

## Chapter 2: Constructivism, Inclusion, Democracy, and Education

### A Deweyan Reflection on the Concept of the Cologne International Teacher Education Laboratory

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#### Abstract

Our essay draws on pragmatist and constructivist approaches in education and connects them with a case study in teacher education, namely the International Teacher Education Laboratory (ITEL) that has been developed and undertaken in the years 2013-2015 at the University of Cologne. We proceed in the wake of the Deweyan tradition of democracy and education and aim to reconstruct this frame for our time by connecting it with components of Zygmunt Bauman's sociological diagnoses and descriptions of liquid modernity as the condition of social life today. Our discussion contains four elements. First, constructivism will help us to address the relations and perspectives of observers, participants, and agents in culture under conditions of liquid modernity. Second, we will use inclusion as a theoretical perspective to understand claims and challenges of emancipation, democratic beliefs and attitudes, as well as educational growth for all in twenty-first century education and society. Third, democracy in the Deweyan sense will be used as a lense of reflecting necessary conditions of inclusion, namely diversity, participation, and transparency. Fourth, education will be the perspective to embrace the different arguments of our essay and sum up what the other three parts have yielded.

**Keywords:** Dewey, Bauman, democracy, education, inclusion

#### 1. Introduction

This essay combines pragmatist and constructivist perspectives in educational theory and philosophy with a case study of educational practice in the context of an international teacher education laboratory. It is the objective of our project to use theory in order to better understand as well as critically reflect and reconstruct practices. In turn, the reflection of a case of teacher education will provide perspectives to rethink theoretical assumptions, concepts, and orientations as well as conceptual strategies in educational philosophy. We will discuss the concept of a Cologne project – the International Teacher Education Laboratory (ITEL) (Note1) – that has been developed and undertaken in the years 2013-2015. In the case of this paper, we will argue that a contemporary approach in education that follows the tradition of John Dewey and connects with his 1916 *Democracy and Education* must address current debates on inclusive education as providing necessary standards of democracy in and through education today. (Note 2) To specify the context of contemporary society in which democracy and education must be reconstructed and made efficacious for all, we refer to Bauman's (2000) globally influential theory of *Liquid Modernity* and especially his ideas about individuality and emancipation.

Bauman (2000) observes that a continuing characteristic of modern society lies in dissolving traditional structures and in the intentional and deliberate production of order and social life:

All modernity means incessant, obsessive modernization (...); and all modernization consists in 'disembedding', 'disencumbering', 'melting the solids' etc; in other words, in dismantling the received structures or at least weakening their grip. From the start, modernity deprived the web of human relationships of its past holding force; 'disembedded' and set loose, humans were expected to seek new beds and dig

themselves in them using their own hands and spades, even if they chose to remain in the bed in which they germinated. (Ibid.: 4)

Bauman further distinguishes between what he calls solid modernity – i.e., the relatively stable social order of past societies as exemplified in early 20th century Fordism – and liquid modernity – i.e., the increasingly fluid and liquefied social conditions of our time. It is characteristic for liquid modernity that crucial parameters of modern times have changed despite the underlying continuities between the solid and the liquid state. For the intentions of this paper, our primary concerns are the challenges for education that go with social liquefaction, especially for the discussion of inclusive education. Therefore, we select the themes of “emancipation” and “individuality” from Bauman’s descriptions of social life, while other themes like “work” or “time/space” will only appear by implication.

Throughout our essay we connect the challenges of education in liquid modernity with the Deweyan claim that education and democracy are mutually interdependent (comp. LW 13: 294-303; see also: Neubert 2012a: 136-149, Garrison/Neubert/Reich 2012). (Note 3) One core principle of democracy and education following Dewey is that it must be a lived experience for all who participate in a group, community, or society. A main challenge for education in liquid modernity is to use social intelligence in a broad and generous way so that education may contribute to the growth of all individuals and groups. This is a standard of educational equity necessarily connected with claims to inclusion, which so far has not been fully realized in educational systems worldwide (see Reich 2012). However, school systems around the world have started to implement features of inclusion since the ratification of the UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009. As a consequence, teacher education, too, has to change towards inclusion in order to prepare all students to be able to effectively engage in the rapidly changing educational landscape. Inclusive teacher education is therefore a necessary component in inclusive educational reconstruction (see Forlin 2010: 650). The discussion about inclusive teacher education points out that in combination with the necessary reconstruction of educational theories, practices, and institutions, inclusion is first of all an attitude: „The principles of inclusion should be built into teacher training programs, which should be about attitudes and values not just knowledge and skills.“ (World Health Organization 2011: 222)

Our analysis employs pragmatist and constructivist concepts and theoretical perspectives in educational philosophy. Following a Deweyan approach, we combine theoretical work with a practical case study in a specific institutional context – namely, the seminar that accompanies the practice period in teacher education studies at the University of Cologne. On the theoretical side, we use pragmatist and constructivist approaches to specify, among other things, the roles of observers, participants, and agents in cultural contexts, the interplay between reflection, creativity, and growth in experiences, as well as democratic claims to diversity, participation, and transparency as necessary conditions of a comprehensive and generous understanding of inclusive practice. On the practical side, the case study of the International Teacher Education Laboratory provides a model not only to illustrate theoretical perspectives on education, democracy, and inclusion, but also to inspire new reflections and reconstructions in educational philosophy. Following Dewey and his experimentalist understanding of philosophy and education, this educational laboratory project builds on the circle of primary and secondary experience in a reflective, open-ended, and multi-perspectival dialogue of theory and practice.

In what follows, we will proceed in three chapters to discuss the topics of our essay, namely constructivism, inclusion, and democracy in education. Each chapter will follow roughly the same structure: we will first elaborate on theoretical perspectives of educational philosophy following a contemporary constructivist reconstruction of the Deweyan heritage. We will thus first give a conceptual grounding of the chapter’s respective theme. Secondly, we will address some general aspects of life under liquid conditions according to Bauman. In a third step, we will then introduce examples from the practice of the International Teacher Education Laboratory and connect them with the theoretical perspectives.

It goes without saying that we only distinguish the topics of our essay here for reason of presentation although they cannot be separated from each other, but are deeply interrelated. A brief conclusion about Inclusive Teacher Education in times of liquid modernity will round out our essay.

## **2. Constructivism: Observers, Participants, and Agents in Cultural Contexts of Liquid Modernity**

*Philosophy of education:*

*“The true statement that we know (observe) with what we have known (that is, learned) needs to be supplemented by recognition that what is learned is a function of the social group and groups of which one is a member” (John Dewey).*

Our general frame for theoretical reflection on the educational practices of the International Teacher Education Laboratory at the University of Cologne consists of the Cologne program of interactive constructivism that was founded in the 1990s by Kersten Reich (see Reich 1998; Neubert/Reich 2006). This approach tries, among other things, to theoretically reconstruct the philosophical tradition of John Dewey in and for our time (see Garrison/Neubert/Reich 2012, 2016). As proponents of interactive constructivism, we regard Dewey as one of the most important predecessors of constructivism in 20th century philosophy and education. We use his theories in constructive and critical ways as resources for a contemporary understanding of the complex and often ambivalent relations of experience, education, and culture in our increasingly dynamic, diverse, and globalized societies. In so doing, we at the same time address the challenges of reconstructing the Deweyan heritage with regard to the changed conditions and constellations of our time. Our case study and theoretical reflection are part of this larger educational and philosophical project of reconstructing Dewey.

