studying Spinoza is not that it represents Spinoza's as x when really Spinoza is y , the problem (tragedy?) is that it reads into Spinoza's thinking the very problems that it otherwise resolves – the simultaneously philosophical, religious, and political problems of hierarchy and separation.

Before I proceed further, there is an important point of clarification that I think should be emphasized. It is not my contention to argue that Spinoza did not accommodate his language to the venues of his discourses. Spinoza clearly communicated his ideas in different ways to different people at different times and places, it would be ridiculous to suggest that Spinoza spoke with perfect candor at all times and places. For example, despite Spinoza's praise of the freedoms afforded by the Dutch Republic in which he lived,¹ that freedom was not as complete as Spinoza described it. The Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century was indeed remarkably free for a European country at the time, but it did not allow complete freedom of thought and expression, nor was there *complete* freedom of worship – Catholic worship was banned even if it was not always rigorously enforced. So clearly Spinoza was not immune to the benefits of diplomatic phrasing or softening the corners of his more controversial ideas. But do these accommodations establish contradictions that imply a two-tiered mode of communication designed to deceive the less scrutinizing? Does Spinoza "lie" or write deceptively when he praises the freedoms of the United Provinces? I think the answer is simply no. An accommodation is not a contradiction

¹ "Since, then, we happen to have the rare good fortune – that we live in a Republic in which everyone is granted complete freedom of judgment, and is permitted to worship God according to his mentality, and in which nothing is thought to be dearer or sweeter than freedom..." (TPT preface.12).

of what one would otherwise say and is therefore distinct from deception. My contention is that if we confuse the principles of accommodation with those of contradiction, then we also confuse Spinoza's contribution to the history of modern thought with those of antiquity and, as a result, we lose the most valuable contributions of Spinoza's thinking.

Strauss first presented his method of studying Spinoza in an article called "How to Study Spinoza's Theologico-Political Treatise" (Strauss, 1947, pp. 69–131). In it, Strauss claims that Spinoza was led...

...to assert that at least some of the Biblical contradictions are conscious or deliberate, and therewith to suggest that there is an esoteric teaching of the Bible, or that the literal meaning of the Bible hides a deeper, mysterious meaning... We may say that Spinoza uses the sketch of his exoteric interpretation of the Bible for indicating the character of his own exoteric procedure.¹ (pp. 107–108)

Spinoza's "exoteric procedure," according to Strauss is to condescend to the undiscerning masses who have somehow found themselves reading a copy of his book. For Strauss, the "scholarly" method of studying Spinoza's "esoteric" meaning then, as opposed to the vulgar exoteric one, is to catalogue the instances of Spinoza's contradictory statements and to privilege those critical of orthodox views. But where would Strauss have us draw the line? Where does heterodoxy begin and orthodoxy end? Indeed, *who* gets to draw this line? As far as I can tell, for Strauss these terms simply recapitulate the more general opposition between heterodoxic philosophy and the conventional dogmas of orthodox theology. But this is an entirely relative standard that asserts nothing of itself since the heterodoxy of philosophy is relative to the orthodoxy of theology, and no theological dogma is in-itself orthodox but is so only relative to the religious conventions of place and time. It seems, therefore, entirely up to the relative opinion of the reader to decide which of Spinoza's statements are orthodox, which are heterodox, and what is even meant by these terms. This relativity is symptomatic of Strauss's way of thinking about the relation between philosophy and theology in general, but it does not at all reflect the absolute standards that characterize Spinoza's thinking.

Strauss tends to argue that the philosophical analysis of religious belief always fails because philosophy, as he understands it, expresses the finite nature of human

¹ Full quote: "... it was possible to assert that in the Bible, a superior mind or superior minds condescend to speak in the language of ordinary people, and that there occur in the Bible a number of statements which contradict those Biblical statements that are adapted to vulgar prejudices. Spinoza was thus led to assert that at least some of the Biblical contradictions are conscious or deliberate, and therewith to suggest that there is an esoteric teaching of the Bible, or that the literal meaning of the Bible hides a deeper, mysterious meaning. By contradicting this ultimate consequence, he leaves no doubt in the reader's mind as to the ironical or exoteric character of his assertion that the statements of the Bible are consciously adapted by its authors to the capacity of the vulgar... We may say that Spinoza uses the sketch of his exoteric interpretation of the Bible for indicating the character of his own exoteric procedure" (Strauss, 1947, pp. 107–108).

knowledge and so cannot legitimately claim to make itself commensurate with the knowledge of a whole (God). His point is that philosophy can neither affirm nor deny the existence of God or the truth of religious revelation because human knowledge always operates within a partial, finite, and incomplete context. This idea of philosophical knowledge includes empirical notions of materialist science and history because the frames of reference on which their subjects depend can only exhibit small fractions of a whole at a time. But, at the same time, theology is powerless to evaluate the truths of philosophy, for Strauss, because faith, he argues, is prior to and unrelated to rational judgment. And so, one either blindly believes or one does not, but in either case the affirmation or negation is made without sufficient reason.

If philosophy cannot attain the knowledge of an absolute whole, as Strauss argues, then it has to presuppose an arbitrary system of valuation – and this is precisely the epistemological function that Strauss attributes to faith. Thus, “the serious argument in favor of revelation,” for Strauss, is not one based on a universally shared understanding, it is one based only on the subjective and inner testimony of the believer. Strauss (1997) calls this “the experience, the personal experience, of man’s encounter with God” (pp. 123–24). That is, since faith does not have a necessary relation to reason, for Strauss, the convincing elements of a faith are determined entirely at the level of subjective feeling and inner experience. But the subjective argument in favor of belief raises the problem of how we understand the relationship between God – the whole – and humanity – apparently a mere part of a whole. According to Strauss’ argument for the testimony of subjective feeling, does the religious affirmation of a faith then vanish when the ephemeral inner feelings of sublimity and inspiration dissipate? Further, if the contents of a faith are determined by the inner recesses of private feeling alone, then in what sense can faith be expressed or externalized in communication and community with others?

If we base the standard of religion solely on the subjectivity of experience, as Strauss does, then we will inevitably confront the insurmountable problem of distinguishing between the subjective, and therefore relative, aspects of a faith and its absolute, and therefore universal, content and dictates. In other words, we will be unable to distinguish by mere subjective and relative authority what is a revealed truth of God and what is merely “a ‘human interpretation’ of God’s action,” in which case it “is no longer God’s action itself” (p. 124). Strauss seems to be aware of the problem but unable to overcome it. He acknowledges that the diversity of religious faith is often expressed and interpreted “in radically different manners . . . Yet only one interpretation can be the true one. There is, therefore, a need for argument between the various believers in revelation, an argument which cannot help but allude *somehow* to objectivity” (p.124, emphasis added). Strauss is thus aware that some sort of standard is necessary to qualify the contents of a faith but he cannot distinguish this “objectivity” from the relative subjectivity in which it is situated.

If, as Strauss suggests, faith must *somehow* allude to objectivity then it follows that the intellectual elite are the ones who have the scrutinizing powers capable of approximating that objectivity and so can be better trusted with interpretive responsibility. André Tsel, in support of this view, writes in “Superstition and Reading”: “The Platonic philosophy of the ‘Republic’ and the ‘Laws’ permits this problem to be resolved: the Philosopher-Legislator is identified with the Philosopher-King” (Tsel, 1997, p. 152). Tsel is even aware that “this is a ‘philosophical’ tendency illustrated by Maimonides” yet he does not acknowledge that Spinoza’s critique of Maimonides disqualifies this as a viable interpretive method for Spinoza (p. 152). According to Tsel, the heterodoxy of philosophical interpretation is not a practice in democracy since the philosophical interpreter opposes two antagonizing forces that threaten the pursuit of objectivity – the fickle multitude and the dogmatic theologians. In Tsel’s view, philosophers must conceal their true ideas and obscure them in the status-quo so to thwart the censorship of authorities. “The philosopher is then condemned to live according to two regimes, to speak two languages” (p. 152). Ultimately, according to Strauss and Tsel, philosophers can only entrust their ideas to other like-minded philosophers. Consequentially, the rich encounters with difference that facilitate and propel the act of interpretation is reduced from dialogue to monologue, from colloquium to lecture. Philosophers who dare to challenge orthodoxy must then pander to their would-be dissenters while using this pandering rhetoric “to make it speak [their] own heretical views” (p. 152). Tsel describes the duplicity of the situation as a political compromise in which the philosopher accepts “the mode of life of the theological-political community to which he belongs” but at the same time forms “a ‘party’ of disciples, which constitutes the kernel of a new community in the midst of the superstitious city” (p. 152). So, in Tsel’s view, the true philosopher does not strive to enlighten the dark corners of the world that he already happens to inhabit, but to become the philosopher-king of a rival city. Strauss and Tsel thus reduce the democracy of interpretation to an aristocracy of philosophical priests. Their method of interpretation explicitly re-enacts the Platonic ideal of the philosopher-king which Spinoza clearly rejects through his critique of Maimonides in the TPT. Strauss’s method and those who follow it cannot offer a fruitful approach to studying Spinoza because it installs separation and hierarchy in Spinoza’s interconnected and democratic theory of interpretation.

In chapter fifteen of the TPT,¹ Spinoza describes the alternatives to his method as those proposed by skeptics and dogmatists. “The skeptics, who deny the certainty of

¹ “Showing that Theology should not be the [ancillary] of Reason, nor Reason the [ancillary] of Theology, and the reason which persuades us of the authority of the Holy Scripture” (TPT15).

I replace Curley’s translation of “handmaiden” with my preferred term “ancillary” which I place in square brackets. I prefer this translation because while *ancilla/ancillae* is the singular/plural of Spinoza’s Latin which translates to “handmaid,” it is also the etymological root of the English word “ancillary” which signifies the same thing without the pejoratively gendered language.

reason, defend the accommodation of reason to Scripture. The dogmatists defend the accommodation of Scripture to reason” (TPT15.1). Spinoza associates Maimonides’ method in *Guide of the Perplexed* with the dogmatic position because it purports to explain Hebraic theology through (non-Hebraic) Aristotelian logic (Maimonides, 1952). Maimonides’ dogmatism of reason, like Plato and Aristotle before him, conceives of reason in terms of its final-ends which, coincidentally, just so happen to resemble his own appetites and prejudices. If Aristotelian logic is the measure of Hebrew Scripture, then it suddenly requires the unerring authority not of pope but of a “philosopher king” – namely, an expert in Aristotelian thought.

