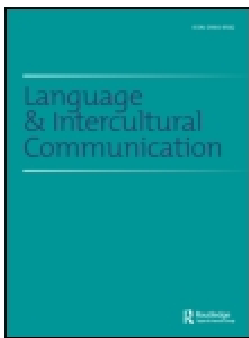

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Capabilities for intercultural dialogue

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The capabilities approach offers a valuable analytical lens for exploring the challenge and complexity of intercultural dialogue in contemporary settings. The central tenets of the approach, developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, involve a set of humanistic goals including the recognition that development is a process whereby people's freedoms are expanded, and in so doing, increasing the capabilities of individuals to lead valuable lives. How the construct of capabilities can be seen to work in practice is demonstrated here through a description and presentation of findings from an insider-practitioner case study concerning the teaching and learning of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in higher education and based on a critical cosmopolitan pedagogical approach. Evidence from the study indicates that cosmopolitan citizenship learning has a valued place in an ESOL multicultural classroom in which intercultural dialogue is fostered. A proposal is made to use the capabilities approach as a normative framework for social justice in the field of foreign language and intercultural education.

潜在能力アプローチは現代の異文化間対話が直面する問題やその複雑な構造を分析するための切り口を提供する。センとM.ヌスバウムの提唱したこのアプローチは、発見的ゴールを中心にしている。その発見的ゴールに含まれるものは、発展が人間の自由の拡大であり、それによって自己の潜在能力が増加する認識することなどである。本稿では、現実には潜在能力がどのように構築されるのかを大学での英語教育関係者および批評的国際教育アプローチの知見を元に論証した。その結果、世界的シティズンシップへの学習法は、異文化間の対話が発生する多文化教室で行われる英語教育にも応用されうることが明らかになった。本稿は外国語および異文化教育において社会正義に関する規範的枠組みを潜在能力アプローチとして使用することを提言する。

Keywords: agency; capabilities; cosmopolitan; critical pedagogy; freedom; functionings

Introduction

Higher education is viewed by many as a resource that is vital to the sustainability of democratic and civic life of the nation. Giroux (2002) points out that this democratic imperative is vital:

> because it is one of the few public spaces left where students can learn the power of questioning authority, recover the ideals of engaged citizenship, reaffirm the importance of the public good, and expand their capacities to make a difference. (Giroux, 2002, p. 450)

However, if we look at the activities and manifestations emanating from institutes of higher education today, what we see, more often than not, are demand-led curricula,

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responding to neoliberal imperatives, that focus on the instrumental dimension of education. Skills and learning outcomes take precedence over activities that engage with the heart, the senses and the imagination; in other words, the 'cultivation of humanity' (Nussbaum, 1997).

In this paper, I argue that the capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 1999) offers a valuable analytical lens for countering the neoliberal hegemonic turn and for exploring the challenge and complexity of intercultural dialogue. The central tenets of the approach involve a set of 'humanly rich goals' (Nussbaum, 2006b), which include the recognition that development is a process of 'expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy' (Sen, 1999, p. 3), and in so doing, thus expanding the capabilities of individuals 'to lead the kind of lives they value – and have reason to value' (Sen, 1999, p. 18). This is done by focusing on capabilities, otherwise known as valued beings and doings, for a life of flourishing. Lozano, Boni, Peris, and Hueso (2012), in an investigation of the differences between a 'skills' or 'competence' based approach with that of capabilities, highlight the fact that the former focus on the results or ends that an individual can achieve, whereas the capabilities approach places an emphasis on the freedom and agency that an individual has to be and to act. From this perspective, specific problems and demands of a given context (for example, responding to an economic crisis) are replaced by a more holistic approach in which ethically informed individual choice is paramount.

Nussbaum has written about the capabilities approach in conjunction with democratic citizenship in education (Nussbaum, 1997, 2006b), and in this context she advocates three main capabilities that inform human development: critical examination, affiliation and narrative imagination. Sen (2006) encourages intercultural dialogue that precludes the essentialising of individuals on ethnic or religious grounds but rather celebrates the multiplicity of identities (cf. Holliday, 2010). Sen (2006) also argues that multiculturalism that becomes in practice 'plural monoculturalism' poses challenges to intercultural dialogue and should be replaced by policy that 'focuses on the freedom of reasoning and decision-making, and celebrates diversity to the extent that it is as freely chosen as possible by the persons involved' (p. 150).

Cosmopolitanism posits a particular notion of global citizenship; as a means of 'building an ethically sound and politically robust conception of the proper basis of political community, and of the relations among communities' (Held, 2005, p. 10). It could be argued that cosmopolitanism, given its focus on democratic equality (Bertram, 2005), is closely related to the capabilities approach concerning issues pertaining to diversity, equality and justice. As such, the cosmopolitan construct, when used in conjunction with the capabilities approach, can offer more nuanced ways of analysing instrumental freedoms in spheres related to global citizenship.