One important theoretical meta-perspective of interactive constructivism situates social interactions in the contexts of cultural practices, routines, and institutions. We interpret the perspectives of observers, participants, and agents as different relations to context that can be distinguished in analysis though never separated in life. This is to say, we consider these three roles in their necessary and mutual interdependence as well as in their often tensional relations to each other.

As observers, we see, hear, sense, perceive, and interpret our world. We construct our versions of reality on the basis of our beliefs and expectations, our interests, habits, and reflections. As participants, we partake in the larger contexts of the multiple and often heterogeneous communities of interpreters that provide basic orientation in our cultural universe. We participate in social groups, communities, networks, and institutions of all kinds. Our partaking is an indispensable cultural resource, but it also implies commitments, responsibilities, loyalties, and the exclusion of certain alternatives. As agents, we act and experience. We communicate and cooperate and struggle with others. We devise plans and projects to carry out our intentions. We articulate ourselves and respond to the articulation of others. (Neubert 2008: 108)

The distinction of observer, participant, and agent roles or perspectives is not alien to Deweyan pragmatism, although Dewey did not use the three terms as systematically as interactive constructivism does today. However, the idea of the three perspectives and their interdependence is clearly implied in his general philosophy of experience and culture (see LW 1; see also Neubert 2009; Reich 2009). For instance, he explicitly talks about the different attitudes and outlooks of a “spectator,” “participant,” and “agent” (MW 9: 131) in the beginning section of chapter 10 of his 1916 *Democracy and Education*. Even in formal expression, this comes very close to our more recent constructivist terminology. Dewey had an acute awareness of the cultural relatedness and inevitable contextuality involved in all three roles (see also his seminal essay “Context and Thought”, LW 6: 3-21). A specifically eloquent and instructive example of this awareness can be taken from a methodological reflection contained in the unfinished 1940s book project *Unmodern Philosophy and Modern Philosophy* (Dewey 2012: 136-139). Dewey here provides an interesting account of the social and cultural emergence or construction of problems. He observes that in a narrow sense and “within the scope of restricted fields” like everyday practice or well established scientific procedure, it may be said that a problem is “given” as a “practical matter” (ibid.). However, when we convert the notion that problems “exist directly per se and are given” into a statement of general theory of knowing, it inevitably leads to a fallacy (ibid.). For this interpretation forgets about the necessary contexts of experience out of which a problem arises and is observed as such. Dewey further elaborates on the implications of this insight for a pragmatist theory of observing. He insists that in all concrete cases of observation “we recognize the dependence of the event of observing and of what is observed upon the antecedent existence of a constellation of habits, including attitudes of belief operating as facilities, resources” (ibid.: 138). Therefore, the observation of an event “which gives it rank as fact (which is a precedent condition of noting ... a problem)” depends on conditions that are determined by social practices “including language, or the meanings current as means and material of communication” (ibid.: 138). For Dewey, facts as well as problems are socially constructed in the sense that they rely on social practices of making and communicating meanings. He summarizes his social constructivist theory of observing in the sentence that follows: “The true statement that we know (observe) with what we have known (that is, learned) needs to be supplemented by recognition that what is learned is a function of the social group and groups of which one is a member.” (Ibid.: 138)

This statement brings us back again to our constructivist distinction between the roles of observers, participants, and agents. Dewey gives an insightful example for the ways in which the participant role informs and influences observation and action. “We are familiar, in some cases only too much so, with the existence of sects, parties, denominations, factions, schools, cliques, sets, economic classes, ‘organizations.’ We are also aware that each one of

these consists of human beings who in that particular capacity are followers, adherents, votaries, devotees, partisans” (Dewey 2012: 138 f). These groups are informed and constituted by commonly held “formulated doctrines, creeds, tenets, platforms, etc.” (ibid.: 139). Dewey uses them as examples because they help understand the relation between participant and observer perspectives. For “it is so obvious in their case that the belief that determines what is admitted and excluded as facts and the manner in which observation is carried on (including deflections and distortions ...) is a matter of group, constitution and behavior” (ibid.). We will possibly find that at least in some of these cases the influence between participation and observation “suggests undesirable, objectionable qualities” – especially in the case of those groups “with which we do not agree” (ibid.). However, there is a more general conclusion to be drawn from these considerations. For Dewey, they point to a necessary cultural self-criticism regarding experience and context:

I have used these cases because their somewhat extreme character illustrates the sort of thing which happens in all cases, including those which are regarded as highly desirable. For the contrast between the undesirable and the desirable is not that of determination of belief-constellations (and consequent facts and problems) in one case by socio-cultural conditions and in the other case by mind or intellect free from any such social influence but is that between habits and the attitudes which are characteristic of the methods used by different groups. (Ibid.)

Dewey’s insistence on the necessary contextuality of facts and problems reminds us that as humans we are always participants, agents, and observers in culture. Our participations, actions, and observations are mutually interrelated and influence each other. He expresses this idea even more drastically by claiming that, as social beings, we are always “partisans” of sorts. In the “etymological sense of the word, all of us are partisans in that we are parts along with others, of groups which are with respect to their ‘parts’ wholes of a sort. In this sense, to be partisan is identical with being ‘social by nature’” (ibid.). There is a “cultural relativity of beliefs, facts and problems” which must not be confused with the idea that beliefs are arbitrary and all of equal value (ibid.). This applies to a scientific community as well as a religious sect. Both groups imply a cultural context of observing, participating, and acting under specific cultural conditions. There is no difference with regard to this general condition of cultural relativity. However, there is all the difference in the world between the respective methods, criteria, attitudes, habits, and practices used in the constitution and formation of beliefs.

#### *Life in liquid modernity:*

Living in a period that in Bauman’s terminology can be called “solid modernity,” Dewey already saw the necessary cultural contextuality of observing, participating, and acting. Much of his social philosophy is about the conditions and challenges of acting in creative and critical ways in modern times. His philosophical attitude of meliorism as a third alternative between naïve optimism and fatalistic pessimism points to the importance of taking conditions as well as challenges of social reconstruction into account. If we follow Bauman’s analysis, some of the conditions and challenges have changed in the transition from solid to liquid modernity. Regarding our constructivist distinction of observer, agent, and participant perspectives, Bauman’s description of the dis-embedding social forces of modernity seems especially relevant. This is because shared experiences in communities are the significant contexts of being a participant and, as we saw above, the role of participant always deeply influences the roles of observer and agent—and vice versa. In this respect Bauman shows how the contexts of social containment have radically changed from solid to liquid conditions: “New is that the ‘disembedding’ goes on unabated, while the prospects of ‘re-embedding’ are nowhere in sight and unlikely to appear.” (Ibid.: 4) Unlike solid modernity when many contexts of social belonging were relatively stable and dependable, social relations and commitments in liquid modernity are increasingly fluid, dynamic, ambivalent, precarious, and easily abandoned in favor of new opportunities. Bauman describes liquid life as an increasing pressure upon individuals as well as communities to time and again adapt themselves to rapidly changing social conditions and challenges in all fields of daily living from personal relationships to the work place etc. It means constant awareness of and adjustment to moving social constellations, bonds, “and ever new rules that change while the social game goes on” (Garrison/Neubert/Reich 2012: 130). What is more, the very “modernizing tasks and duties” have undergone “deregulation and privatization” in the change from solid to liquid modernity (Bauman 2000: 29). “What used to be considered a job to be performed by human reason seen as the collective endowment and property of the human species has been fragmented (‘individualized’), assigned to individual guts and stamina, and left to individuals’ management and individually administered resources.” (Ibid.) Besides the gradual decline of the “early modern illusion” of “an attainable *telos* of historical change, a state of perfection to be reached” (ibid.), Bauman argues that this deregulation and privatization constitutes the “second seminal change” (ibid.) in the transition from solid to liquid modernity.