Again, if this opinion were true, it would follow that the common people, who for the most part have no knowledge of demonstrations, and don’t have time for them, wouldn’t be able to accept anything about Scripture except on the authority and testimonies of those who philosophize. They’d have to suppose that the Philosophers can’t err concerning the interpretation of Scripture. This would obviously introduce a new authority into the Church, and a new kind of priest, or a High Priest, which the people would mock rather than venerate. (TPT7.79)

Spinoza goes on to deny Maimonides’ method from an etymological, ethical, and historical point of view, but the point of relevance here is Maimonides’ dogmatism of reason. What alarms Spinoza about Maimonides’ method is not only the “useless” absurdity of its premise but more specifically the very real harm that this method can do. Maimonides’ position, and Strauss’s by extension, is that philosophers are entitled to interpret the ideas of others according to their own philosophically preconceived schemas. His “method completely takes away all the certainty the common people can have about the meaning of Scripture from a natural reading of it, and which everyone can have by following another method. So we condemn Maimonides’ opinion as not only useless, but harmful and absurd” (TPT7.87).

An obvious rebuttal to my argument is that philosophical and theological texts are not supposed to be read in the same way since philosophy is interpreted according to logical demonstration and theology according to faith. Of course, Spinoza is no prophet, and his texts are not holy Scriptures. So, “the common people,” whatever we mean by the term, may not necessarily be “obligated” to have a first-hand understanding of Spinoza’s ideas as they might otherwise have in regard to, depending on their religious denomination, the Torah, the Bible, the Quran, etc. But this counter-point does not stand because Spinoza’s theory of interpretation posits an indissociable link between reason and judgement which therefore includes the conditions for belief and faith. It is precisely this link between reason and judgement that I call interpretation. Interpretation is so pivotal to Spinoza’s thinking because it establishes the prerequisite conditions of autonomous action and moral responsibility necessary for an ethics of belief but without recourse to a false notion of “freewill.” If there was no necessary connection between *how* we think and *what* we think, if neither affects nor ideas had to the power cause individuals to self-

consciously reflect on the processes through which they think what they think, and believe what they believe, then Spinoza's entire ethical project would be indistinguishable from the positions he critiques. Curley touches on this problem in his article *Descartes, Spinoza & the Ethics of Belief* but, as far as I understand him, he interprets Spinoza's ethics of belief in a way opposed to the way I do here. On the one hand, Curley (1975) argues that Spinoza's philosophy does not permit an ethics of belief because it denies that belief is a voluntary action (pp. 162–163). But, on the other hand, Curley concludes that "Spinoza's view of the nature of belief is not really an obstacle to the project of developing an ethics of belief. But ... I find it difficult to see that there are any absolute principles which can validly govern our acquisition and maintenance of our beliefs" (p. 184). Contrary to Curley's interpretation, I argue that Spinoza's critique of freewill does not preclude the ethical and evaluative responsibilities we have to ourselves and others. I also argue that Spinoza's critique of false universals in the preface to part four of the *Ethics* should be read in light of his critique of teleology or "final-ends" in the appendix to part one. Thus, contrary to Curley, I argue that Spinoza's ethics of belief (or what I call interpretation) is an essential component of the ideas presented in the *Ethics*, and that this ethic is indeed determined by absolute principles through which we can acquire, develop, and maintain adequate beliefs.

Hence, Spinoza does not have to be a prophet, nor do his texts need to be "holy scriptures" for their adequate interpretation to require a personal and unmediated reading, but this is precisely what is lost, or at least significantly undermined, if Spinoza wrote in the duplicitous way that Strauss, Curley, and Tosel suggest. Of course, Spinoza's "geometrical" or deductive way of writing does require readers to have at least some "knowledge of demonstrations" – namely, at least a basic understanding of inductive and deductive logical procedures – even though his method of biblical interpretation does not. But this does not separate a mathematical kind of certainty from a moral kind of certainty because, in either case, Spinoza consistently argues that certainty can only be conceived as its own standard (EIIIP43schol). In other words, the morally certain cannot be deduced from the mathematically certain, nor can the mathematically certain be induced from the morally certain. Certainty is necessarily its own standard, and it is a standard which is absolutely universal and immanent to the human mind. Therefore, no one authority can make an esoteric or exclusive claim to that standard without obscuring and appropriating universal rights and powers for themselves. Thus, we should abandon Strauss' method of interpreting Spinoza for the same reasons that Spinoza implores his readers to abandon Maimonides' method of interpreting the Bible. Both obscure the fundamental principle that since belief always involves individual interpretation, and since interpretations always involve and express reason and judgement, there is a necessary, reciprocal, and indissociable relationship between reason and faith.

So how then do I justify the strategy with which I propose to interpret Spinoza's ideas as a paradoxical unity of opposites? I justify it as a natural extension or application of the theory of interpretation that Spinoza himself uses to interpret the Bible in the TPT to the interpretation of his own writings. In exactly the same way that Spinoza (paradoxically) demonstrates that we could not know that Scripture itself was replete with errors if we did not also have available to us the standard of its absolute certainty, so also does my preferred method of reading Spinoza allow both reader and text to account for, thereby becoming responsible for, their own respective errors.¹ However, since I treat this topic in greater depth in the study that I have adapted this article from,² I will give here only a very brief outline of the way I interpret Spinoza's theory of interpretation.

Spinoza begins his inquiry into the problem of biblical interpretation by posing the question of prophets and their revelations. He first considers a conventional definition of prophecy as "one who interprets God's decrees to others to whom they have not been revealed, and who, in embracing them, rely only on the authority of the prophet" (TPT1.4.n4.). But he quickly corrects this conventional definition which, *prima facie*, would otherwise condone Strauss's and Maimonides' methods. Spinoza realizes that prophets cannot properly be described as "spokespersons" who interpret God's decrees *for others* who cannot because this assumes a privileged insight into the mind and nature of God. If this were the case, we should expect more agreement between canonical prophets who are not always even consistent amongst themselves. Instead, what we find when we examine the matter is that the gift of prophecy did not relieve prophets of their particular prejudices and biases,³ which is what we would otherwise expect if they did enjoy some sort of privileged insight into the mind and nature of God. Therefore, Spinoza concludes that "the Prophets were not endowed with a more perfect mind, but rather with a power of imagining unusually vividly" (TPT2.1). In this way, prophecy is thus more akin to something like artistic expression, for Spinoza, than it is to a philosophical expression of truth. But

¹ "For no one who has a true idea is unaware that a true idea involves the highest certainty. For to have a true idea means nothing other than knowing a thing perfectly, *or* in the best way. And of course, no one can doubt this unless he thinks that an idea is something mute, like a picture on a tablet, and not a mode of thinking, namely, the very [act of] understanding. And I ask, who can know that he understands some thing unless he first understands it? That is, who can know that he is certain about something unless he is first certain about it?" (EIIIP43schol).

² For a fuller discussion of my views on Spinoza's method of interpretation, see chapter three of my (2023) book, *Spinoza's ethics of interpretation: Interpreting the paradoxical singularity of Spinoza's ontological argument*.

³ "Because the certainty the Prophets had from signs was not mathematical – i.e., a certainty which follows from the necessity of the perception of the thing perceived or seen – but only moral, and the signs were given only to persuade the Prophet, it follows that the signs were given according to the opinions and capacity of the Prophet. So a sign which would render one Prophet certain of his Prophecy could not at all convince another, who was steeped in different opinions. That's why the signs varied in each Prophet. [13] Similarly, the revelation itself varied in each Prophet, as we have said, according to the disposition of his bodily temperament, according to the disposition of his imagination, and according to the opinions he had previously embraced" (TPT2.12-13).

this difference does not thereby mean that prophecies are inherently false so long as their modes of expression are not confused with those of philosophy, and vice versa.

So, Spinoza denies that the prophets had a private insight into the nature of God because the many discrepancies and inconsistencies contained in Scripture demonstrate that their prophecies were expressed through the particular socio-historical lens of their personal imagination. In other words, the means of prophetic communication are specific to the particular images and words that circulate within and between particular communities. But since the unusually vivid (artistic?) power of imagination that characterizes prophets is not a difference in *kind* but only a difference of degree (the same as that between the artistically inclined and declined), prophets cannot really be described as “spokespersons” who speak for the speechless or who imagine for the imageless. But this implies a new problem. Although the socio-political conditions in which prophecy was communicated explains the historical specificity of its theological imagery, it does not explain how the prophets themselves could have been certain about what they prophesized or how we, thousands of years and many mistranslations later, can have that certainty either.¹

The novelty of Spinoza’s method of interpretation is to have perceived a distinction in this inquiry that resolves the certainty of the prophets and our interpretation of that certainty into two separate but inter-related questions. On the one hand, we have the question regarding our faith or confidence in the true divinity of Scripture – a question that equally applies to the prophets themselves – and, on the other hand, we have the question of the socio-historical interpretation of particular languages and imageries long since eroded by violence and time. In other words, we have one question concerning the status of religious doctrine, and we have a different but interrelated question concerning how its authors and audience would have interpreted an idea in a particular way through the mediation of their socio-historically situated imaginative powers. Thus, Spinoza’s pioneering contribution to biblical interpretation is to have established a distinction between the *truth* and the accommodated *sense* or *meaning* of a particular expression.² Although these questions appear separate since one does not seem to depend on the other, they are in fact interrelated in a simultaneously religious and philosophical interpretative endeavor. For, if we are to have faith in the divinity of Scripture then we must be able

¹ As Curley puts it in his fourth note in chapter seven of the TPT: “...if we are to have confidence in the truth of the moral teachings we find in Scripture, we must first establish that our hearts are inclined toward the right and the good. If we assume that knowing that our hearts are so inclined requires at least a basic knowledge of the right and the good, this seems to entail that Scripture cannot be our sole, or even our most fundamental, source of moral knowledge” (2016, p. 172).

² “In order not to confuse the true meaning with the truth of things, we must seek that meaning solely from linguistic usage, or from reasoning which recognizes no other foundation than Scripture” (TPT7.17).

to testify without prejudice that it teaches *true* moral doctrine, but in order to know what it teaches we must also know what it means.