Central tenets of the capabilities approach

The capabilities approach, as conceived by Sen (1999), sees development in terms of freedom. This freedom, it is suggested, has at its heart human agency, that is, an ability to act as an individual and bring about change based on one's own values and objectives (p. 19). According to Sen, agency work cannot be perceived in isolation. It is constrained by social, political and economic factors and these factors must be borne in mind when looking to develop and support agency. Walker and Unterhalter (2007) call this construct 'ethical individualism' (p. 2).

As capabilities are theoretical or 'counterfactual' constructs (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007, p. 16) and not directly or easily assessed, Sen introduces the term *functioning* to

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describe the valuable beings and doings that are made possible through the availability of a capability or set of capabilities. Thus, according to Sen, a 'person's capability refers to the alternative combinations of functionings that are feasible for her to achieve' (Sen, 1999, p. 75). An example that he gives, and is often quoted (Alkire & Deneulin, 2009; Robeyns, 2003) is that of two people who are starving. Person 'a' might choose to starve as a form of religious or political fasting, whereas person 'b' might starve because of a lack of access to food. While both persons experience the same deprivation, only in the case of the latter can it be said that there is capability deprivation, as 'b' does not have the freedom to choose. This notion of freedom and choice is central to all Sen's concerns around capability enhancement and functioning and the opportunity to live a life in the fullest possible way.

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Nussbaum's capability lists

Sen and Nussbaum's ways of interpreting the capabilities approach diverge when it comes to an iteration of capabilities and functionings. Sen (1999) describes the development of capabilities in terms of the expansion of freedoms and, while he does give examples of functionings to illustrate a point, he prefers to leave the approach as broadly framed as possible so that those who work with it can have greater scope to make it their own, in the light of their own context. The means for arriving at such specification are through public reasoning and democratic deliberation.

Nussbaum, however, favours the creation of a list of central capabilities so that individuals, groups, organisations and governments can use it to evaluate their norms and practices accordingly. Nussbaum advocates that a list, or set of universal political principles, be underwritten by constitutions (Nussbaum, 2000), akin to the referencing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for moral guidance by many nation states. She thus aims to develop 'a partial theory of justice' (Robeyns, 2003, p. 24). This is underpinned by the question 'What does a life worthy of human dignity require?' (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 32).

Nussbaum emphasises the fact that her list is provisional and subject to change through debate and rational consideration, and also that it had evolved through a process that involved consultation with many people. The list is based on a 'political overlapping consensus' (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 14) and should continue to do so.

Before looking at the list, it should be pointed out that all the capabilities listed are based on two overarching capabilities that suffuse the rest. These are 'practical reason' and 'affiliation', and Nussbaum explains that, following Aristotelian, Kantian and Marxist philosophies, these capabilities set individuals apart from animals and mark them as being truly human. Nussbaum's list of central capabilities (Figure 1), expressed as functionings, is useful to begin to see what a capabilities rich landscape might look like.

Although Sen (2005) does not advocate a central list of capabilities, he does, however, refer to a set of 'basic' capabilities for survival. His work on the Human Development Index (HDI) with Mahbub ul Haq is a case in point. Sen points out that he is not against lists per se; he has, in fact, drawn up lists for the HDI, for example, but that he 'must stand up against a grand mausoleum to one fixed and final list of capabilities' (p. 337). He also says that the hierarchical nature of a list can be misleading, giving prominence to some capabilities over others.

When we take both Sen's and Nussbaum's theoretical views together, they can be seen as a complementary set of constructs that provide a framework of evaluation for an

Central Human Functional Capabilities

1. Life
2. Bodily Health
3. Bodily Integrity
4. Senses, Imagination, and Thought
5. Emotions
6. Practical Reason
7. Affiliation
8. Other Species
9. Play
10. Control over One's Environment

Figure 1. Nussbaum's list of central human functional capabilities.

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enriched quality of life. Freedom, agency and capabilities work together in multi-dimensional ways to inform how the lives of individuals and, by extension, of society can be enhanced.

Three central capabilities for education

Nussbaum has written widely about the capabilities approach in conjunction with democratic citizenship in education (Nussbaum, 1997, 2002b, 2006b, 2011). In this context, she advocates three main capabilities that inform human development: (1) critical examination, (2) affiliation and (3) narrative imagination.

The first, the capacity for *critical examination* is in the spirit of Socrates' 'The examined life'. This concept is present in pedagogical approaches that engage with critical theory (e.g. Barnett, 1997; Freire, 2005; Giroux, 1992; Guilherme, 2002; Pennycook, 2001; Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004), where educators are called on to move beyond recognition to action.

The second capability for democratic or world citizenship is that of *affiliation*, which Nussbaum describes as 'human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern' (Nussbaum 2006b, p. 389). This capability is central to intercultural studies and cosmopolitan citizenship.