*Case study:*

Against this background, the construction, reflection, and self-critical awareness of observer, participant, and agent perspectives in cultural contexts appears all the more as an important pre-condition of constructivist education in liquid times. It represents a specific challenge on the level of teacher education because students take the path of becoming professional teachers only after they themselves have for a long time been involved – often unwittingly and without reflective awareness – in cultural practices of observing, participating, and acting. Especially important in this connection is the task of working on teacher students' own biographical experiences of school socialization and the ways they learnt what it is to be a teacher and a student. This includes becoming aware of relevant biographical backgrounds, as well as discussing and reflecting beliefs and values by comparing them to the perspectives of other learners in a reflective and research orientated way (see Martschinke/Kopp 2008: 292). In our teacher education laboratory we try to respond to these challenges as follows:

Since 2013, the teacher education students at the University of Cologne can attend the International Teacher Education Laboratory as part of their regular studies (see Glutsch/Kricke 2014; Kricke/Kürten/Amrhein 2015). Among other things, the seminar includes accompanying and supporting the teacher students during their first university based practice phase. This is a one-month internship in a school that usually occurs during their first or second semester at the university. It serves as a general orientation for the students regarding their choice of studies. In the seminar, our main focus is on inclusive education and new ways of learning (see e.g., Kalantzis/Cope 2012; see European Agency for Special Education Developments 2012).

The laboratory as a typical Deweyan learning environment intends to provide contexts and opportunities for all teacher students to experience diversity and participation in a playful, multi-perspectival, and interactive environment. To develop inclusive perspectives and attitudes, the Cologne students get the opportunity to critically reflect on their own experiences in theory and practice and their attitudes regarding education embedded in their own biographies (see Amrhein/Kricke 2013). The seminar offers different ways of “inclusive activities” like writing, drawing, discussing, and reflecting about diverse ideas and imaginations connected with their experiences of being a learner and a teacher. This is the starting-point and basis for processes of critical reflection in dialogue with international peers and experts. The laboratory contains e-learning components that use current international cooperation with universities in countries like Finland, Spain, Sweden, UK, Turkey, USA, Canada (see Kricke/Kürten/Amrhein 2015). Through this dialogue and reflection in international contexts, the students are invited to construct, reconstruct, and deconstruct their visions about being a teacher (see Garrison/Neubert/Reich 2012, 2016). This may help them to widen their horizons, critically reflect on their own attitudes, and grow as teachers in a Deweyan sense. It includes the ideas of teachers being reflective practitioners (see Schoen 1983), educational researchers (see LW 5: 1-40, especially 23-24), artists of caring relationships (see Garrison 1997), and facilitators of learning (see Reich 2006).

The first inclusive activity is called “working theory.” The students start by writing in class. They articulate ideas and imaginations coming from their heart of being a teacher. This is the basis for upcoming reflection processes – in a worldwide multi-perspectival setting with international peers (teacher education students from different countries with different backgrounds). We invite the students to consider their own ideas and imaginations as part of their “working theories” which are grounded in biographical experiences. Groeben, Wahl, Schlee, and Scheele (1998) have shown that teachers' biographical school backgrounds constitute an important influence in their later own teaching practices.

We use the following questions to inspire students' writing process on their working theories (see Kricke/Reich 2011):

- *How do I see the role of a teacher?*
- *Which characteristics of the teacher's profession are essential for me?*
- *If I was a teacher yet:*
- *How do the students see me as a teacher?*
- *How do I feel as a teacher?*
- *How do I want to develop?*
- *What is the significance of being a teacher within our society?*
- *Teaching means to me...*

- *Learning means to me...*
- *What is good education for me? Which are the characteristics of good education for me?*
- *Which are the situations in which I as a teacher take over an educating role?*
- *Handling diversity/heterogeneity in the class room means to me...*
- *My tasks as a teacher are the following...*
- *My personal questions:*

Comparing their own working theories embedded in their biographical backgrounds of being observers, participants, and agents in culture with the ones of their (international) peers, the German students can get a deeper understanding by becoming aware of and critically attentive to their own beliefs based on their experiences in a “German” school setting. Concerning the topic of an inclusive classroom, the following concrete example shows how a German and a Finnish teacher student reflect their experiences concerning “heterogeneity in the classroom” (see Kricke/Kürten/Amrhein 2015: 88):

Working theory from a German student	Working theory from a Finnish student
<p>“In every class there is at least one ‘difficult’ pupil. Because of those children it is important for the teacher to cooperate with institutions that help support those children. (...) Equality is a central term as all children have the right to learn (...)”</p>	<p>“When talking about heterogeneity and homogeneity in my classroom, I must say that a large group with a lot of variation sounds very challenging to me. I think that it is a good thing to have heterogenic groups, but teachers must have enough support to deal with these groups.”</p>

As this example suggests, there are differences in responding to heterogeneity in the working theories of different students. In this connection, we often discuss with students that experiences in different school systems influence individual working theories. Here the Finnish teacher student by tendency describes heterogeneity as “positive” and “challenging,” while the German student focuses on the aspect of diversity as being “difficult.” One interpretation of this might be the multi-tracking German school system, in which different learners are separated into different school tracks (*Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium*, and comprehensive schools) accompanied by a further track for special needs students (*Förderschulen*). (Note 4) This tracking system expresses a deeply rooted traditional tendency towards homogenization and deep-seated fears of diversity in learning. In this process, we often discuss with students that the German school system is a relatively stable and inflexible institutional setting. With Bauman we might say it is a historical heritage from the times of solid modernity. It is so to speak a dinosaur.

The benefit of this international multi-perspectival exchange based on different experiences is that it helps students to take a reflective and critical perspective on the limitations of the institutional contexts in which they have grown up as observers, participants and agents and in which they find themselves as future teachers. The very comparison creates an atmosphere in which imaginations and visions can grow for rethinking the roles of teachers and learners in inclusive classrooms. Especially for the German students, it constitutes the challenge to construct perspectives that point beyond the traditional school system and help them envision new responses to conditions of liquid life. These responses cannot focus on homogeneity and fixed order, but must allow for diversity and participation of all. In this respect, the ITTEL invites students to travel in time and space and get back to themselves with broadened horizons.

To close these considerations, we draw on Dewey’s insight from *Art as Experience* (LW 10) that democracy and education in a modern society must struggle against tendencies of separation, homo genization, or what he himself calls “compartmentalization“ of life:

The institutional life of mankind is marked by disorganization. This disorder is often disguised by the fact that it takes the form of static division into classes, and this static separation is accepted as the very essence of order as long as it is so fixed and so accepted as not to generate open conflict. Life is compartmentalized and the institutionalized compartments are classified as high and as low; their values as profane and spiritual, as material and ideal. Interests are related to one another externally and mechanically, through a system of check and balances ... Compartmentalization of occupations and interests brings about separation of that mode of activity commonly called ‘practice’ from insight, of imagination from executive doing, of significant purpose

from work, of emotion from thought and doing ... Those who write the anatomy of experience then suppose that these divisions inhere in the very constitution of human nature (LW 10: 26-27).