As for the moral teachings also contained in the Bible, although they can be demonstrated from common notions, still, it cannot be demonstrated from these notions that Scripture teaches them. This can only be established by Scripture itself. Indeed, if we want to testify, without prejudice, to the divinity of Scripture, we must establish from Scripture alone that it teaches true moral doctrines. For only from this can its divinity be demonstrated. We have shown that the Prophets' certainty is known chiefly from the fact that they had a heart inclined toward the right and the good. So it's necessary to establish the same thing for us, if we're to be able to have faith in them. (TPT7.11)

Who, however, determines the standard of true moral doctrine? If we must be able to establish that both our own hearts *and* those of the prophets are inclined towards the right and the good, then clearly it has no unilateral standard. Instead, the standard of true moral doctrine must be accessible and verifiable to both prophet and interpreter, author and reader. If it was accessible only to the private recesses of the prophetic mystery, then we could never be certain of the things they prophesize and true faith would be indistinguishable from blind-faith. Thus "it's certainly true that Scripture ought to be explained by Scripture, so long as we're only working out the meaning of the statements and the Prophet's intention. But once we've unearthed the true meaning, we must, necessarily, use judgement and reason to give it our assent" (TPT15.8.). There is, therefore, a necessary and inextricable link between philosophical (mathematical) and theological (moral) reason. At the same time that Spinoza separates and distinguishes philosophy from theology by allocating each to a specific "domain" he also shows that they are inextricably united through the paradox of interpretation.¹

If the domains of philosophy and theology were dichotomously cleaved, which Strauss has to presuppose to justify the esoteric and exoteric procedures involved in his method, readers would never really know if Spinoza's concept of moral certainty were pious or seditious. We would need an esoteric class of elites to confirm our interpretations of his texts. But what Spinoza's analysis of the relationship between philosophy and theology actually shows is that "reason" belongs neither to philosophy nor to theology if it cannot belong to both at once. Theology "determines the doctrines of faith only so far as is sufficient for obedience. But precisely how those doctrines are to be understood, with respect to their truth, it leaves to be determined by reason, which is really the light of the mind, without which it sees nothing but dreams and inventions" (TPT15.23). Reason, as an expression of the force by which

¹ "...reason's domain is truth and wisdom; Theology's is piety and obedience" (TPT15.21).

human beings persevere in their being, belongs equally to philosophical and theological modes of thinking. If it is removed from one, it is removed from both.

To summarize the principles and methods of Spinoza's theory of biblical interpretation, the prophets did not require a super-human insight in order to prophesize, and if they did it would be precisely the esoteric nature of this insight that would render faith and atheism indistinguishable. Esoterism and mystification cannot serve as standards for either philosophy or theology because "belief in it would make us doubt everything and would lead to Atheism" (TPT6.21). Therefore, the moral standards according to which religious faiths are evaluated must be universal, transparent, and immanent to the believer in order for that faith to be certain. In other words, the standards of interpretation must be common to both author, reader, and text if adequate interpretations are to be possible in the first place. Otherwise, a hierarchy will inevitably subordinate the interpretations of readers to the dogmatic reason of authors, or, inversely, that will subordinate the author's intent to the skepticism of readers. The point is that the meaning or sense of a person's words cannot be based on the predispositions of private reason but only on the historical basis of that person's usage. It is only when we know the particular genius (*genium*) and temperament (*ingenium*) of other people – philosophers and prophets included – that we can be in a position to interpret them. In other words, "the better we know someone's spirit and mentality, the more easily we can explain [their] words" (TPT7.24). Therefore, for the same reasons that Spinoza does not condone "reading between the lines" of holy Scripture, modern readers of Spinoza's writings should not privilege Spinoza's esoteric silences over his explicit statements and arguments.

So how then can Spinoza's method of biblical interpretation be applied to a philosophical one? The question only stands if we have remained immune to the argument. Although Spinoza explicitly separates philosophy from theology, he only does so to prevent the subordination of one to the other. In one version of this subordination, we have philosopher-kings and in the other version we have pontiffs but both follow from essentially identical conceptual structures of separation and hierarchy. Therefore, if reason is indispensable to both theological and philosophical interpretation, and if reason is a universal power of human thought, then the same principles and methods apply to the interpretation of a philosophical text as to those of a theological one. The ideal of private insight fundamentally obscures the inherent democracy of interpretation which is essential to both.

In conclusion, the advantage of this method of interpretation is that by interpreting the differences inherent to Spinoza's thinking as paradoxical unities that unfold in particular endeavors, we apply Spinoza's theory of interpretation to his own writings. In other words, Spinoza must be read from Spinoza alone in exactly the same way that Spinoza argues Scripture should be interpreted through Scripture alone. This is not to say that everyone should interpret Spinoza's thinking in the same way, it is to suggest the reverse. But for these differences to become profitable or used in a way

that establishes a greater shared understanding of Spinoza's thinking, we must abandon the antiquated ideal of private and esoteric insight. Strauss cannot contribute to this shared understanding because where there is no coherent community, there is also no coherent communication.

By divorcing the cognitive functions of reason and faith, Strauss makes it impossible to have reasons for one's faith, and equally impossible to have faith in one's reasons. Spinoza, however, demonstrates in both the *TPT* and the *Ethics* that reason and faith are not two opposed expressions of human nature. On the contrary, both texts show that neither a knowledge of nor a faith in God is possible without both a knowledge of and faith in the many distinct peoples whose equally faithful practices usher in the kingdom of God and constitute its sovereignty. Given this connection between the freedom of thought and the freedom of belief, Spinoza shows that one faithful religious interpretation is true only if all faithful and yet differing interpretations are equally true. In other words, Spinoza's ethics of interpretation demonstrates that no interpretation is truly adequate unless it can recognize itself in the different yet equally true faiths of others. Not only does the elitist and esoteric aspects of Strauss' method make this impossible, he consistently exports the standards of reason and faith to something or someone outside the individual mind who interprets and practices their ideals in their daily lives. So, when we allow philosophers and theologians to treat the idea of God as a "sanctuary for ignorance" (EI, appendix) like in the way Strauss does, we risk forfeiting the standards with which we distinguish the true from the false, religion from superstition, and philosophy from hearsay. But, as Spinoza consistently reminds his readers, if we had no knowledge of the true, we could have no knowledge of the false. This is why Spinoza is convinced that every human being, whether they consciously recognize it or not, has a true idea with which to establish adequate interpretations for themselves.¹ If this is the case, then philosopher-kings and pontiffs who claim to enjoy some kind of private or esoteric access to universal rights are not only uselessly redundant, they are harmful.

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Argumentum ex Cartesio: A Study of Descartes' Employment of Arguments in His Meditations on First Philosophy

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Abstract

In his *Regulae* (Rules for the Direction of the Understanding), Descartes focuses on Arithmetic and Geometry as the methodological model for argumentation and learning generally. As a result, it is generally assumed that his *Meditations on First Philosophy* employs the deductive method utilized in Mathematics. Part of the difficulty in understanding the method of the *Meditations* stems from the fact the nowhere in the *Meditations* does Descartes explain the method he employs in this work. In fact, Descartes addresses the method of the *Meditations* in only one place, namely, in the

Replies to the Second Set of Objections, where he contrasts the method of Geometry (which he refers to as ‘synthesis’) with the method of the Meditations (which he refers to as ‘analysis’). In my paper, I turn to the Descartes’ Dreaming/ Waking argument in the fourth and fifth paragraphs of the first meditation to illustrate how scholars have erred in their critical exegetical efforts, when they regard the Meditations as utilizing a logical mathematical-type approach in arguments in the search after truth. In the second half of my paper, I focus on Descartes’ method of ‘analysis’, the only method that he insists he employs in his Meditations.

Keywords: dreaming, waking, method, argument, deduction, hyperbolic doubt

Methodology

Descartes makes abundantly clear in his correspondence with those seeking clarification on what he has written in his Meditations on First Philosophy, that while he is concerned in this work to discover the first principles of human knowledge, the arguments that he utilizes to lead the reader to these first principles, especially, but not exclusively, in the first meditation, do not possess certainty, but rather ‘verisimilitude’. The resultant concern for the commentator, of course, is to try to understand how Descartes moves from such arguments to grasping the first principles of human knowledge. This is the chief matter that I address in my article, a topic which is largely neglected in the literature on the Descartes’ Meditations.

Argumentum ex Cartesio: A Study Of Descartes’ Employment Of Arguments in His Meditations On First Philosophy

In his Meditations on First Philosophy, Descartes sets out to discover the first principles of human knowledge, that is, what must be known before anything else can be known. In the Preface to the Principles of Philosophy, he refers to the subject which seeks these first principles of human knowledge as ‘metaphysics’ (HR 1, 210; CSM 11, 186). In the first meditation, he attempts to determine whether these metaphysical first principles can be established through the senses. When this fails, he devotes the remaining meditations to showing that reason is the source of the first principles of human knowledge. In this article, I turn my attention to the first meditation, and, more specifically, to Descartes’ Dreaming/ Waking argument in the latter half of the fourth and in the fifth paragraph of the first meditation. I will examine a criticism of Descartes’ approach put forth by Peter Simpson and Gilbert Ryle, and show that this criticism does not impact what Descartes is attempting to accomplish in his dreaming/ waking argument. In the second half of my article, I focus on Descartes’ method of ‘analysis’, the only method that he insists he employs in his Meditations.

First, to Descartes’ argument about dreaming and waking. The argument begins at the end of the fourth paragraph of the first meditation, when he recognizes that people

who suffer from madness are delusional, in that their brains generate what they take to be reality: "...they constantly assure us that they think they are kings when they are really quite poor, or that they are clothed in purple when they are really without covering..." (M 46, CSM 11, 13). He rules out that he is mad, given that he is able to compare and contrast his perceptions, in order to determine which are likely true of reality. However, in the fifth paragraph, he raises the concern that he may suffer from madness when he dreams: "How often has it happened to me that in the night I dreamt that I found myself in this particular place, that I was dressed and seated near the fire, whilst in reality I was lying undressed in bed!" (M 46-47; CSM 11, 13) He then goes on to draw a contrast between waking and dreaming:

At this moment it does indeed seem to me that it is with eyes awake that I am looking at this paper; that this head which I move is not asleep, that it is deliberately and of set purpose that I extend my hand and perceive it; what happens in sleep does not appear so clear and so distinct as does all this. (M 47; CSM 11, 13)

But, he urges, that this contrast between waking and dreaming in terms of clarity and distinctness cannot be accepted, because "on many occasions I have in sleep been deceived by similar illusions, and in dwelling carefully on this reflection I see so manifestly that there are no certain indications by which we may clearly distinguish wakefulness from sleep that I am lost in astonishment. And my astonishment is such that it is almost capable of persuading me that I now dream". (M 47; CSM 11, 13)

Peter Simpson and Gilbert Ryle have put forth the following criticism of Descartes' Dreaming/ Waking argument:

It is a standard criticism of Descartes' dream argument that it must necessarily fail because it is inconsistent with itself: it has to assume the truth of what it sets out to deny. It concludes that there is no difference between dreaming and waking, and that our experiences may be false delusions, while the premises, which liken waking to dreaming and assert the illusory character of the latter, presuppose that there is such a difference. As Ryle has said in a criticism of the argument from illusion, "just as it makes no sense to talk of counterfeit coins when there are no genuine ones to contrast them with, so it makes no sense to talk of illusory experiences like dreams without waking and veridical ones to contrast them with." I believe that... this criticism is correct.