The third capability is *the narrative imagination*. It refers to the capacity to walk in other people's shoes, imagining how they live and is ideally cultivated through literature and the arts, which both Dewey and Tagore advocated. Nussbaum says that freedom is at the heart of these three 'Tagorian capacities' (p. 392). This claim brings her more strongly in line with Sen's approach. Narrative accounts are used widely in intercultural education to elucidate the 'transcultured self' (Parry, 2003), for example, Kramsch (2009) and Ros i Solé (2004).

Together, these three capabilities can be seen to have a direct relevance to the field of education, and resonate particularly well with the field of foreign language pedagogy, given its concern with the exploration of self and otherness through language, literature, interculturality and translation.

The capabilities approach and interculturalism

I turn, now, to examine Sen and Nussbaum's exposition of the capabilities approach pertaining to culture, in particular, to interculturalism. Sen's contribution rests firmly on the belief that, while there are different norms and practices in a diverse range of settings across the globe, it is 'dangerous' and 'fallacious' (Sen, 1999, p. 232) to make cultural

claims for a given region. All cultures have been influenced from elsewhere. For example, if one looks at ancient philosophies and writings, one can see echoes of the same sentiments regarding citizenship values and leading the good life in both the east and the west. Sen thus affirms the validity of cultural diversity, a value that Nussbaum also strongly shares, as is manifest in her writings on the cultivation of humanity, capabilities and social justice (Nussbaum, 1997, 2000, 2002c, 2006a, 2006b, 2011).

In defence of her list of 10 central capabilities for the construction of a theory of basic social justice, Nussbaum (2011) focuses on constructs such as 'human dignity', 'threshold' and 'political liberalism' to support her approach. She rebuts claims of cultural imperialism in relation to her list, saying that, to begin with, the CA comprises scholars from all over the world and that the two founding figures come from different cultural traditions (Sen from India and she from the USA). Like Sen, she underlines the heterogeneity inherent in cultures and societies thus:

> More generally, as we ponder the whole issue of pluralism and cultural values, we should bear in mind that no culture is a monolith. All cultures contain a variety of voices, and frequently what passes for 'the' tradition of a place is simply the view of the most powerful members of the culture, who have had more access to writing and political expression… Once we understand this point, it is very difficult to think of traditional values as having any normative authority at all: tradition gives us only a conversation, a debate, and we have no choice but to evaluate the different positions within it. The Capabilities Approach suggests that we do so using the idea of human dignity for all as our guide. (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 107)

Sen and Nussbaum's elaborations of the CA, while they might diverge at certain points, offer a rich paradigm and set of analytical tools for the development of capabilities for intercultural dialogue, centred on notions of freedom, agency, opportunities and valuable 'beings and doings' that individuals, wherever they live, can aspire to for a life worthy of living. As the approach is underpinned by ethical individualism, there is a strong connection here with theories of cosmopolitan citizenship, which Nussbaum also advocates in her writings, as discussed in the next section.

Cosmopolitan citizenship

The Greek philosopher, Diogenes, alleged founder of the Cynic movement, when asked where he came from, replied, 'I am a *kosmou politês'* (world citizen) (Nussbaum, 2002b, p. 6). In this account, he thus appears to eschew local familial and civic bonds in favour of a bond with humanity. A century later, in ca. 300 BC, the Stoics were the first to develop a comprehensive cosmopolitan philosophy which continues to influence cosmopolitan thinking today (Papastergiadis, 2012). They put forward the following four principles: (1) the polis should be replaced by the whole of humanity as a community to which the individual belongs, (2) human rights should not be bounded by geopolitical spheres, (3) a non-hierarchical vision of cultural value should be promoted and (4) reflexivity should be encouraged through an engagement and open exchange with cultural others.

Nussbaum (2002b), in her study of Stoic philosophy, cautions that to be a citizen of the world does not mean one should give up allegiance to local ties; such identifications are a great source of richness in life and are to be upheld and cherished. She demonstrates this through a schema developed by the Stoics to show the relationship between the individual and different allegiances (See Figure 2), which places the individual in the centre of a set of concentric rings. Each ring represents affiliations, e.g. immediate and

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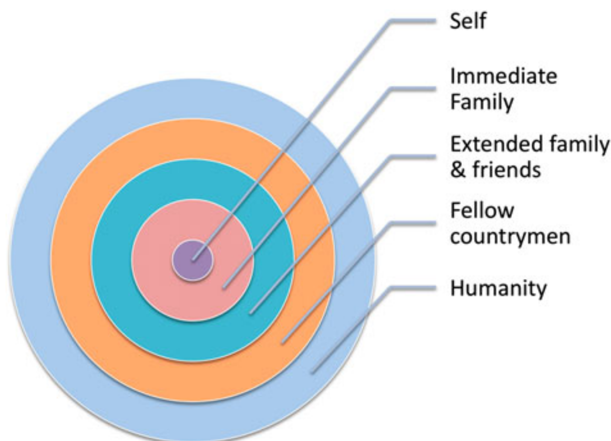

Figure 2. Stoic vision of cosmopolitanism (my interpretation).

extended family, neighbours, local groups, etc., in ever widening circles. The final circle represents humanity as a whole. The task, as citizen of the world, is to draw these circles towards the centre, and through the overlapping of rings, to show that humans living on our periphery should be accorded the same respect and compassion as those close by (Hierocles, cited Nussbaum, 2002b, p. 9).