### **3. Inclusion: Emancipation, Reflective Attitude, and Growth for All**

#### *Philosophy of education:*

*“[E]very individual is in his [or her] own way unique” (John Dewey).*

We may start the reflections of this chapter by drawing on a number of specifically pregnant passages from Dewey's writings where he explores the meanings of individuality and equality as democratic principles that stand against the dangers of homogenization, reduction to fixed standards, one-size-fits-all procedures as well as other forms of discrimination and exclusion of individuals and groups from comprehensive, free, and generous participation in social life and growth. In his 1919 essay “Philosophy and Democracy,” Dewey observes that the principle of equality implies “a world in which an existence must be reckoned with on its own account, not as something capable of equation with and transformation into something else.” It means a world “of the incommensurable in which each speaks for itself and demands consideration on its own behalf.” (MW 11: 53) The statement accords well with his general philosophical appreciation of individuality and unique potentiality articulated e.g., in the 1929 essay “Construction and Criticism:” “... every individual is in his [or her] own way unique. Each one experiences life from a different angle than anybody else, and consequently has something distinctive to give others ... Each individual that comes into the world is a new beginning; the universe itself is, as it were, taking a fresh start ... and trying to do something, even if on a small scale, that it has never done before.” (LW 5: 127) Dewey further reflects on the democratic meanings of equality in his 1939 essay “Creative Democracy – the Task Before Us” where he observes that the “democratic faith in equality is belief that every human being, independent of the quantity or range of his [or her] personal endowment, has the right to equal opportunity with every other person for development of whatever gifts he [or she] has.” (LW 14: 226 f) From his democratic point of view, the principle of equality must therefore be combined with a generous and thoroughgoing appreciation of diversity in experience. This is especially important for education because, seen from the educational point of view, a fundamental criterion of all democratic communication consists in the appreciation of “the intrinsic significance of every growing experience” (MW 9: 116). Dewey draws a fundamental educational conclusion from these democratic visions of individuality and equality when – in his 1938 essay “Democracy and Education in the World of Today” – he points to the necessity of including the diverse experiences of all learners in participatory ways in order to make the classroom truly democratic:

Even in the classroom we are beginning to learn that learning which develops intelligence and character does not come about when only the textbook and the teacher have a say; that every individual becomes educated only as he [or she] has an opportunity to contribute something from his [or her] own experience, no matter how meager or slender that background of experience may be at a given time; and finally that enlightenment comes from the give and take, from the exchange of experiences and ideas. (LW 13: 296)

Education is a necessary component of every culture to socialize the young to become “robust trustees of its own resources and ideals” (MW 9: 14). From the perspective of democracy and education, it is important to distinguish between two “forms” or “poles” of socialization. On the one hand, we find social conditions and forces that work toward relatively narrow, unreflective adaptation to pre-existing social expectations, conditions, practices, routines, and institutions. On the other hand, the aim of democratic education is to provide experiences that are encouraging and empowering for full, active, reflective, critical, creative, competent, and self-determined membership and participation in social processes. It is especially important for educational philosophy as well as educational practice to consider the tensions and complex relations that exist between these two poles.

Every culture from the most pluralistic and democratic to the most dogmatic and totalitarian strives to culturally reproduce its beliefs and values. From the democratic point of view, however, cultural reproduction involves continuous and necessary efforts to reflect and critically transform inherited customs, habits, beliefs, and values. Reproduction is seen as the task of necessary cultural reconstruction because “every generation has to accomplish democracy over again for itself ... its very nature, its essence, is something that cannot be handed on from one person or one generation to another, but has to be worked out in terms of needs, problems and conditions of the [changing] social life of which ... we are a part” (LW 13: 298 f). Dewey argues that one of the most important tasks of philosophy and education lies, in this connection, in performing a “kind of intellectual disrobing” (LW 1: 40). Caught between the poles of education as uncritically adaptive and education as creatively reflective, we “cannot permanently divest ourselves of the intellectual habits we take on and wear when we assimilate the culture of our own time and place. But intelligent furthering of culture demands that we take some of them off, that we inspect them critically to see what they are made of and what wearing them does to us” (ibid.). He introduces a helpful

language game when he suggests that the very fulfillment of this task constitutes the difference between “individuals with minds” – socialized individuals in the more narrowly adaptive sense – and “individual minds” – more fully educated individuals as self-reflective and self-determined partakers in culture and society:

I say individual minds, not just individuals with minds. The difference between the two ideas is radical ... the whole history of science, art and morals proves that the mind that appears *in* individuals is not as such individual mind. The former is itself a system of belief, recognitions, and ignorances, of acceptances and rejections, of expectancies and appraisals of meanings which have been instituted under the influence of custom and tradition. (LW 1: 169-170; ital. in orig.)

The emergence and growth of “individual minds” – as a result of education – constitutes the contextual and always limited emancipation from more narrow forms of socialization. To put it differently, it represents the relative and always contextual freedom of thought that is a necessary condition for full and self-determined democratic participation. For Dewey, such freedom has more to it than just a negative side – i.e., the absence of constraints. Rather, it presupposes the constructive (creative), deconstructive (critical), and reconstructive (transformative) powers of individuals in interaction with other individuals, groups, and societies to deliberately shape experience and culture:

He knows little who supposes that freedom of thought is ensured by relaxation of conventions, censorships and intolerant dogmas. The relaxation supplies opportunity. But while it is a necessary it is not a sufficient condition. Freedom of thought denotes freedom of thinking; specific doubting, inquiring, suspense, creating and cultivating of tentative hypotheses, trials or experimentings that are unguaranteed and that involve risks of waste, loss, and error. Let us admit the case of the conservative; if we once start thinking no one can guarantee where we shall come out, except that many objects, ends and institutions are surely doomed. Every thinker puts some portion of an apparently stable world in peril and no one can wholly predict what will emerge in its place. (LW 1: 172; ital. in orig.)

Culture has us before we have it. Becoming an “individual mind” is a lifelong challenge of imaginative, reflective, and critical social self-creation. Otherwise, we are merely “individuals with minds” who think the thoughts of others, fulfill the expectations and uncritically perform the roles prescribed to us by the institutions and customs of our culture. This is an especially important challenge in the field of inclusive teacher education because only teachers who themselves have had sufficient opportunity for becoming “individual minds” will be able to develop, sustain, and reconstruct learning cultures that provide for creativity, critical self-reflection, and growth for all learners in the most generous and inclusive sense. This is a core tenet of inclusive education.

#### *Life in liquid modernity:*

Regarding the role of individuality in society, Bauman observes crucial changes between solid and liquid states of modernity. (Note 5) In the former solid period, individuality appeared in opposition to the massive structures of institutionalized life (like the Fordist factory) and potentially as a prey of heavy systems. In liquid times, by comparison, we live in a society of individuals. Individuality is taken for granted (individuality *de jure*). The danger is not so much that individuality gets lost in the mass, like it was before. Rather, the challenge and pressure is for individuals to make effective use of their individuality and release the potentials and opportunities inherent in their conditions of social life (see Bauman 2000: 25 ff). Bauman argues that this shift entails changed conditions for the task of emancipation in liquid modernity – that is, in Deweyan terms, the task of becoming individual minds.