If Descartes' had intended his Meditations to be a logical search for first principles, then the criticism by Simpson and Ryle (and others) would be on the mark: without knowing the veridical experiences that we are capable of having, it makes no sense to speak of illusory experiences. I will show that, in his Meditations, Descartes does not intend to undertake a logical search for first principles. As a result, criticisms of his approach in the Meditations, which focus on standards that a logical approach must meet, are inappropriately applied to what he is attempting in this work. One of the problems confronting the commentator is that Descartes does not set out in the

Meditations, the method that he utilizes in this work. As a result, his procedure is subject to misunderstanding, given that it is typically assumed by commentators that he employs the deductive method of Geometry in the Meditations. In this regard, we need to deal with two topics: hyperbolic doubt which is introduced in the first meditation and is utilized throughout the Meditations, and Descartes' method of analysis in the Meditations, which he sets out in the Replies to the Second Set of Objections. I begin my study with Descartes' employment of hyperbolic doubt in the Meditations.

Hyperbolic Doubt

Descartes first introduces hyperbolic doubt, that is, doubt which goes beyond what reason is able to approve, in the second paragraph of the first meditation. He informs us that he will examine those principles through which empirical beliefs are admitted into consciousness. These principles are guides, regarding which beliefs should be admitted into consciousness as true, and which beliefs should be rejected. And, he continues, if he finds that a principle has at any time led him to error, or may lead him to error, then he will reject the principle, and all beliefs admitted into consciousness through this principle: “[I]f I am able to find in each one some reason to doubt, this will justify my rejecting the whole” (HR 1, 145; CSM 11, 12) . One such principle relevant to our discussion is the principle of clarity and distinctness, which initially enables him to distinguish waking from dreaming: “At this moment it does indeed seem to me that it is with eyes awake that I am looking at this paper...what happens in sleep does not appear so clear and so distinct as does all of this” (M 47; CSM 11, 13). Nevertheless, he recalls that on many occasions in sleep he has been deceived by similar illusions - some of his dreams possess the clarity and distinctness he associates with being awake - with the result that he sees so manifestly “that there are no certain indications by which we may clearly distinguish wakefulness from sleep that I am lost in astonishment. And my astonishment is such that it is almost capable of persuading me that I now dream” (M 47; CSM 11, 13). His argument here is clearly not reasonable, but is rather hyperbolic, holding that, because he has at times been deceived into thinking that he is awake when he is asleep and dreaming, that he should regard all sense experiences as occurring in dreams.

In the Third Set of Objections to Descartes' Meditations, Thomas Hobbes' acknowledges Descartes' argument that we have no reliable criterion for distinguishing waking from dreaming, but he questions why Descartes developed this argument (and others) in the first meditation, since all of this has been adequately covered by Plato and other ancient philosophers. In his reply to Hobbes, Descartes offers three reasons for introducing hyperbolic doubt in the context of the Dreaming/Waking argument:

[M]y reason for employing them [was] partly that I might prepare the readers' minds for the study of intellectual matters and for distinguishing them from matters

corporeal, a purpose for which such arguments seem wholly necessary; in part also because I intended to reply to these very arguments in the subsequent Meditations; and partly in order to show the strength of the truths I afterward propounded, by the fact that such metaphysical doubts cannot shake them. (HR 11, 60-61; CSM 11, 121)

Each of Descartes' reasons for employing hyperbolic doubt requires some discussion.

(1) The readers' minds must be prepared for the study of intellectual matters and for distinguishing them from matters corporeal, because Descartes holds that the senses prejudice us into believing that ideas received through the senses are the true metaphysical ideas, from which the first principles of human knowledge can be derived. In the Replies to the Second Set of Objections, Descartes elaborates on the ill effects of sensory prejudice in metaphysics:

...[N]othing in metaphysics causes more trouble than the making the perception of its primary notions clear and distinct. For, though in their own nature they are as intelligible as, or even more intelligible than those the geometrician study, yet being contradicted by the many preconceptions of our senses to which we have since our earliest years been accustomed, they cannot be perfectly apprehended except by those who give strenuous attention and study to them, and withdraw their minds as far as possible from matters corporeal. Hence if they alone were brought forward, it would be easy for anyone with a zeal for contradiction to deny them. (M 102-103; CSM 11, 111)

Descartes' insists that the true metaphysical ideas are innate, that is, they are devoid of empirical content (he often calls them 'pure'), and they were given to us by God. The influence of the senses prevents us from apprehending these innate ideas, and, therefore, until the 'preconceptions of our senses' are removed, metaphysical knowledge cannot be obtained. Two central topics in the Meditations where this arises are, first, in the second meditation, when Descartes, having established that he exists, proves that he exists as a thinking thing; and in the third meditation, when he attempts to know God through his idea of God. In both instances - knowledge of the self; and knowledge of God - he shows that the true ideas of the self and of God are not revealed through the senses. These ideas are innate, given to him by God, and are not subject to change or modification:

It only remains to me to examine into the manner in which I have acquired this idea [of God] from God; for I have not received it through the senses, and it is never presented to me unexpectedly, as is usual with the ideas of sensible things; nor is it likewise a fiction of my mind, for it is not in my power to take from or to add anything to it; and consequently the only alternative is that it is innate in me, just as the idea of myself is innate in me. (M 71; CSM 11, 35)

Accordingly, the need to eliminate all sensory influences, if he is to grasp the true innate ideas of the self and of God. The hyperbole in his doubts ensures that sensory

ideas will no longer be regarded as the true ideas of the self and of God, or of any other metaphysical ideas, and this will facilitate his search for the true innate ideas, which are the foundation of metaphysical knowledge. In other words, once all empirical ideas are shown to be unreliable as the path to truth in metaphysics, his writings in the Meditations can direct his (and our) attention to those innate ideas through which the first principles of metaphysical knowledge can be grasped. As he teaches in the Replies to the Second Set of Objections, “if the reader care to follow it and give sufficient attention to everything, he understands the matter no less perfectly and makes it as much his own as if he had discovered it. But it contains nothing to incite belief in an inattentive or hostile reader...”(M 101; CSM 11, 110) The hostility that Descartes has in mind is found in those who are still under the influence of sensory - based beliefs, e.g. empirical ideas of the self and/ or of God, which he holds can never lead the mind to the metaphysical first principles that he is seeking.

Toward the end of the first meditation, immediately before introducing the evil genius hypothesis, he explains that the true starting point of his metaphysical inquiry into the first principles of human knowledge is indifference:

For these ancient and commonly held opinions [learned through the senses] still frequently revert to my mind...That is why I consider that I shall not be acting amiss, if, taking of set purpose a contrary belief, I allow myself to be deceived, and for a certain time pretend that all these opinions are entirely false and imaginary, until at last, having thus balanced my former prejudices with my latter, [so that they cannot divert my opinions more to one side or the other], my judgment will no longer be dominated by bad usage or turned away from the right knowledge of the truth. (M 49; CSM 11, 15)

In order to sustain the indifference which he has achieved by the end of the first meditation, Descartes introduces the hypothesis of the evil genius, which alleviates the need to review the arguments developed through hyperbolic doubt already presented against the senses:

I shall then suppose, not that God who is supremely good and the fountain of truth, but some evil genius not less powerful than deceitful, has employed his whole energies in deceiving me...(M 49; CSM 11, 15)

The evil genius hypothesis will no longer be needed, once Descartes arrives at the point where he can begin to emerge from this state of doubt. He identifies this point in the opening paragraph of the fifth meditation:

Now (after first noting what must be done or avoided , in order to arrive at a knowledge of the truth) my principal task is to endeavor to emerge from the state of doubt into which I have in these last days fallen...(M 80; CSM 11, 44)

(2) Descartes makes clear to Hobbes that he intends to reply to the arguments put forth in the first meditation in the subsequent meditations. This is a necessary step,

given that, in the first meditation, hyperbole was utilized to eliminate all of his sensory beliefs, so that he will no longer be influenced by his senses in his search for the first principles of human knowledge. However, once he has discovered the first principles of human knowledge, he must, without hyperbole, return to evaluate his sensory beliefs, to establish which are reliable, and which are not reliable. A hint regarding this occurs in the penultimate paragraph of the first meditation, when Descartes reflects momentarily on his hyperbolic doubts regarding the senses, and takes a more reasonable appreciation of his sensory beliefs:

For these ancient and commonly held opinions still revert frequently to my mind...nor will I ever lose the habit of deferring to them or of placing my confidence in them, so long as I consider them as they really are, i.e. opinions in some measure doubtful, as I have just shown, and at the same time highly probable, so that there is much more reason to believe in than to deny them. (M 49; CSM 11, 19, italics added; not in the text)

Once again, therefore, we see that Descartes is proceeding strategically through his employment of hyperbolic doubt, which requires the reader to give her/himself over to the teachings of the Meditations, despite the fact that such teachings run counter to accepted beliefs and to the standards of reason. As we learned earlier, he is very clear about this in the Replies to the Second Set of Objections, when he urges that “if the reader care to follow it and give sufficient attention to everything, he understands the matter no less perfectly and makes it as much his own as if he had discovered it. (M 101; CSM 11, 110)

(3) Descartes insists that the hyperbolic doubts he raised in the first meditation will reveal that all beliefs obtained through the senses are dubitable, and, therefore, that the metaphysical principles he is seeking cannot be empirically based. In the third part of his answer to Hobbes in the Replies to the Second Set of Objections, as to why he elaborated on the hyperbolic doubts in the first meditation, he insists that he did so “partly in order to show the strength of the truths I afterward propounded, by the fact that such metaphysical doubts cannot shake them.” He does not explain to Hobbes why this is the case: I will provide an explanation here.