Nussbaum (2002a, 2002b), basing her arguments on the Graeco–Roman scholars and the Kantian legacy the Western world has inherited, advocates a broadening of school curricula to reflect global as well as local concerns. Her call for a move to a cosmopolitan mind-set is based on a premise that national boundaries are arbitrary and exclude those natural ties and bonds that exist on other levels of society; she cites examples of religious, linguistic, ethnic, gender and race affiliations in this context. Nussbaum argues that it does not make sense to identify oneself solely with national or patriotic narratives, especially as they can result in a type of 'jingoism' that is detrimental to the human condition.

The field of second language learning does not abound with examples of global citizenship learning; however, there are some notable exceptions (Starkey, 2011). The fact that second language pedagogy has moved to embrace cross-cultural and intercultural communication in later years means that it plays an increasingly important role in promoting understanding of people from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, as well as fostering a greater awareness of learners' own culture and identity.

Other dimensions of global citizenship learning, such as those put forward by Noddings (2005) including economic and social justice, well-being of the physical environment, social and cultural diversity (including intellectual) and educating for peace are addressed, to some extent, by Pennycook (2001), Guilherme (2002, 2007) and Byram (2008) but are otherwise largely absent from much of the foreign language pedagogy literature. Guilherme (2002) advocates a multi-perspective approach to language teaching and learning, one that includes human rights education and education for democratic citizenship. She points out that language educators need to be educated about human rights and democratic citizenship themselves if they are to be seen as responsible, in part, for the preparation of democratic global citizens and intercultural speakers. Guilherme's work is complemented by a study undertaken by Jackson (2011), indicating that the

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development of cosmopolitan subjectivities can be transformative for the individuals concerned.

How the constructs of capabilities and cosmopolitan citizenship can be seen to work in practice is demonstrated in the next part of this paper, through the description and presentation of findings from an insider-practitioner case study concerning the teaching and learning of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in higher education in which the following research question is posited; 'In what ways can the language classroom be seen to contribute to the formation of learners' cosmopolitan and learning identities, which affect their capability to live and act in the world?' Evidence from the study indicates that cosmopolitan citizenship learning has a valued place in an ESOL multicultural classroom and a proposal is made to use the capabilities approach as a normative framework for social justice in the field of foreign language and intercultural education.

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The study

The research inquiry at the centre of this study, based on critical theory, could be viewed as a quest for social transformation in that it begins with a language-learning classroom in which students are encouraged to deal with cosmopolitan ideals, giving rise to a possible scenario where engagement with the world is shaped by social justice. These aims are underpinned by notions of power, participation and pedagogy (Crosbie, 2013).

The study is a form of critical participatory action research (CPAR) or, equally, *interrupted* critical action research, in that one particular cycle in an action research model (constituting a teaching semester) is foregrounded for analysis. As I have continued to teach the module on an annual basis since data were collected in 2006, I continue the analysis, albeit in a less rigorous way, and make incremental adjustments accordingly.

Research was conducted over the course of the spring semester. I adopted the role of 'Researcher as *Bricoleur'* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 4), a metaphor that refers to the creation of a patchwork quilt from different materials; in the case of qualitative research, of drawing together different, eclectic texts to create a unified whole. In my case I draw on a range of methods that add 'rigour, breadth, complexity, richness and depth' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 5) to the study. Rather than seeing the use of diverse methods as a means of achieving triangulation, or fixed validity, I favour the concept of *crystallisation*, put forward by Richardson and Adams St. Pierre (2005), with its connotations of prisms, layers, multidimensions and diverse perspectives. With this in mind, I studied 'texts' (or data) via four main sets of methods: focus groups, participant observation, questionnaires and document analysis.

When participant observation happens in classroom settings, as opposed to more exotic locations often associated with anthropology, there is a shift in the balance and focus. The teacher–researcher is not a 'visitor' but an intrinsic member of the learning community, which can have both positive and negative repercussions. The familiarity with the context means that the research practitioner is not a stranger, and positive attributes that Denscombe (2010) lists, such as ecological validity and the study being holistic in nature are valid for this type of research. However, there are drawbacks in relying on the teacher's self for interpretation that needs to be considered. The researcher–practitioner needs to be mindful of her own values and ways of interpreting. However, much of the qualitative literature, while acknowledging validity is an issue, suggests that all research is socially constructed. As long as possible biases and ways of seeing and being in the world are acknowledged, then the research in question can be considered

valid, albeit under different conditions (cf. Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Holliday, 2007; Lather, 1993; Piantanida, Tananis, & Grubs, 2004; Somekh, 2005; Walker, 1995).