Solid modernity “was a sworn enemy of contingency, variety, ambiguity, waywardness and idiosyncrasy, having declared on all such ‘anomalies’ a holy war of attrition; and it was individual freedom and autonomy that were commonly expected to be the prime casualties of the crusade.” (Bauman 2000: 25) Therefore the main emancipation project in solid modernity was to protect individuality against the totalizing powers of the state and other institutions. In liquid modernity, however, the relationship between individuality and the social order appears in a new light. Increasingly, individualization and individual responsibility appears as a constitutive element in the very social order. Bauman believes that the new problem and new danger attendant to this change is the gulf between what he calls “individuality *de jure*” and “individuality *de facto*”. Being an “individual *de jure* means having no one to blame for one’s own misery, seeking the causes of one’s own defeats nowhere except in one’s own indolence and sloth, and looking for no remedies other than trying harder and harder still.” (Ibid.: 38) However, trying hard and harder does not guarantee success in a society where not all individuals have sufficient conditions and resources for actualizing their potentials in ways that are emancipatory. “[T]here is a wide and growing gap between the condition of individuals *de jure* and their chances to become individuals *de facto* – that is, to gain control over their fate and make



the choices they truly desire.” (Ibid.: 39) This is the very challenge for emancipation: to transform autonomy *de jure* into *de facto* (see *ibid.*: 51).

If we consider these conditions under the perspective of democracy and education there are some crucial challenges that must be taken into account. In contrast to earlier times, there is at least a clear recognition that in the society of individuals the democratic claim to equity in education is essential. In actual practice, however, we observe in all democratic societies huge inequalities and even a growing gap between rich and poor that entails not only diversity, but also separation in education. This violates the fundamental democratic principles of equality and individuality that we discussed with Dewey above. Inclusive education must strive to counteract these tendencies. Otherwise it would betray the democratic value of participation for all. We here employ a comprehensive and generous understanding of inclusion as stated e.g., in 2011 by the Toronto District School Board (see Toronto 2011). Many international programs for equity in education focus on the following five principles or standards of participation and anti-discrimination:

- (1) Ethno-cultural Equity and Anti-racism
- (2) Gender Equity and Anti-sexism
- (3) Diversity in Sexual Orientations and Anti-homophobia
- (4) Socio-Economic Equity and Anti-classism
- (5) Equity for Persons with Disability (Note 6)

As Booth and Ainscow (2011: 9) insist: “Inclusion is about increasing participation for all children and adults. It is about supporting schools to become more responsive to the diversity of children’s backgrounds, interests, experience, knowledge and skills.” We illustrate and further specify some implications for teacher education by taking a closer look at the International Teacher Education Laboratory.

#### *Case Study:*

Our International Laboratory has a special focus on the task of emancipation and becoming individual minds as a core component of critical teacher education. We consider this task as being necessarily involved in the claim to educational inclusion. Following the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2012), we believe that the following four core values (Note 7) should be realized in inclusive teacher education. They form the basis of our concept and practice. The table indicates how these values are being integrated into the seminar concept:

<b>Four core values as basis for the ITEL-seminar concept</b>	
<b>Valuing Learner Diversity</b>	Students experience themselves in an integrative practice setting (for all students) Students’ develop their own questions concerning inclusive practices in a diverse (integrative) classroom
<b>Supporting All Learners</b>	The seminar includes students from all teacher education programs
<b>Working With Others</b>	The students work in and with international learning teams
<b>Personal Professional Development</b>	Students work with inclusive activities based on an e-portfolio for sustained reflection and growth (reflective practitioner) Students work on their own concepts of being teachers (working theories) (see Amrhein/Kricke 2013)

Previous findings (Amrhein/Kricke 2013) demonstrate that students’ attitudes on inclusive education change slowly. Moreover, students’ attitudes towards inclusion and teacher’s profession can even deteriorate as a result of difficult

or negative experiences with mentors who are not able to adequately deal with diversity in the classroom. We see the international dimension of our seminar as a resource to counteract such developments. The Cologne students get into dialogue about inclusive values with teacher students and educational experts from all over the world via skype, supported by a virtual e-portfolio-platform. International ERASMUS-students, too, take part in the Cologne course. We encourage all students to work on the same reflecting tools and key questions. The aim is to widen the perspectives about becoming a teacher in inclusive developments and to support the students in the process of becoming aware of their attitudes in consideration of contrasting perspectives. Previous studies have shown the importance of such reflection for inclusive teacher education: it could be shown that attitudes, beliefs, and values in initial teacher education play a key role (see Avramidis/Norwich 2002) for developing critical inclusive pedagogies that value learner diversity. What is at stake here is the furthering and development of inclusive attitudes in correspondence with necessary reconstructions of institutional and practical settings.

In our ITTEL, the Cologne teacher students are doing their practice period in a so-called “integrative” setting. During these internships, they can explore themselves in their roles as observers, participants, and agents and connect these experiences with their own biographical backgrounds and visions as becoming teachers. Among other things, the students develop their own question concerning inclusive practices in a diverse (integrative) classroom. These questions then constitute starting points for more comprehensive research perspectives for the following practice periods. The intention of this procedure is to support teacher students in developing their own roles as educational researchers in practices. This accords well with Dewey’s understanding of the role of teachers in a democracy and the necessary connection between education as (scientific) research and education as practice in the role of the professional teacher:

For these teachers are the ones in direct contact with pupils and hence the ones through whom the results of scientific findings finally reach students. They are the channels through which the consequences of educational theory come into the lives of those at school. I suspect that if these teachers are mainly channels of reception and transmission, the conclusions of science will be badly deflected and distorted ... I am inclined to believe that this state of affairs is a chief cause for the tendency ... to convert scientific findings into recipes to be followed. (LW 13: 24)

To say it with Donald Schoen (1983), the aim is to provide opportunities for the students to become “reflective practitioners”. After their experiences in integrative settings, the students reflect on their observations, participations, and actions. Here we often encounter critical statements from them regarding the claims to and practices of “integration”, respectively inclusion. The following is a rather typical example, especially from students who wish to become subject teachers on the upper secondary school level, mainly in the so-called “*Gymnasium*.” Many of these students haven’t had any experiences and imaginations about what inclusion might look like in these schools. Against this background, their practice phase combined with the participation in ITTEL can be seen as a crucial experience that invites reflection, learning, and growth. But it is often difficult for these students that there are tensions and even contradictions between the claims to integration/inclusion, on the one hand, and the institutional practices of integration/inclusion during their internship, on the other. For instance, one student reported after his practice phase:

*“During my practice phase I could not observe any aspects of inclusion. For me, it was alarming how strong selection was compared to integration, especially for a school that claims to be very inclusive.”*

Likewise, there are also tensions and contradictions between claims to inclusion and the student’s own habitual ways of thinking and their abilities to imagine new ways of schooling. Another student self-critically observed after having done his practical phase:

*“For me, it is hard to overcome my habitual and deep-seated pre-occupation with performance and achievement. Even though I wish for an inclusive society, I lack the belief in its practical feasibility, not only as a vision, but as a successful example.”*

We try to support our teacher students in reconstructing these and other habitual ways and nurturing abilities of imagination and critical thinking by embedding their primary experiences from practice (internship) into the dialogical and international seminar setting. Here, they can elaborate their experiences by seeing and reflecting them from self- and distant-observer perspectives. This reflection process follows the Deweyan idea of secondary experience, in which new visions of being a teacher can grow.