The hyperbolic doubts introduced in the first meditation all pertain to Descartes’ empirical beliefs: by the end of the first meditation, all of his empirical beliefs, and those principles through which these beliefs are admitted into consciousness, have been shown to be dubitable. Immediately following the first meditation, he is concerned with beliefs which are based solely on innate ideas, namely, his belief in the existence of himself as a thinking thing (in the second meditation), and his belief that a veracious God is his creator (in the third meditation): neither of these beliefs presupposes, or depends upon, Descartes previously knowing anything about God. In other words, these beliefs can be known to be true without the divine guarantee. In one passage in the Replies to the Second Set of Objections, Descartes explains about

such beliefs that they cannot be shaken, even if he grants that there exists a deity intent on deceiving him:

To begin with, directly we think that we rightly perceive something, we spontaneously persuade ourselves that it is true. Further, if this conviction is so strong that we have no reason to doubt concerning that of the truth of which we have persuaded ourselves, there is nothing more to enquire about; we have here all the certainty that can reasonably be desired. What is it to us, though perchance someone feigns that that, of the truth of which we are so firmly persuaded, appears false to God or to an Angel, and hence is, absolutely speaking, false? What heed do we pay to that absolute falsity, when we by no means believe that it exists or even suspect its existence? We have assumed a conviction so strong that nothing can remove it, and this persuasion is clearly the same as perfect certitude. (HR 11, 41; CSM 11, 103)

While Descartes acknowledges that mathematical ideas are also clear and distinct, he does not include them within the category of ideas of the intellect, which he can never doubt about believing them to be true, because the truth of mathematical claims can be challenged by the hypothesis of a deceiving deity.

But when I took anything very simple and easy in the sphere of arithmetic and geometry into consideration, e.g. that two and three together made five, and other things of the sort, were not these present to my mind so clearly as to enable me to affirm that they were true? Certainly if I judged that since such matters could be doubted, this would not have been so for any other reason than that it came into my mind that perhaps a God might have endowed me with such a nature that I may have been deceived even concerning things which seemed to me most manifest. But every time that this preconceived opinion of the sovereign power of a God presents itself to my thought, I am constrained to confess that it is easy to Him, if he wishes it, to cause me to err, even in matters in which I believe myself to have the best evidence. (M 59-60; CSM 11, 25)

No comparable concern arises regarding his awareness of himself existing as a thinking thing, and of the existence of God as his creator. The question, of course, is why this is the case? I will now explain.

With innate ideas, Descartes' concern is always with whether what he is thinking corresponds to what he is thinking about. His concern is that a deceiving deity may be causing him to think matters in a certain way, but that this way of thinking does not correspond to reality. In mathematics, despite the fact that he must think the relation between relata in a certain way, e.g. that $(3+2) = 5$, he considers that if God is a deceiver, then God can bring it to pass that $(3+2)$ does not equal 5, and Descartes may never be able uncover this. Hence, in the case of mathematics, what he finds he must think about certain relations may not be the case at all. On the other hand, when he discovers the necessary relation between thought and existence in the Cogito ergo Sum, he can be confident that this relation is true, because what he is thinking is

identical to what he is thinking about. No deception, not even by God, is possible here, because the problem of correspondence can never arise. There is a transparency with the Cogito ergo Sum, which never occurs with mathematical claims:

What of thinking? I find here that thought is an attribute that belongs to me; it alone cannot be separated from me. I am, I exist, that is certain. But how often? Just when I think...I do not now admit anything which is not necessarily true: to speak accurately I am not more than a thing which thinks, that is to say a mind or soul...(M 52-52; CSM 11, 18)

I turn now to Descartes' attempt to show that knowledge of God as Descartes' creator is not subject to doubt. I will not be dealing with his full treatment of the topic of God here, but only with the epistemological concern as to whether he is able to know God with certainty, simply through his idea of God. In the anti - penultimate paragraph in the third meditation, he explains:

It only remains to me to examine into the manner in which I have acquired this idea from God; for I have not received it through the senses,...nor is it likewise a fiction of my mind, for it is not in my power to take from or to add anything to it; and consequently the only alternative is that it is innate in me, just as the idea of myself is innate in me. And one certainly ought not to find it strange that God, in creating me, placed this idea within me to be like the mark of the workman imprinted on his work; and it is likewise not essential that the mark shall be something different from the work itself. (M 70; CSM 11, 35)

For Descartes, to have the idea of the self is to have the idea of God in that thought.

To show that the awareness of the self and God is reliable, and, therefore, indubitable, it would have to be shown that the awareness of God through the awareness of the self is like the awareness of the self: there must be no distinction between what I am thinking, and what I am thinking about. But how, in the case of God, can this be upheld? Descartes offers his explanation in the Replies to the Fifth Set of Objections through an illustrative analogy, which clarifies his position that the idea of God is 'as it were, the mark of the workman imprinted on his work':

When you ask whence I get my proof that the idea of God is, as it were, the mark of a workman imprinted on his work, and what is the mode in which it is impressed, what is the form that mark, it is very much as if I, coming across a picture which showed a technique that pointed to Apelles alone as the painter, were to say that the inimitable technique was, so to speak, a mark impressed by Apelles on all his pictures in order to distinguish them from others, but you replied with the questions: 'what is the form of that mark?' and 'what is its mode of impression?' Such an enquiry would seem to merit laughter rather than any reply. (HR11, 221; CSM 11, 256)

According to Descartes, the idea of God stands to the idea of the self in a manner analogous to the relation between a painter's technique and works of art which result

from this technique. As such, the idea of God is contained in the awareness of oneself as a thinking thing, in a manner analogous to the way in which the observation of a painting contains within itself the technique of the artist who created the painting. Just as observing the painting aids in apprehending the technique through which the painting has come to be, so by meditating on the self as a thinking thing, he comes to understand the only way in which he could have come to be. Therefore, when apprehending God within the awareness of the self, there is no basis for a distinction between what he is aware of, and what this awareness is about, in the same way that when apprehending the technique in a painting there is no basis for a distinction between what is apprehended and what the apprehension is about. The technique that an artist employs in creating a painting is not a copy of the artist's technique; rather it is the artist's technique in creating the painting. Similarly, the idea of God which Descartes discovers through meditating on the idea he has of himself is the mark of the workman imprinted on his work: this idea is not a copy of God's mark or technique; rather it is God's mark or technique. Again here, therefore, there is no basis for a distinction between what he apprehends about God in the idea of the self and what this apprehension is about. It is in this way that indubitability pertains to the awareness of God in the awareness of the self.

The Method of Analysis in the Meditations

I want now to address the method of analysis, which Descartes utilizes throughout the meditations. As I pointed out earlier, the only place where Descartes discusses the method he utilizes in the Meditations is in the Replies to the Second Set of Objections (M 101-104; CSM 11 110-113). Since the Cartesian analytic method is designed to remove sensory prejudice to the point of indifference, so that the primary notions of metaphysics can be apprehended clearly and distinctly, the method of analysis must have the role of rejecting claims (this is particularly evident in the first meditation, but is also evident in subsequent meditations.). Further, analysis must also direct the mind to the appropriate primary notions, once the manifold prejudices have been removed. Second, since the foundation of certainty for Descartes is to be found in the certainty of the metaphysical first principles, it follows that, prior to apprehending these first principles, any argument which he employs as a means to assist in apprehending the primary notions will lack certainty. For this reason, deductive arguments, which are presented in the context of his method of analysis prior to knowing that a veracious God is his creator, will fall short of demonstrative certainty, and this would include the proofs of God's existence in the third meditation. The sceptical arguments employed by Descartes in the first meditation are also ones which fall under the rubric of the method of analysis, and two comments that he makes in the Replies to Objections regarding arguments in the first meditation should be borne in mind.

The first of these comments appears in the Replies to the Third Set of Objections, when Descartes mentions that the arguments employed in the first meditation "were

provided by me only as possessing verisimilitude.” (HR II, 60; CSM II, 121) In other words, these arguments appear to be true, but they are not true. They have heuristic and rhetorical value, rather than being sound arguments. And, in his second comment, in the Replies to the Fifth Set of Objections, Descartes urges that what is false may be employed in directing the mind toward its primary notions (HR 11, 206; CSM 11, 242) Two instances of utilizing falsities in seeking the truth are first, the evil genius hypothesis; and second, the utilization of calculations involving objective and formal reality in the third meditation in the two proofs for the existence of God. He offers no proof for these concepts, and he ignores the fact that, in the first and third meditations, he had cast doubt on all mathematical calculations.

The result of my study is to show that the reading of the Meditations, along the lines offered by Peter Simpson and Gilbert Ryle in the context of the Dreaming/ Waking argument, is an inaccurate assessment of what Descartes is seeking to accomplish in this work. Descartes’ approach is not logical; it is rhetorical and strategic. It requires that the reader give sufficient attention to what Descartes has written, and internalize it, so that the reader can grasp the same innate ideas as Descartes is grasping, in order to attain knowledge of the metaphysical first principles he is seeking.

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The Evolving Mass Media Landscape for Children and the Imperative Role of Journalistic Products in Shaping Children's Opinions

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Abstract

This paper explores the complex digital landscape that children navigate in the contemporary era, focusing on the profound transformations in media consumption and the implications for cognitive development, safety, and media literacy. As digital platforms increasingly permeate the lives of the youth, offering both opportunities for enrichment and exposure to risks, this study delves into the dual nature of this digital evolution. It examines the shift from traditional media to a digital-dominated environment where interactive platforms, educational technology, and social media play pivotal roles in shaping children's experiences. The analysis extends to the ethical considerations in creating content for young audiences, emphasizing the need for accessibility, educational value, and inclusivity in journalistic products designed for minors. Furthermore, the paper scrutinizes the GREVIO General Recommendation No. 1, highlighting its relevance to protecting children in the digital domain from cyber violence and exploitation, and stresses the importance of educational initiatives to foster safe and responsible digital navigation. Through a comprehensive review of the characteristics of journalistic products for minors and strategies to stimulate critical and autonomous opinion formation, this study underscores the critical role of ethics, parental guidance, and educational efforts in cultivating a discerning and informed younger generation. The overarching aim is to contribute to the ongoing discourse on ensuring a balanced, safe, and enriching digital media landscape for children.

Keywords: Digital Media Consumption, Media literacy, Cyber safety, Children, Educational Technology.