The module of learning

The module of learning that is central to this study, ENG06, *English and Globalisation*,[1] was originally designed for a Business Studies programme in an institute of higher education in Ireland, and included learning aims such as Curriculum Vitae (CV) writing, preparing for interviews and report writing. As module coordinator, I was in the position to make changes to the course content and learning outcomes and I chose to redesign the module, placing an emphasis on critical pedagogy and globalisation over a more instrumental, skills focused approach, using a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)[2] approach. The module aims were thus changed to include the following:

- To develop a deeper understanding of processes and issues concerning globalisation;
- To develop fluency and accuracy in the four language skill domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing in the context of the topics: (1) globalisation and (2) language and intercultural learning; Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR level B2-C1)[3];
- To foster group work by identifying common goals and working towards individual & group aims;
- To work with an electronic version of the European Language Portfolio (ELP),[4] Language On-Line Portfolio Project (LOLIPOP)[5] and thus to assist learner autonomy by conducting self-assessment and goal-setting exercises, as well as reflecting on the language and intercultural learning process.

In keeping with a cosmopolitan perspective, one of the underlying aims was to bring social justice and agency to the forefront of the curriculum, fostered through the development of a set of capabilities (see below). There was also a desire to create a multi-perspective rationale, in which human rights education, democratic deliberation and agency coexisted with language studies, values and reflexivity (cf. Byram, 2008; Guilherme, 2002).

The cohort for the study comprised a set of 29 international students from diverse national backgrounds, including Austria, France, Germany, Japan and Spain; ranging in age from 19 to 25; and with a gender ratio of 21 females to 8 males. The students displayed heterogeneity of academic disciplines, including anthropology, business, communications, law, linguistics and literature. Their level of English ranged from B2–C1 on the whole.

The learners were called on to be active learners, developing agency with their peers in the classroom through such activities as negotiating syllabus content, designing and teaching content and conducting self- and peer-evaluation, as well as contemplating their differing roles in society from a cosmopolitan perspective.

Some of the teacher-led components included: an overview of the different dimension of globalisation, including political, economic and social affairs; fair versus free trade; ethnic identity; and intergroup theories. There were also a number of ice-breakers including scanning newspapers for themes linked to globalisation, drawing pictures of rooms in their family homes, indicating local and global objects and activities and depicting social and individual values, again through drawings which were shared within groups. Peer-presentations were conducted in two different ways: (1) initially, in the form of short presentation-based group work, with students discussing global bodies such as

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the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations (UN) and Amnesty International (AI) and (2) longer 50' peer-teaching sessions based on themes addressing globalisation. The students were placed in multinational groups and selected topics of their own choosing, including: child labour, drugs, ethnicity, fairtrade, Mcdonaldisation, sport, and world music.

Sample teacher-led lessons

Teacher-led classes were conducted in the first half of semester and students engaged actively in tasks, in the L2, through various media including video, audio recordings, website and journal article research, and lively class discussion. An activity that had a strong impact on the students was the viewing of the BBC 1 television programme, *Horizon*, devoted to Fair Trade, called '*The Dollar a Day Dress*' (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2005). The programme tracks the footsteps of a tutor from a London Fashion school as he travels to different parts of the world to source ethically produced fabric for his students, in so doing uncovering ways in which unfair global trade practices keep many producers in poverty. The film draws the viewer into the debate on fair versus free trade as the tutor engages with local producers and discusses their critical situations, raising awareness of inequities in the trade. The accompanying visuals and soundtrack create a powerful sensory stimulus to underscore the message.

Students' responses to the video were manifold: Hiroko (Oral E, p. 1) found the programme very interesting; it opened her eyes to the negative aspects of globalisation in developing countries. Aiko (Focus 2b, p. 7) said that she was so interested in the plight of the people depicted, it led her to choose fairtrade as a topic to research for her peer-teaching session, and Mayuko's response (Focus group 1a, p. 6) was to lead her to want to buy fairtrade items in future.

Another theme developed concerned ethnic and global identities. As the class was composed of students from ethnically diverse backgrounds, there was a lot of interest in ethnicity studies, especially as the students were on a Study Abroad Programme, which gave them the opportunity to view their own ethnic identity, in many cases, for the first time, in a tangible manner. The students listened to a radio documentary about ethnicity and a post-listening task included a discussion of their own ethnicity and whether they could identify ethnic markers in terms of values, customs and beliefs. This led on to an 'Ethnic Identity Development' exercise (Yeh, 1998) in which they were grouped according to their ethnic affiliations to discuss commonalities.