In the whole process, we hope to provide students with sufficient opportunities and challenges for critically addressing their own school-backgrounds and becoming individual minds in the sense of self-critical and reflective

teachers with imaginative visions for working in inclusive classrooms. To put it in a nutshell, we quote from Willingham (2002) who formulates a principle that well accords with the overall Deweyan approach: “We seek to train creative problem solvers, not parrots. Insofar as we can prevent students from absorbing knowledge in a rote form, we should do so.”

#### 4. Democracy: Diversity, Participation, and Transparency as Necessary Conditions of Inclusion

*Philosophy of education:*

“*[T]he relation between democracy and education is a reciprocal one*” (John Dewey).

In the seventh chapter of *Democracy and Education* (see especially MW 9: 89-92), Dewey proposes two general criteria for evaluating the democratic quality of groups, communities, or societies. Both criteria are of fundamental importance and even today still seem appropriate for assessing the internal and external conditions and challenges of democratic living together. They give direction and orientation for the development of more democratic interactions on all levels of social life (see for the following Garrison/Neubert/Reich 2012: 77-107).

The first criterion is internal: “How numerous and varied are the interests which are consciously shared?” (MW 9: 89) The question addresses the necessary open-mindedness for diversity of interests within a given group or society. It implies that democracy must rely “upon the recognition of mutual interests as a factor in social control.” (Ibid.: 92) This criterion interprets democracy as a pluralistic and participatory way of living together. Among other things, it stands against uniformity, one-sided social and political hegemonies, elite rule, and the dangers of totalitarianism.

The second criterion is external: “How full and free is the interplay with other forms of association?” (Ibid.: 89) The question addresses the quality and extent of exchange, interaction, and communication between different social groups, communities, or societies. It points to the necessity of continuously readjusting and reconstructing social habits, practices, and institutions “through meeting the new situations produced by varied intercourse.” (Ibid.: 92) This criterion interprets democracy as an open and evolving society. Among other things, it stands against stagnation, ignorance, jingoism, isolationism, and the dangers of unilateral power.

If democracy relies on action, participation, and communication, this means that it is necessarily interconnected with education. Belief in the potentials of education is an inevitable element in the democratic faith. For it is only in the experiences of individuals in communities that democracy as a way of life can prosper and grow and be enriched by the multitude of individual contributions. Dewey suggests that “the relation between democracy and education is a reciprocal one, a mutual one, and vitally so.” (LW 13: 294) He insists that democracy “is itself an educational principle, an educational measure and policy.” (Ibid.) In the final chapter of his 1927 book *The Public and Its Problems*, he argues that the prosperity and growth of local communities – i.e., communities based on face-to-face communication or other forms of direct personal encounters, today also made possible by multiple forms of new social media – is a necessary condition for the democratic welfare at large.

This bottom-up view on the necessary everyday practices of democratic communication is based on the belief that the educative potentialities of democracy can only be sufficiently actualized when it is experienced through direct forms of partaking in communities of shared interests that cooperatively solve joint problems. Local communities in neighborhoods, schools, social groups, networks, social and political movements, and so on can provide opportunities for direct democratic involvement. They can articulate the multitude and diversity of contextualized experiences by which democracy is enlivened. They are backbone of civil society. At best, they turn democracy into a firsthand experience of learning and educational growth that of itself shows its advantages as a way of life for all who participate. (Garrison/Neubert/Reich 2012: 85-86)

Democracy and education in the Deweyan sense need transparency as a necessary condition of success. It is obvious that both criteria of democracy discussed above rely on transparency as a necessary condition of their realization. Actually, we might even regard transparency as a third criterion in addition to the other two. For in all modern societies, solid or liquid, the recognition of democratic pluralism and the realization of effective democratic participation and exchange are put at risk by social divisions, classisms, separations, exclusions, and compartmentalizations of life that block the free, full, and transparent communication of thoughts, experiences, ideas, and interests. In *The Public and Its Problems*, one of his most influential studies in political philosophy, Dewey extensively discusses the democratic need of transparency in the Great Society of the industrial age. (Note 8) Without sufficient transparency, individuals cannot identify, recognize, and articulate their “numerous and varied” shared interests and make them effective in social life. Nor can they – as partakers in groups, communities, or societies – have “full and free” exchange or “interplay with other forms of association” (op. cit.). (Note 9) From a Deweyan perspective, communication is at the heart of democracy – in the sense of a personal way of life as well as regarding

the necessary institutions, structures, and forms of social organization. Therefore, participation, diversity, and transparency cannot be separated from each other but are mutually interdependent preconditions of democracy and education.

*Life in liquid modernity:*

The tensional relation that Dewey already observed between democracy and capitalism is a continual characteristic of modernity. In the specific context of liquid modernity, Bauman observes that the two core tendencies of privatization and deregulation have produced conditions of “light capitalism” (Bauman 2000: 149) – “light” in the sense of being more dynamic, fluid, consumer orientated, and flexible than the “heavy capitalism” (ibid.: 145) that was typical of the Fordist age. This change has deeply affected all human relationships and bonds. First of all, it applies to the very relationship that exists between capital and labor. Bauman metaphorically describes the shift as a passage from marriage to co-habitation: “The present-day ‘liquefied’, ‘flowing’, dispersed, scattered and deregulated version of modernity may not portend divorce and the final break of communication, but it does augur the advent of light, free-floating capitalism, marked by the disengagement and loosening of ties linking capital and labour.” (Ibid.: 149) And what is more, Bauman observes that light capitalism and the almost omnipresent seductions and imperatives of living in a consumer society also deeply affect all other human affairs, relationships, and bonds in liquid modernity (see also Bauman 2003):

... the policy of deliberate ‘precarization’ conducted by the operators of labour markets finds itself to be aided and abetted (with its effects reinforced) by life politics, whether adopted deliberately or embraced by default. Both converge on the same result: the fading and wilting, falling apart and decomposing of human bonds, of communities and of partnerships ... bonds and partnerships tend to be viewed and treated as things meant to be consumed, not produced; they are subject to the same criteria of evaluation as all other objects of consumption. (Bauman 2000: 163)

According to this analysis, the “decomposing of human bonds” and communities is a by-product of the more general growing precariousness of social life that arises from neoliberal competition on a global scale in our time. Bauman observes that in liquid modernity, precariousness is “the mark of the preliminary condition of all the rest: the livelihood, and particularly the most common sort of livelihood, that which is claimed on the ground of work and employment.” (Ibid.: 160) Livelihood, for many, has become more and more fragile and reliable only on a short-term basis. Flexibility is a core demand of light capitalism. Markets have become more dynamic, fluid, and globally interdependent. More and more people have to adjust their lives to them. “No jobs are guaranteed, no positions are foolproof, no skills are of lasting utility, experience and know-how turn into liability as soon as they become assets ... Livelihood, social position, acknowledgement of usefulness and the entitlement to self-dignity may all vanish together, overnight and without notice.” (Bauman 1997: 22) Life under liquid conditions therefore increasingly involves the continuous and deliberate effort of new beginnings, transformations, reconstructions. What seems to be too stable does not sell for long: “The most acute and stubborn worries that haunt such a life are the fears of being caught napping, of failing to catch up with fast moving events ... of missing the moment that calls for a change of track before crossing the point of no return” (Bauman 2005: 2).