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving digital era, the media landscape accessible to children has experienced significant changes, introducing a mix of advantages and challenges that influence their perception, values, and cognitive growth. Whereas previous generations engaged more with the physical world, today's youth are increasingly

immersed in digital environments. The majority of children now possess personal tablets and frequently maintain their own social media profiles, marking a stark contrast from the past. Traditional media outlets, like television and print, now share the stage with—or are even eclipsed by—a vast spectrum of digital platforms designed to meet the varied interests and needs of a digitally adept younger population.

The advent of the digital age has provided children with unparalleled access to a broad range of information and entertainment options across various devices. Smartphones, tablets, and computers have become standard tools for media consumption among children. Today's media landscape is distinguished by its interactive nature and the rich multimedia content it offers. Unlike the passive engagement associated with traditional media, current offerings for children include educational applications, interactive websites, and engaging virtual realities. These modern tools deliver a complex and engaging experience, allowing children to interact with content in ways that transcend the limitations of previous media formats.

Transforming Childhood in the Digital Age

The rise of streaming platforms tailored for children has revolutionized content delivery. On-demand services provide a vast library of age-appropriate shows, movies, and educational content, enabling children to curate their viewing experiences and granting parents greater control over content selection. The pervasive impact of social media on children cannot be overstated. Platforms designed for adults often attract younger users, exposing them to a wide array of content and social interactions. This introduces both positive opportunities for self-expression and creativity, as well as potential risks associated with cyberbullying, misinformation, and unhealthy comparison. A study conducted from Ofcom¹ in 2016 revealed that children between 6 and 11 spent an average of 4 hours and 49 minutes with forms of media and communication. Children between 11 and 15 years old spent 6 hours and 20 minutes²

The integration of technology into educational settings has given rise to EdTech tools designed to enhance learning experiences. Interactive e-books, educational games, and virtual classrooms have become integral components of the modern educational landscape, reshaping how children engage with academic content. The interconnected nature of the digital world has facilitated global connectivity for children. Online platforms enable cross-cultural interactions, exposing children to

¹ Ofcom – Office of communication is the UK regulator of communication services. As of February 2020, it holds the position of “online harms regulator”.

² “The digital day” study, Ofcom 2016

https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/26826/cm_r_uk_2016.pdf

diverse perspectives, languages, and cultures, fostering a sense of global awareness from an early age.

As the media landscape evolves, parents face the challenge of navigating a complex digital environment to ensure their children's safe and enriching media experiences. Balancing the benefits of technology with the need for parental oversight is a delicate task that requires ongoing awareness and adaptation. Discussing this topic among colleagues and students it feels that is more an emotive one. My colleagues start telling stories how they were spending most of their times playing outside, while children today don't do that anymore for several reasons:

Parental reluctance to leave children to play outside without adult supervision

Childrens love for tablets and digital technologies.

Media literacy can be seen as a “subset of multiliteracy”, based on the definition of Burn and Durran¹.

The Digital Dimension of Children’s Media Consumption

The digital dimension of children's media consumption represents a dynamic and complex landscape shaped by the intersection of technology, content creation, and the evolving needs of young audiences. Examining the GREVIO General Recommendation No. 1² provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with this digital transformation, shedding light on the implications for children's exposure to information.

a. Examination of GREVIO General Recommendation No. 1

The GREVIO General Recommendation No. 1 addresses the digital dimension of violence against women, emphasizing the importance of understanding and mitigating the impact of digital platforms on vulnerable populations, including children. The following key points emerge from this examination.

Cyber Violence and Exploitation

Firstly, the Recommendation articulates the widespread nature of cyber violence and exploitation, recognizing the heightened vulnerability of children to online harms. It identifies specific manifestations such as cyberbullying, online harassment, and the dissemination of harmful content. These digital behaviors can inflict significant psychological and emotional distress on children, impacting their overall well-being and development.

Privacy and Online Safety

¹ Burn, A. and Durran, J. (2007) *Media Literacy in Schools: Practice, Production and Progression*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

² <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-rec-no-on-digital-violence-against-women/1680a49147>

The digital environment poses considerable challenges to the privacy and online safety of children. The Recommendation calls attention to the necessity of implementing stringent measures to safeguard children from exposure to inappropriate content, predatory behaviors, and the potential exploitation of their personal data. The emphasis is on creating a secure online environment that respects and protects the rights of children.

Educational Initiatives

Furthermore, the Recommendation likely advocates for the promotion of educational initiatives aimed at equipping children with the essential knowledge and skills to safely and responsibly navigate the digital world. This includes fostering media literacy, enhancing critical thinking abilities, and instilling the principles of responsible digital citizenship. Such educational efforts are vital in preparing children to critically engage with digital content and interactions, thereby reducing their susceptibility to online risks.

b. Implications of the digital dimension on children's exposure to information.

The digital dimension brings forth a set of profound implications for how children access, consume, and interact with information.

Digital media provides children with unprecedented access to information anytime, anywhere. While this accessibility offers educational benefits, it also raises concerns about constant exposure to potentially inappropriate or harmful content. Algorithms play a significant role in shaping children's online experiences by curating content based on their preferences and behaviors. This raises questions about the unintentional reinforcement of biases and the potential for children to be trapped in information bubbles. The interactive nature of digital media allows for personalized content experiences, tailoring information to individual preferences. This can enhance engagement but also poses challenges regarding the influence of algorithmic recommendations on children's worldview.

Resilience is an important word when it comes in term of the skills children need in their engagement with the media. Zolkoski and Bullock suggest that "resilience requires conditions of an identified risk or challenge followed by some defined measure of positive outcome"¹

Parents play a crucial role in navigating these risks by being actively involved in their children's online activities and providing guidance on responsible digital behavior.

Overview of Characteristics of Journalistic Products for Minors

Journalistic products tailored for minors play a crucial role in shaping the perspectives, values, and cognitive development of young audiences. Recognizing the

¹ Zolkoski, S.M. and Bullock, L.M. (2012) "Resilience in Children and Youth: A Review, pp 2295-2303

unique needs and vulnerabilities of children, the characteristics of these products are designed to provide informative, engaging, and age-appropriate content while fostering critical thinking and autonomy. Here's an overview of key characteristics that contribute to the effectiveness of journalistic products for minors.

Transparency and Accuracy:

Content should be presented in a clear and understandable manner, avoiding jargon or complex language that may be beyond the comprehension of the target age group and rigorous fact-checking processes are essential to ensure the accuracy of information provided to minors, fostering trust in journalistic products.

Educational Value:

Journalistic products for minors should go beyond entertainment, incorporating educational elements that contribute to the intellectual growth and knowledge acquisition of children.

Interactive features, quizzes, and educational games can enhance the learning experience and make information more engaging.

Content should be tailored to the cognitive and emotional development of different age groups, recognizing that children of varying ages have distinct information processing abilities and sensitivities¹. Journalistic products must be free from inappropriate or harmful material that could negatively impact the mental and emotional well-being of minors.

Integration of multimedia elements such as videos, images, and interactive features enhances engagement and caters to the multimedia preferences of modern young audiences. Platforms that allow children to interact with content, ask questions, and express their opinions foster a sense of involvement and agency.

Digital Literacy

Journalistic products can include components that enhance digital literacy skills, helping children navigate the digital landscape safely and critically. Encouraging responsible online behavior and ethical use of digital platforms is crucial in the age of digital media. In order to uphold professional ethics is paramount, even in the context of content for minors. Journalistic products should adhere to ethical standards, avoiding sensationalism or exploitation. Maintaining a balance between entertaining content and informative material is essential to keep children engaged while delivering meaningful messages.

Stimulating Critical and Autonomous Opinion Formation

¹ MediaSmarts. Available at: <https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy>

Stimulating critical and autonomous opinion formation is a multifaceted process that involves empowering individuals to think independently, analyze information critically, and form well-informed opinions. In various contexts, including education and media consumption, fostering these skills is essential for developing active and engaged citizens. Here's an overview of key considerations in the endeavor to stimulate critical and autonomous opinion formation.

Teaching individuals, especially young audiences, how to discern credible sources from unreliable ones is fundamental. Media literacy programs can equip individuals with the skills to critically evaluate information¹.

Providing platforms for open and constructive dialogue fosters an environment where individuals feel comfortable expressing their opinions without fear of judgment. This helps in shaping a diverse range of perspectives.

Integrating critical thinking skills into educational curricula from an early age lays the foundation for autonomous opinion formation. Activities that encourage questioning and analysis contribute to intellectual growth.

Utilizing interactive formats, such as multimedia presentations, simulations, and educational games, can capture attention and enhance the learning experience². Interactive learning stimulates critical thinking and autonomous decision-making.

Fostering a culture of curiosity and encouraging individuals to question assumptions, narratives, and information promotes independent thought. Questioning is a fundamental element of critical thinking.

Parents play a crucial role in guiding their children's exposure to information. Balancing guidance with allowing space for independent exploration helps in the development of autonomous opinions.

Collaborations between media outlets and educational institutions can create programs that blend media literacy education with classroom learning, reinforcing critical thinking skills in a broader educational context.

Leveraging technology, including online forums and social media, can provide spaces for individuals to express and refine their opinions. However, educators and guardians need to guide individuals on navigating the potential pitfalls of online spaces.

That's why stimulating critical and autonomous opinion formation is an ongoing process that involves a combination of educational, media, and societal efforts. By incorporating these various strategies, individuals can develop the skills needed to

¹ Hobbs, R. (2010) *Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action*.

² Jorgensen, H. and Skovbjerg, H. (2021) *Understanding the Mutuality of Play and Media Literacy in Young Children* in D. Holloway, M. Willson, K. Murcia, C. Archer and F. Stocco "Young Children's Rights in a Digital World, Switzerland; Springer

think critically, form independent opinions, and actively contribute to informed discussions in the broader social context.

Ethics in a modern context.

In the contemporary landscape, professional ethics represents a fluid and evolving framework of principles that informs the conduct of individuals and organizations across various sectors. As we witness rapid technological innovations, increased global interconnectedness, and evolving cultural norms, the ethical landscape confronting professionals has grown increasingly complex.

The widespread integration of technology into professional practices introduces ethical dilemmas related to data management. Professionals are tasked with striking a delicate equilibrium between embracing technological advancements and protecting individual privacy rights.

Within the domain of journalism targeted at younger audiences, ethical considerations assume unique dimensions that significantly influence the development of ethical media consumption habits among youth. It is imperative for journalistic endeavors aimed at minors to prioritize accessibility, tailoring content to be comprehensible across diverse age brackets. Moreover, such journalistic outputs should transcend mere news reporting to incorporate educational elements, thereby fostering media literacy among this demographic¹.