In another activity, based on the development of intercultural understanding, students were asked to read an article by Worchel (2005) that addresses the issue of in-group/out-group binary divisions based on social-identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As the article is quite long and potentially challenging for non-native speakers, it was divided into five sections, and students were given one section each to read and summarise and discuss in groups with colleagues who had read the other sections.

Afterwards, the students were invited to relate the article to local and global contexts, to see how social-identity theory worked in practice. In the final focus group interview, one of the students, Hiroko, referred to the article and how it had pushed her to think more deeply about intergroup conflict, as follows:

> Hiroko: Veronica gave out the article about ethnicity and in-group and out-group theory and after I read the article I thought it was useful because I didn't realise… I realised it but I didn't think about this, because when we meet other nationalities or other ethnicities we feel fear towards them and even if we talk with them and we know each other, the article said that

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> still we have fear but the fear level decrease[s]. I thought it was key point of the current situation in globalised world because we feel fear and host-… feel hostile towards foreigners or other ethnicities or other religions, so, it, the article was really interesting.(Focus group 2b, p. 6)

This narrative extract displays a nascent awareness of the intricacies of globalisation, and of how the theories the students read about play out in real life. In it, we can see an example of Nussbaum's capability of critical rationality being consciously evoked as the student in question contemplates global identity ascription and development. It can be argued that Nussbaum's other two capabilities for cosmopolitan citizenship are also evoked in the classroom examples listed above, namely affiliation and narrative imagination. Throughout the module, the students showed an openness and willingness to discuss issues of social justice and social group theory and while they often professed not to know what they could do to help the situation, they acknowledged a new sense of knowledge and understanding, which is a precursor to action.

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Sample peer-presentations

For the short peer-presentations, the emphasis was on working together as a group, doing a short critical piece of research on a global body in which positive, negative and interesting points were to be examined, and finally, standing up in front of the class and giving a formal presentation. It was also a chance for the students to receive formative feedback on their language and presentation skills in addition to a focus on the content being conveyed, in preparation for their longer peer-teaching sessions ahead. One group focused on the IMF, in which they gave a brief historical overview of the development of the body, together with its aims and objectives, culminating in a critical analysis of issues associated with it (Figure 3).

In the longer peer-teaching sessions, students managed to strike a deep chord in the hearts and minds of their fellow students. For example, Harumi writes of the child labour session: 'I believe this was the most shocking and unforgettable presentation given by the class' (Peer-assessment report). In their session, the child labour teachers set about creating an evocative learning experience for their peers. A centre-piece of their lesson was a critical presentation of exerpts from the film Salaam Bombay (Nair, 1988). In preparation, they drew up an activity sheet for their peers (Figure 4) in which they devised pre- and while-watching activities, followed by a set of critical questions with the intention of developing a sense of agency in their classmates.

They drew on the powers of narrative imagination in the retelling of stories of exploitation and slavery and in so doing also created opportunities for the capability of affiliation (Figure 5).

Whilst reviewing the peer-assessment reports that students wrote about the session, I was struck by the number of times the word *shock* appeared in their appraisals. Leach and Moon (2008, p.10) say that pedagogy should perform in the same way that art historian Schama (2006, cited in Leach & Moon, 2008) says good art does: get under our skin, unsettle us, and provide us with surprises and shocks that force us out of our complacent routines and habituated ways of thinking and acting. This echoes Phipps and Gonzalez' (2004) notion about pedagogy creating creative disorder as part of a positive learning process. It could be argued that the class had achieved this aim. Indeed, one of the peer-teachers of the session, Mayuko, expresses a desire on behalf of the group to deeply affect their peers with the material they presented. She writes:

Figure 3. IMF peer-presentation (extract).

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> I (Mayuko) wanted students to feel about child labour more realistically, because I thought most of them might think that those children are surely poor, but that's none of my concern. So I was trying to make a scratch on their heart with the video so that they wouldn't forget about the existence of child labour. (Child labour self-assessment report)

In the manner of the Stoic concentric circles, this presentation moved from inner to outer ring and back again, drawing all three together as the local and national were juxtaposed with the global. Students were invited to consider the topic of child labour in relation to their own (relatively privileged) lives; they also focused on actions carried out at national and transnational level which facilitate child labour as well as those that seek to combat it. Other peer-presentations, involving analysis of 'McDonaldisation', fairtrade and ethnicity, to mention a few, achieved similar ends in that they drew peers into the world they were describing, relating their fellow students' ways of being in the world to those who are negatively affected by globalisation and suffering from social injustice as a consequence. These peer-learning sessions also brought new insights to the students as individuals themselves with reference to ethnic identity, personal attributes and modes of behaviour, which could be equated with the innermost ring of the Stoic circles. Lola from Spain describes how the course affected her thus:

Child labour worksheet

1. What do you know about child labour?
2. What would it be the cause of child labour?
3. How many children between the age 5 – 17 are in child labour?
4. Please write as many jobs which children are engaged as you see in this presentation.
5. Which area has child labour the most?
6. What is the name of the video, which is the story in India? What is the name of the boy? How old is he?
7. How much does he earn a day?
8. What is the name of organizations, which works against child labour?