*Case study:*

In our ITEL, we deliberately encounter and respond to conditions and challenges of liquid modernity as part of the varied experiences that students bring to the seminar. We try to implement the ideas of diversity, participation, and transparency in multiple ways. The intention is to use the advantages and counteract the dangers of liquid life by giving students the best opportunities possible to develop diverse and sustainable communities of learning. This means that students meet and cooperate across differences concerning teacher education programs, semesters, countries, backgrounds, experiences, etc. The language used in class is English, but students can use their mother languages whenever they feel they can express themselves more authentically that way (e.g., in written tasks). For the cooperation in international teams we have also developed inclusive activities where non-verbal elements serve as keys for communication in order to overcome language barriers. These can be linguistic metaphors (see Black-Hawkins/Amrhein 2014), painted images, pantomime, or role-plays and many other forms of interactive methods. The advantage of this approach is to support students in developing and enlarging their capabilities of participating in reflective, constructive, and critical ways in diverse communities of learning with others. In a Deweyan sense, we may say that the ITEL represents a kind of educational “local community” in a global world. This means that it is based on direct face-to-face encounters across differences and at the same time opens horizons beyond local, regional, national, cultural, social, economic, and other borders. The ITEL-slogan could be: “*Think globally, learn locally!*”

In the laboratory, we encourage students to articulate their own thoughts and experiences concerning learning, teaching, developing, communicating, and growing in an inclusive setting. This articulation helps them to become aware of their own beliefs, positions, and biographical backgrounds as self-observers. At the same time, they share their experiences and thoughts with (international) peers and experts who respond to them as distant-observers. One example would be the reflection through a skype-meeting for a limited time of, say, one or two hours (or e-mail conversation, blog etc.) with international peers and experts. Students share their ideas about being a “good” teacher in an inclusive classroom. As self-observers in conversation with distant-observers the students thus get valuable, professional, and diverse responses and resources for a multi-perspectival and contextualized understanding of inclusion. After the conversation, we provide the students with reflection-impulses to record what they have learnt. Such impulses could be, for example: “*After the skype meeting, I think/ feel/ realize/ wonder about/ ask myself/ know...*”; “*I have learnt ...*”; “*The most important realization that I have taken from the conversation is ...*”; “*I have developed further/ deepened/ improved ...*”; “*For my professionalization as a teacher this means ...*”; “*However, I do not know enough about ...*”; “*Which can be seen in...*”; “*My understanding of inclusion is ...*”; “*My understanding of a ‘good’ teacher is ...*”.

This method includes the experience of meeting with strangers across differences. As Bauman observes, encountering strangers in cooperative and constructive ways is a crucial criterion of civility in times of liquid modernity: “The main point about civility is ... the ability to interact with strangers without holding their strangeness against them and without pressing them to surrender it or to renounce some or all the traits that have made them strangers in the first place.” (Bauman 2000: 104 f) Dewey believed that being able to communicate and collaborate across differences is a core requirement for living in a democracy: “To cooperate by giving differences a chance to show themselves because of the belief that the expression of difference is not only a right of the other persons but is a means of enriching one’s own life-experience, is inherent in the democratic personal way of life” (LW 14: 228). It is especially important for teachers of tomorrow who will work in contexts of diversity in many ways throughout their professional lives.

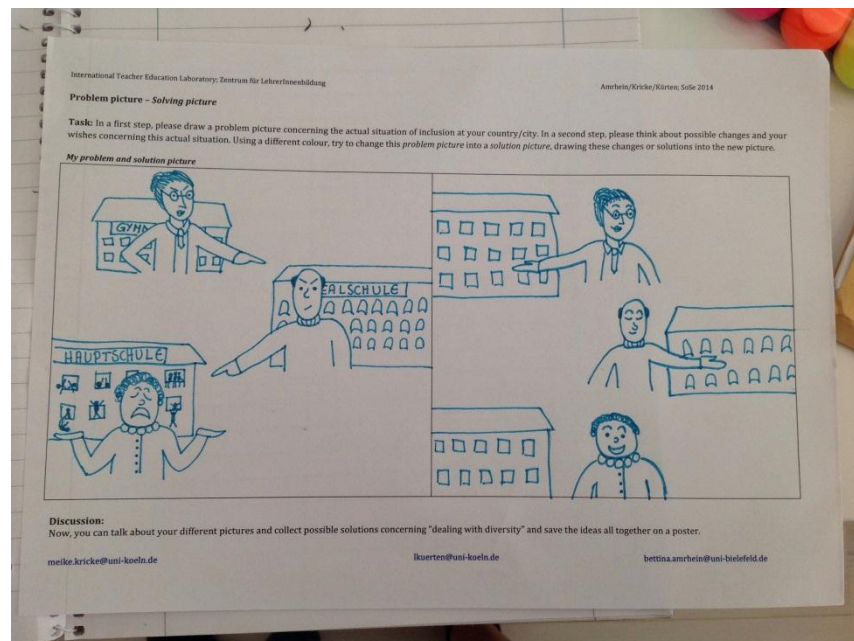
To do this in a most efficient way, they must be able to construct and develop their own communities of cooperation and learning that are characterized by high degrees of participation, diversity, and transparency. The intention is to help them become professional teachers who have expertise in creating cultures of communication and learning that respond to the needs of democracy and education in liquid modernity. This includes responding to diverse needs of diverse learners as well as cooperating in multi-professional teams. It means, of course, that education be seen – with Dewey – as an art as well as a science (see LW 5: 3-12). On both levels, democracy in education must be reinvented and reconstructed in times of liquid modernity. Pretty much in a Deweyan spirit, Bauman observes that a democratic community must be understood as “an emergent unity which is a joint achievement of the agents engaged in self-identification pursuits, a unity which is an outcome, not an *a priori* given condition, of shared life, a unity put together through negotiation and reconciliation, not the denial, stifling or smothering out of differences” (Bauman 2000: 178).

As far as we can see, such communities constitute the best chances possible to give teacher students the necessary orientations for connecting their own background experiences, imaginations, and visions with the realities of living under liquid conditions. Especially, the role of being a teacher must be reinvented and reconstructed as students become aware of the necessity of continual reconstruction in education. Therefore, the whole complex of experience, communication, learning, and reflection connected to the ITEL converges in the use of e-portfolios to collect, select, and reflect material for further development and life-long learning. Here the students begin to construct their own foci and golden threads for their continuous development as professional teachers. We invite them to develop and formulate their own creative, critical, and transformative perspectives for reflecting on their professional learning and development. In combination with the working theories (pre/post), we work with an assignment for the evaluation of personal development and growth, the so-called success-and-growth task. Based on general goals (standards) in the official teacher education curriculum, the students define the personal goals they would like to achieve during the next practice phase. At the end of the course, they draw a balance: “*Looking at the official as well as my own personal goals: What did I learn? In which further respects would I like to grow as an inclusive teacher?*”

Last not least, we understand the ITEL in accord with Dewey as a space for learning that is not contained but open to the contexts of social life outside the classroom or school or university. The idea is that inclusion is a comprehensive social claim of democracy and education that cannot be limited to school walls or teacher education classes. Therefore we invite experts from social professions, like social workers, cultural workers etc. to share their experiences and thoughts with the teacher students. They give profound and valuable insights and provide concrete examples of best practices in inclusion in the larger social life. Thereby the students get a more profound

understanding of what is implied in the idea that inclusion in the generous social sense means more than only practices in school around the integration of handicapped pupils (see Lindmeier 2008). For instance, we invited an expert from the *Cologne Lebenshilfe* – an organization that takes care of the inclusion of handicapped people in all areas of life like family, work, recreation, school, education, culture and art, sports and activities. We hope that the students will be prepared this way to conceive of their future role as not only teachers in a narrow sense, but also cultural workers that mediate democracy and education between the school and society.