A commitment to inclusivity within journalistic content for minors is essential, ensuring representation of a wide array of narratives that reflect the varied experiences of the youth. Through such inclusivity, journalistic initiatives can serve as pivotal instruments in cultivating media literacy, empowering young individuals to distinguish between credible information and falsehoods.

Ethical journalistic practices engender a sense of accountability among media consumers, paving the way for a society characterized by critical engagement and ethical discernment. Furthermore, journalism that resonates with young individuals on societal issues can inspire a burgeoning sense of civic duty, laying the groundwork for their active participation in community endeavors and democratic processes. Such engagement is crucial for the vitality of democratic societies, highlighting the role of ethically grounded journalistic content in shaping informed and responsible citizens from a young age.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has navigated the complex and dynamic digital landscape that envelops the modern childhood experience, highlighting the profound shifts in media consumption, educational engagement, and ethical considerations that define

¹ Zhu, C., Huang, S., Evans, R. and Zhang, W. (2021) Cyberbullying among Adolescents and Children: A Comprehensive Review of the Global Situation, Risk, Factors and Preventive Measures

the digital age. Through a detailed examination of the transformation of media environments, the rise of educational technology, and the pivotal role of journalism tailored for minors, we have explored the multifaceted impacts on children's cognitive development, safety, and media literacy.

The advent of digital platforms has undeniably broadened access to a diverse array of information and learning resources, yet it has also introduced significant challenges that necessitate careful navigation. Cyber violence, privacy concerns, and the potential for misinformation underscore the need for robust educational initiatives and parental involvement to safeguard and guide young digital citizens.

Journalistic endeavors targeting minors have emerged as crucial tools in fostering media literacy, offering content that is not only accessible and educational but also ethically grounded and inclusive. These initiatives play a vital role in preparing children to critically engage with digital content, enhancing their ability to discern credible sources from misinformation, and encouraging a responsible and informed interaction with the digital world.

As we move forward, it is imperative that educators, parents, media professionals, and policymakers collaborate to cultivate environments that support safe, enriching, and empowering digital experiences for children. Emphasizing the development of critical thinking, digital literacy, and ethical media consumption habits will equip the younger generation with the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the digital age confidently and conscientiously.

Ultimately, the journey through the digital landscape is an ongoing process of adaptation and learning. By embracing the opportunities for growth and addressing the challenges head-on, we can ensure that children not only thrive in the digital age but also contribute to the shaping of a more inclusive, informed, and ethically responsible digital society

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Folk Songs and Their Relationship with Albanian Professional Music

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Abstract

The history of the world music development has shown that the influence of popular music on cultivated music, when it is used with the right artistic and professional criteria, has increased its emotional phenomena, as well as the formation of unrepeatability. Folklore, as well as language, is one of the most important components of the spiritual and material cultural heritage, which factors into the identity of a nation. Supporting the cultivation of folklore in professionally cultivated music, in addition to duty, is also a necessity in its national orientation. Based on what we discuss, we can also quote the Albanian ethnomusicologist, from Kumanova, Macedonia, who says: "*... folklore for a nation is its identity, a kind of identity card, with which it is distinguished from other peoples*" (Ismaili 2006). Even in cultivated professional Albanian music, the influence of folk music has tended to its development from the very beginning. The intonative continuity of popular music, in addition to the value of the creative talent of the people, for the very stability that it has reflected throughout the centuries, shows that it is the basic terrain of the contemporary Albanian musical language. The use and reliance on folk intonations influenced the crystallization of the forms of melodic development in professional musical creativity. From the beginning of the process of cultivation of professional Albanian music, popular music was not only the most appropriate example from which it was oriented, but it was also the aspiration that guided the entire process of its formation.

Keywords: folk song, cultivated creativity, Albanian composers, professional music.

Introduction

Being part of the artistic tradition of our people's culture, folk music not only led to the development of professional music but also was the main factor that guided it during European developments. On this phenomenon, A. Uçi, along with many other forms, writes: "*...folk art has played a special role, especially in the history of our art because, for thousands of years, it has been the only artistic tradition with uninterrupted continuity*" (Uci, 1976)

The fact that popular music has been represented with high quality and originality throughout our centuries-old history, aroused interest from the beginning of the cultivation of professional Albanian music and, what is more important, through its use was also conditioned the democratic orientation and its national one.

One of the simplest and most tangible forms of the relationship between folklore and cultured music is the harmonization of popular songs, especially those for polyphonic vocal formation.

Harmonization, as a process, represents the first step in the relationship between folklore and cultivated artistic music, especially vocal music.

Through this process, the folklore song and dance have acquired new and growing emotional features and developed dimensions.

Harmonization of folk songs is the earliest and simplest form, as well as the closest relationship to the cultivation processes in professional artistic music.

Harmonization, as the simplest form of the relationship between folklore and cultivated music, has been widely practiced by Albanian composers, especially those after the 30s and 40s of the last centuries. Since the development of our national music came later than in other nations, the harmonization of popular music naturally led to Albanian musical beginnings and oriented them towards the formation of the national character and spirit. This practice also came through the influence of the created path, followed by representative composers of the National School of Music, especially those of the 19th century. (Hysi, 1991). The practice of harmonizing folk songs was the initial orientation in cultivated musical creativity and the fact that the Albanian composers of the 30s-40s had a limited degree of qualification, their creativity was concentrated in small forms, mainly vocal, with popular spirit. From the beginning of the process of cultivation of professional Albanian music, folk music was not only the source and the right example from which it was oriented but also the aspiration that guided the entire process of its formation. Being an important part of the spiritual and artistic heritage of our people's culture, folk music led to the development of professional music and factored in its direction during European developments (Zadeja, 1997). Academician A. Uçi writes about this formative process: "...folk art has played a special role, especially in the history of our art because, for thousands of years, it has been the only artistic tradition with uninterrupted continuity" (Uci, 1976).

Harmonization was the process that became the main object, mainly for the cultivation of folk songs, for different vocal formations, which, in terms of dimension, simplicity, and articulation, was closer to the musical tastes of the Albanian public of this period. Among the Albanian composers who worked on the harmonization of popular songs for different vocal formations, the following stand out Kristo Kono, Kostandin Trako, Čes Zadeja, Lorenc Antoni, Tish Daija, Tonin Harapi, Milto Vako, Fahri Beqiri, Mark Kaçinari, Gjon Simoni, Mende Mengjiqi, etc.

From the many harmonizations of Albanian folk songs for choral formation, we have selected to analyze one of them: "Rritu moj bajame", performed by the composer Česk Zadeja (Shupo, 2002).

"Grow my tonsil."

(Harmony for four-part mixed choral formation, a-Capella)¹.

The folk song "Rritu moj bajame" comes from the territories of Central Albania, Myzeqeja. It is harmonized as a four-part mixed choral formation, without orchestral accompaniment („acapella“) and with popular text by the composer Česk Zadeja. The harmonization is elaborated in the 7/8 meter and the "Allegro" movement and extends to 30 measures, f, g, a, b, c, d (fa, sol, la, si, do, re), with tonal center on the note "Sol". The author maintains this position throughout the length of the harmonization. This is structured in the stanza-refrain form, of which the stanza consists of two symmetrical sentences, with seven measures each (measures 1-14), while the chorus consists of two symmetrical sentences, with eight measures each. (measure 15-30).

In the authentic version, the song is elaborated intonatively in the hexatonic mode².

The melodic material of the stanza is simple, flowing, and organized in melo rhythmic

bubbles 

which are organically related to each other. Melo rhythmic bubbles convey a distinct emotionality.

The first sentence of the stanza consists of seven measures (measures 1-7). In the first five measures, the verse of the first stanza is conveyed (measures 1-5) and in the following two measures, 6 and 7, the fourth verse "Pika e ballit". As harmonization, the first five measures of the stanza are delivered by the bass voices in unison, between the middle and high register, while the two following measures are delivered by the soprano and altos, between the middle and low register, harmoniously placed in relation interval octaves (8), fifths (5) and thirds (5) and end united in unison on the note G (G), in measures 6 and 7. Dialogue relationships between the bass voices (measures 1-5) with the sopranos and altos (measures 6-7), create a joyful and emotional atmosphere in the sound of the song. The second sentence of the stanza, between measures 8-14, is symmetrical with the first sentence, but in contrast to it, its last two measures (measures 13&14) appear more mobile. In these two measures, the voices of the sopranos and altos are harmoniously placed in interval relationships of fifths (5), sevenths (7), fifths (5), sixths (6), and, at their conclusion, join in unison.

¹ A-Capella is a form of vocal singing, without instrumental or orchestral accompaniment.

² The hexatonic mode consists of 6 sounds.

The second part of the harmonization, the chorus, which appears right before the end of the stanza, is disciplined in 16 measures, between measures 15-30. It consists of two symmetrical sentences, with eight measures each. Each sentence is divided into two small symmetrical constructions of four measures each. In the first sentence of the chorus (measures 15-22), the thematic material is first placed harmoniously in the harmony of the 3d degree, B-major (B-flat+), and then returns to the basic tonality, G-minor (Sol -). This part of the harmonization is also the part where the harmonic chord is more complete and fusionally denser. In its first four measures, the chord setting is distinguished, t-d-III; t; s6; s; d7; t, (measures 15-18), and in the second four measures the chord setting appears: t;s6/4; sII4/3; s; d; t, (measures 19-22).

The second sentence of the chorus, in terms of structure and harmony, is identical to its first sentence. The thematic material of the stanza and the chorus contrast with each other, through tonal placement, fusional density, and accordion. One of the distinguishing characteristics of harmonization is the placement of harmonic consonances (chords) in close positions, such as decadences, through the seventh chord of the dominant minor (d7), in half cadence¹, and in final cadence². These phenomena find expression throughout the pretending of the chorus. As a harmonization, the song relies more on diatonic harmonies and, in some cases, also on consonances of the modal sphere, such as the case of placing the seventh chord of the dominant minor (d7-) in the corresponding cadences.

The authentic musky folk song, "Rritu moj bajame", harmonized for a four-part mixed choir, without instrumental accompaniment (acapella) by the composer Česk Zadeja is a creation that, through the harmonizing process, has gained significant emotional growth, which comes expressed through a simple and clear musical language and assimilable by the listeners.

The creation preserves the sonic totality of the authentic popular variant throughout its length and throughout the elaboration new developments are also observed, which come through the tonal placement of the accordion, which has helped the creative quality, directing it into the streams of cultivated professional artistic music.