True or False

1. More developed countries, such as the U.S., have no child labour.
2. Most child labours work in manufacturing making items like carpets or clothes.
3. Child labour won't be eliminated until poverty is eradicated.
4. I can help to eliminate child labour.

Figure 4. Child labour activity sheet.

> And it's like now I feel that one of *my* and *our* roles has to be that when I come back to Spain, I guess not only in Spain, there are people who are very closed minded, [about] for example, immigration. Because now we are having there a big problem and it's like I could …well, I could apply all I learnt about ethnicity and what I've been living all these months here, and I can apply it and see it in a very different way than people can see it. (Focus group 2a, p. 13)

Capabilities for language and intercultural learning

The findings of the case study led to the formulation of language education in a new way; through a capabilities framework. A set of twelve capabilities and functionings for human flourishing was developed, grounded in the beings and doings of the L2 classroom (Figure 6). This capabilities list offers, I would argue, a much richer way of perceiving the process of language learning than the more ubiquitous skills-based approach to be found in higher education discourse.

Three central capabilities became evident from the textual analysis of this study: (1) cosmopolitan citizenship, (2) voice and agency and (3) identity and ontological being. These emerged through the prisms of my conceptual constructs. All three can be seen as features of intercultural dialogue.

Cosmopolitan citizenship, as conceived here (and discussed above), relates to the cooperation and co-mingling of cultural others; however, a key feature of this capability, which sets it apart from some intercultural approaches, is a keen focus on the critical dimension, underpinned by social justice.

Turning to voice and agency, the next capability, according to Barnett (2007), voice has two dimensions. On the one hand, as no two voices are the same, through voice work 'one becomes oneself uniquely' (Barnett, 2007, p. 90). On the other hand, through the use of voice 'the self places itself in the world' (Barnett, 2007). In so doing, the voice looks for an audience, a response, and a means of making an impact on the world. Taken

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Figure 5. Child labour presentation (extract).

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together, these two aspects of voice portray its ability to develop self-identity and at the same time to make a connection with the world and potentially change it, too.

Throughout the module, the students had many opportunities to discover and use their voice both in an embodied (through tone, pitch and range) and metaphorical (finding a unique voice) sense: at the level of pair and group work in the classroom; in group meetings to discuss the peer-teaching sessions; and on a larger scale, standing up in front of the class and voicing their opinions to the class. While both forms of voice were in evidence in the research texts and in the classroom, the metaphorical, authentic one was, understandably, the more challenging one to develop and not all students succeeded in projecting this dimension.

Sen refers to agency as 'someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives' (Sen, 1999, p. 19). As discussed earlier, he points out, however, that such freedom to act is constrained by social, political and economic circumstances (Sen, 1999, p. xii). In the focus group interviews, both in the preliminary and final meetings, when asked about their role in the world, i.e. as cosmopolitan citizens, the responses from the students reflected a growing understanding of global issues and the kinds of actions that they might take (as discussed above).

Regarding the third capability, identity and ontological being, Barnett points out that '[k]nowing cannot be stamped in or assimilated from without; it has to come from within' (Barnett, 2007, p. 31) and the process of ontology concerns the bringing forth of this knowing from within. This process entails the bringing of the student's *being* into a new relationship with the world, thus 'coming to stand anew in the world' (Barnett, 2007). Barnett further points out that this process can only happen if the student is aware of it, has the reflexivity to understand that the epistemology has changed her, that it has become ontology. This deeper sense of knowing is one that I find resonates strongly with the texts I have drawn on, to demonstrate what I call 'ontological knowing' in the study.