Another inclusive activity consists of the so-called “problem-solving picture.” One of our teacher students used this activity to construct a very instructive picture that aptly represents the need of reconstruction and the necessary change of the role of teacher from instructor and representative of the respective school to a mediator between the school and society who welcomes diversity of experiences to the school. On the left side of this picture, one finds a caricature of the hierarchical multi-tracking German school system with its tendency of snobbism, pointing depreciatively down to the next lower level in order to manifest one’s own superiority.



Student’s example from the ITEL

The caricature actually has a serious content, because the vast majority of our teacher students have themselves been socialized in this hierarchical and exclusive setting. This very situation constitutes a paradoxical challenge for the turn to inclusion today. As with most paradoxes, it takes a leap – an existential as well as logical and interpretive leap – to get from the left side of our picture to the right. Among other things, the ITEL is dedicated to encouraging and assisting teacher students in taking the leap and thereby themselves reconstructing their experiences, perspectives, capacities, beliefs, imaginations, and visions of being a teacher. This may help them grow as reflective, creative, critical, and transformative practitioners in a lifelong learning process. We close by quoting from Dewey, once again, who concisely defined educational growth as “that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience” (MW 9: 82)

### 5. Education in Liquid Modernity: Challenges for Theory and Practice

All the way through this essay, we have discussed multiple aspects and implications in and for education in liquid modernity. It remains to conclude with a brief summary of some of the most important consequences for inclusive teacher education programs. The case study serves as a model of illustration and inspires new ways of reflection concerning inclusive education and the development of professional attitudes and competences for future teachers. For example our discussion has shown that the traditional Deweyan concept of democratic growth in local communities as a necessary condition for the prosperity of democracy at large needs to be reconsidered and reconstructed regarding the characteristic challenges and opportunities of our time. First, we have argued that such

communities today need to be local and global in the same time. The global appears in the local anyway. This is the challenge of globalization for democracy and education. At the same time we now have tools and media to overcome distances in new ways and reconstruct the global in the local and the local in the global in education.

Second, our discussion has suggested that is imperative in our time that teachers develop increased skills of temporarily constructing heterogeneous communities of learning in changing contexts of interactions with colleagues in multi-professional teams, learners, experts and members of the larger society. In Dewey's time, local communities were relatively stable and for the most part given by the social circumstances of solid modernity. Dewey was a pioneer in envisioning the democratic need of learners being able to construct their own communities of learning. Today this vision has become even more a challenge than in his day. To enable students to achieve this task for teachers of today and tomorrow they need to get prepared with innovative and creative forms of using media and to develop democratic attitudes of civility by interacting in constructive ways with strangers and across differences in contexts of diversity.

In a fundamental sense, then, educational theory and philosophy in Dewey's wake needs to reconstruct and reconsider the conditions and challenges of local communities in relation of democracy and education. The needs to construct and continually reconstruct such communities under liquid and increasingly opportunities to critically reflect on the inevitable ambivalence and incompleteness of such communities. This helps to avoid the dangers of limited and exclusive communities and insofar increases the chances of growth in diversity. On the other hand it poses new challenges of living with ambivalence and the growing precariousness of human bonds in liquid modernity.

Against this background, a critical reconstruction of teacher education in the wake of Dewey includes among other things:

1. teachers and learners as learning designers,
2. teachers as researchers,
3. life-long learning through experiences,
4. self-critical awareness of the connections between biographical background and professional attitudes and visions,
5. multi-perspectival reflection against the background of biographical experiences as part of professionalization,
6. awareness of the quality and influence of cultures of learning and communication,
7. multi-professional cooperation and international teamwork,
8. appreciating diversity of learners and ways of learning,
9. facilitating participation of all as a precondition for growth.

Looking ahead, there are many concrete challenges educational research connected with this necessary reconstruction. Dewey's perspective on teachers as researchers as investigators again gives us a clue here for where to start. In addition to a critically and self-reflective evaluation of practices we need research programs that focus on long-term developments in teacher's attitudes, practices and beliefs connected to the experiences in local and global contexts.

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Citations of the works of John Dewey are to the critical edition, *The Collected Works of John Dewey, 1882-1953*, published by Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale and Edwardsville.

Volume and page numbers follow the initials of the series. For instance, MW 9: 1. Abbreviations for the volumes used are:

EW 1-5 = *The Early Works* (1882-1898), Vol. 1-5

MW 1-15 = *The Middle Works* (1899-1924), Vol. 1-15

LW 1-17 = *The Later Works* (1925-1953), Vol. 1-17

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## Notes

Note 1. See <http://ukoeln.de/9CDZX>. The project had been funded by innovation funds (*Qualitätsverbesserungsmittel*, QVM) of the University of Cologne.

Note 2. A constructivist approach to inclusive education can be found in Reich (2014).

Note 3. All references to Dewey in this essay use the Collected Works with EW (for Early Works), MW (for Middle Works), and LW (for later works), followed by the respective volume number. For instance, LW 13 refers to Later Works, vol. 13.

Note 4. Regarding the latter, there are up to ten different kinds of further separation and specification, depending on the regulations in different German federal states.

Note 5. See more explicitly: Neubert/Reich (2011); Garrison/Neubert/Reich (2012).

Note 6. For an extensive interpretation of these five standards from a Deweyan perspective of democracy and education see Garrison/Neubert/Reich (2016), especially chapter 9. The authors there also provide a critical discussion of perspectives and shortcomings in Dewey on issues of social class, race, gender. For Dewey and classism see also Westbrook (1991), for Dewey and racism see Eldridge (2012), Neubert (2012b), for Dewey and

feminism see Seigfried (2002).

Note 7. See European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2012): <https://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion/profile>.

Note 8. The book is a penetrating critique of the actually existing social, economic, and political conditions of his time. Taking the conditions, challenges, and contradictions of living in the Great Society of the industrial age into view, he addresses the dangers of an “eclipse of the public” that impedes or even blocks comprehensive communication and deliberate participation of all and thereby puts the very democratic project at risk.

Note 9. Regarding the social conditions of life in his period, Dewey observes that the ties and bonds which hold men and women “together in action are numerous, tough and subtle. But they are invisible and intangible. We have the physical tools of communication as never before. The thoughts and aspirations congruous with them are not communicated, and hence are not common. Without such communication the public will remain shadowy and formless, seeking spasmodically for itself, but seizing and holding its shadow rather than its substance ... Our Babel is not one of tongues but of the signs and symbols without which shared experience is impossible.” (LW 2: 323-324)