Example 1:

"Rritu moj bajame" Harmonized by Cesk Zadeja

¹ The half cadence is the harmonic turn at the end of the I sentence of musical construction, which then continues the further development.

² The final cadence is the closing harmonic turn of a musical construction.

Allegro

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Baritone

S

A

T

B

S

A

T

B

S

A

T

B

Audio link: https://youtu.be/9Ax8XKg6e4Q?si=r7Szm9MR_ixEcStb

In the period after the Second World War, before the composers of the time, like the entire Albanian society, a series of tasks were laid for the development and overall improvement of life in Albanian society. The imperative task was to increase musical creativity in the service of mass education, to increase the number of professional creators, through education inside and outside the country, and, most importantly, to strengthen the national character, which had to be oriented especially by popular creativity. So, the cultivation of musical creativity, in close connection with popular music, was a priority for the time. In this context, the processing of the folk song was seen as one of the most important and basic forms for the development of professionally cultivated music, with a popular spirit and national character. On this problem, musicologist Albert Paparisto underlines: "The first step in the creation of national music was the processing or use of the song, of the popular melody. The values of such a work are seen in the fact that the composers, who less and who more, have made this processing starting not only from the goal of enrichment, and technical

but also defining a point of view and creating new emotions from the old folklore material" (Paparisto, 1970).

Based on what we mentioned above, it turns out that the processing of popular music has been the focus of the creative work of the first-generation composers of the second half of the last century. Among them, the quality of the processing for sound formations of Ćesk Zade, Kostandin Trakos, Lorenc Antonit, Tish Daija, Akil Koci, Fahri Beqiri, Tonin Harapi, etc. stands out. They transmitted this tradition to other generations of Albanian composers, those after the 70s, such as Limoz Dizdari, Milto Vako, Feim Ibrahim, Gjon Simoni, and those after the 80s, such as Rafet Rudi, Thoma Simaku, Vaso Tole, etc.

For the cultivated professional creativity, in addition to harmonization, we can say that they influenced and factored the formation and deepening of the national character of the great Albanian artistic music, as an important factor for the formation of creative individuality, the processing of popular music and especially the song, has preceded the cultivated Albanian vocal creativity. On the importance of this process Ć. Zadeja expresses himself with determination: "I am fully convinced that the formation of the national stylistic creative individuality, in practical terms, begins with the processing of the folk song" (Zadeja, 1997).

Zadeja has had the processing of popular music, especially songs, as the focus of his creative work, almost throughout his life. When the composer talks about the treatment and use of form, the use of modal-harmonic language, polyphonic structures, syntactic tools, and Melo-rhythmic variety of folk music, as factors of the natural development of cultivated national music, he concludes that: "My goal as a creator has always done what is possible to help, however modestly, in the high creation of the national style of music professional" (Zadeja, 1997).

To achieve the success of his musical work, with a national face, the composer has practiced densely the small forms of relations with popular music, and particularly the form of processing, as a basis for the deepening of his great artistic music. In evaluating this process, he says: "I have "applied" all these prosperous tools of this new tradition, (the composer is talking about the new tradition of cultured music, based on popular music - A.K.) starting from the elaboration of the folk song." (Zadeja, 1997).

Regardless of the term, the processing represents a cultivated new, independent musical creation. On this logical reasoning, the composer T. Harapi writes (Shupo, 2002): "Processing is a new work, even though the source was taken from the people: therefore, one must distinguish its architectural construction, a clear form which conveys thought from one stage to another, gives path and creates the necessary curvature to the inner emotion and nerve. Here the role of the artistic skill, insight, and taste of the composer plays a special role." (Kalemi, 2003).

Albanian composers of this period had the processing of popular music at the center of attention and priority of their creative work. Through this process, they were able to build stable relationships with popular music and, alongside it, paved the way for the cultivation of large vocal and orchestral forms, with a national face. For the realization of elaborate creations, Albanian composers used all possible forms. Thus, Harapi, following his writings on the processing of popular music, adds: "By processing, we understand the expansion, the multiplication of the ideological, emotional, stylistic and technical values of the popular source material. Processing starts from increasing the volume (resonance) of a popular song, until the realization of a choral, orchestral, or soloistic architectural construction, from harmonizing with many voices, with many lines of instruments, etc (Kalemi,2003). Without going into the details of the degree of processing, we can say that it is another edition of the popular song, more amplified in many directions."

The processing of folk music has been the focus of the creative work of Albanian composers of the first generation of the second half of the last century. Among them, the quality stands out processing for sound formations by Ćesk Zade, Kostandin Trakos, Lorenc Antonit, Tish Daisa, Akil Kocit, Fahri Beqirit, Tonin Harapi, etc. They passed on this ancient tradition also to other generations of Albanian composers, those after the 70s, such as Limoz Dizdari, Milto Vako, Feim Ibrahim, Gjon Simoni, and those after the 80s, such as Rafet Rudi, Thoma Simaku, Vaso Tole, etc.

For illustration, we mention in the paper three folk songs processing, Albanian songs for different sound formations, performed by Albanian composers in different periods, in which professional clear creative logic appears, through processing tools and compositional techniques. We have selected the composers Thoma Simaku, with "Qenke veshur me te bardha", Ćesk Zadeja "Shkon djali termale" and "O mora rrugen e kurbetit."

The ongoing impact of folk music.

In addition to the process of processing and harmonizing folk songs, the creations in popular style are also used especially for different choral formations.

This process appears more densely in the cultivation of small forms of vocal music, especially in the genre of songs for soloists or vocal creations for different vocal formations. The characteristic of these creations is that they, despite not relying on any popular authentic creation to quote and develop further, most of them come oriented from generalizing characteristics of popular songs and, more often, inspired by the provincial folk music of the author's origin.

These creations in their listening bring to attention variants of styles of folk songs. They mostly convey the popular spirit, preserving the characteristics of distinctive syntactic, tonal-modal, regional melo-rhythmic in the melodic content, as well as in structure. In argumentation of this reasoning, we bring as an example some of the civic

songs of Shkodra, Elbasan, Berat, Tirana, Korçës, etc., which, despite having authors, nowadays show anonymously and in people are known as purely folk songs. There are many examples, but among them stand out civic songs like "Turtulleshë" (https://youtu.be/A8KT5Ye_VWk?si=VLBLzLG57J4tAPeN) "Delja rüde", "Zanusha", "Lulja me ere", by R.Sokoli; "Luleborë", by S. Gjon, "Kenga e krushkeve", by T. Daija; "Kur me vjen burri nga stani", by K. Kono etc.

"Lule bore" song. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDDECjEUIAQ>

Simon Gjoni

Comparative Perspective in other national music traditions.

The quoting form from popular music is not an Albanian experiment, as this phenomenon has appeared throughout the entire history of the development of all world music and, especially, during the period of romanticism of the 20th century. Throughout this century, various composers have expressed themselves about the relationship of their creativity with popular music. Along with composers also creators of other fields of art, writers, poets, and painters' creativity has manifested the tendency to rely on folk art.. Among them M. Ravel, M. de Falia, B. Bartok, etc.

The well-known Hungarian ethnomusicologist of the first half of the 20th century, Bela Bartok, in addition to relying on popular music in his musical creativity, also theoretically elaborated on the necessity of the relationship between cultivated artistic music and popular music. In this regard, in one of his three articles on the development of contemporary Hungarian music, he underlines: "To create based on folk songs, this is one of the most difficult or otherwise no easier tasks than to create works with an original theme. It is enough to bear in mind that the elaboration of the given theme represents the source of a great difficulty in the elaboration of the popular song or its simple harmonization, such inspiration is also required, as in the creation of the work written on the theme created by the composer" (Zadeja, 1997).

Starting from the experiences of the achievements in the musical creativity of the composers of the 19th and 20th centuries, the development of our national music was also oriented in this way, from its first steps. The Albanian creative practice of musical

direction, step by step, has tried to give an original solution to the aspect of citation. The creative path of many of our composers brings abundant and rich material in this direction, from which valuable conclusions can be drawn, especially for the composers of our younger generation.

A prominent example comes from Ekkerman's writing about Goethe which, among others, reads: "What made him great? Perhaps those old songs of the grandfathers that were alive in the minds of the people, which they sang to him when he was in the cradle and as a child grew up among them, living in intimacy and perfectly with these living examples, where he has found the inexhaustible source with which to proceed further" (Zadeja, 1997).

Conclusions

National schools of music, especially those of the 19th century, which flourished during that period in many European countries, in the framework of efforts for the formation of national musical cultures, at the center of their programs had the knowledge, study, and possible use of the musical heritage of their peoples. Their formation also affected the awakening of the development of the national musical cultures of other peoples. This direction influenced and also led to the development of Albanian national music, from its first steps, during the first decades of the XX century.

Among the totality of the relationships of cultivated music with folk music, are separated the harmonization, processing, creating in folk style, and folk music citation. The citing of popular music as a process, in addition to the above, is also an important expression of the addition and coexistence of popular music with professional compositional techniques and universal expressions of the world of music. This relationship appears naturally among the sonority world, as a means of expressing musical art in general, whether it comes spontaneously or premeditated. Quoting is an important aspect of cultivated music. The place it occupies in the musical work and the way of compositional treatment, such as processing and re-creating the cited source material, factor into the formation of the national sound. In music, it is known that the basic source from which the national character derives is folklore, which throughout the centuries has gone through a long path of development and, through selection, following the aesthetic tastes of the people has taken an artistic form. Thus, in the initial conditions of the formation of the national tradition of professional music, folklore, like language in literature, constitutes its basic subject. Without the support and orientation of the local musical tradition, the formation and crystallization of the cultivated national and musical tradition cannot be conceived. This is what happened with our professionally cultivated music in the first steps of its development.

The application of these forms has influenced the formation of musical cultures with popular spirit and national character, with the result that they, despite differences, could also coexist among them. Folk music with the great and varied heritage that it presents, in terms of emotional, Melo- rhythmic, modal-tonal, harmonic, linguistic, and

structural aspects, has been an inexhaustible source of inspiration and factor for the development and improvement of cultivated creativity. The composer, the closer he is to folk art and the more profound he knows and assimilates it, just as naturally more obvious will also appear his creative individuality. The simplicity of expression and talent with which our people have created songs and folk dances proves, not only for the creative genius, but through them is developed and oriented the artistic skills of professional cultivated music.

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