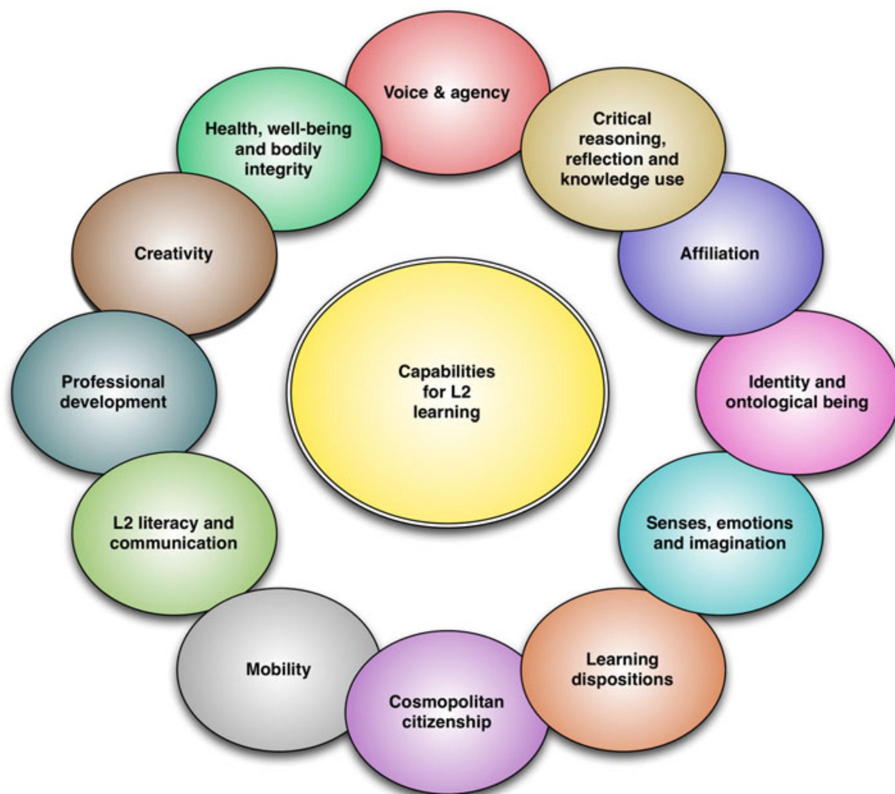

Figure 6. Capabilities for language and intercultural learning.

The remaining capabilities are named rather than discussed in full here. The following four are important for education, regardless of the discipline. They are (4) critical reason, (5) emotion, (6) creativity and imagination and (7) learning disposition. These are followed by a set of three capabilities pertaining specifically to L2 Studies, comprising: (8) L2 learning and communication, (9) affiliation (including intercultural competence) and (10) mobility. Finally, two generic capabilities are presented, that are again cross-disciplinary: (11) health, well-being, and bodily integrity; and (12) professional development (the capability my module centred on before the action research cycle had commenced).

Conclusion

Revisiting my initial research question, in which I ask 'In what ways can the language classroom be seen to contribute to the formation of learners' cosmopolitan and learning identities, which affect their capability to live and act in the world?' has led me to new ways of understanding social practice, especially those underpinned by social justice and democratic ideals. Through the capabilities approach, I discovered that notions such as agency, freedom and well-being can be employed to investigate quality of life in rich and resonant ways, including higher education contexts. One of the tenets of the approach, creating opportunities for living a life that one has reason to value, became compounded with an exploration of what these values might

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be, and to what extent they might be realised, leading to an actualisation of designated identities.

Having two philosophically distinct but complementary guides in Sen and Nussbaum provided for a dynamic engagement with ideas concerning human development and capabilities, including the high context approach of under specification as advocated by Sen in contrast with Nussbaum's low context propensity to spell things out in a series of lists and propositions. Rather than eschew one in favour of the other, holding the two in tension has led to inhabitual ways of reading theory that creates useful synergies, such as that a list is a useful way to begin to articulate, in a concrete fashion, what a set of valuable beings and doings might entail, thus working towards a normative approach underpinned by social justice, while at the same time, keeping in mind Sen's five instrumental freedoms as a set of fundamental principles for capability development.

Research on cosmopolitanism indicates that this is an unfinished project that has endured for centuries, with an aim to build ethically sound, sustainable communities that coexist in a principled manner based on democratic equality. Many of the tenets of this approach complement theories of interculturality, the difference here being one of a focus on civic duties and agency and on a linking of the different spheres of social influence from local, through national to global. The implications for higher education lie in a desire to have students critically engage with their social worlds, being able to critique different social discourses and practices and to envision a life of flourishing based on notions of hospitality and social translation; challenging, partial and provisional though these may be.

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Notes

1. Names and titles are anonymised, where appropriate, throughout this study.
2. CLIL is a pedagogical approach adopted for the acquisition of a foreign language in which the target language is used to teach content (Coyle, 2007; Marsh, 2003).
3. CEFR levels were devised by the Council of Europe (2001) to create a shared approach to the teaching, learning and assessment of languages across Europe.
4. The ELP is a Council of Europe initiative aimed to assist with the development of language learners' autonomy through a set of interconnected activities designed to foster self-assessment. It allows the portfolio bearer the opportunity to showcase language and intercultural learning to language professionals, employers and peers.
5. LOLIPOP was a European Commission Socrates-funded language-learning project (2004–2007) involving a consortium of 12 partners engaged in the task of creating an interactive, online version of the ELP with an enhanced intercultural dimension: <http://lolipop-portfolio.eu/>.

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