Learning Cultural Literacy through Creative Practices in Schools

Cultural and Multimodal Approaches to Meaning-Making

Tuuli Lähdesmäki ·
Jūratė Baranova · Susanne C. Ylönen ·
Aino-Kaisa Koistinen · Katja Mäkinen ·
Vaiva Juškiene · Irena Zaleskienė

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"This book takes us *from what we thought* cultural literacy meant, to a deeper understanding that actually supports children experiencing learning to utilize it in practice. Linking research and practice, it offers a guide to how utilizing creative arts can help children become tolerant, inclusive and empathetic to the world around them. It's *definitely* a book teachers and teacher educators should read!"

—*Long-time University of Patras academic,* Dr. Julie Spinthourakis, *researches and writes about diversity-identity-culture-communication issues*

"This book is a timely, highly articulate analysis of the relationship between cultural literacy and pedagogical practice. Taking full account of previous research into the multimodal processes whereby children transform culturally diverse, mixed forms of learning material into co-created artefacts, it highlights the importance of reinterpreting cultural literacy as an instrument of social understanding in a world marked by instability and change."

—Dr. Robert Crawshaw, *Senior Research Associate, Lancaster University & Research Consultant, the Missenden Centre*

"This book is a good example of what we can discover when children's creativity and art are considered from a socio-cultural perspective. The collection and interpretation of artistic data can be challenging. Since – as the DIALLS project shows – children can deal with abstract things in an artistic way, it is important to develop methods for utilizing art in teaching and researching children."

—Dr. Päivi Venäläinen, *Executive Director of Art Centre for Children and Young People, Finland*

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In memory of Jūratė Baranova

Preface

This book is an outcome of intensive collaboration between seven scholars whose divergent academic backgrounds in pedagogy, civic education, art education, art history, cultural studies, film and media studies, literary studies, and social sciences creates a unique set of knowledge to explore cultural literacy learning in schools through children and young people's creative practices. The authors were all involved in the research project Dialogue and Argumentation for Cultural Literacy Learning in Schools (DIALLS), funded by the European Union from its Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme. The project includes ten partner universities from Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain, and the UK. This broad consortium was led by Dr. Fiona Maine from the University of Cambridge. The project ran from 2018 to 2021.

The DIALLS project addresses the role of formal education in shaping the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for effective cultural literacy learning, intercultural dialogue, and mutual understanding. It has worked with teachers in different educational settings (preprimary, primary, and secondary) to create cross-curricular dialogic resources and activities. The core of these resources is the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) that the project developed in 2019 in close cooperation with teachers from several European countries. During the project, the program was tested in over 250 classes in Cyprus, Germany, Israel, Lithuania, Spain, Portugal, and the UK in 2019 and 2020. The program

includes three sets of lessons targeted at different age groups. The lessons focus on thematic discussions catalyzed by wordless picture books and films produced in and around Europe. These were selected from a bibliography of 145 wordless picture books and films that reflect an increasingly multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual social landscape of places, people, and ways of living in Europe and nearby regions.

The CLLP is based on interaction between students in their own class, then within each country, and after that, with a class abroad. Classes interacted in the program through an online platform developed in the DIALLS project. During the implementation of the program, the project researchers collected diverse data sets for further analysis. These data sets include a broad multilingual corpus of the face-to-face discussions that took place in the classes, files documenting the exchange of views on the online platform, and a broad collection of visual and multimodal artifacts that the students created in lessons. This collection of unique data is useful for analyzing cultural literacy learning through creative practices in schools. This book focuses on the last data set, the multimodal artifacts produced by the students who participated in testing the CLLP. The project researchers followed national ethical guidelines and regulations and the EU's General Data Protection Regulation in data collection and management, including consent from students and their parents for using the artifacts in analyses and publications.

Besides the CLLP, the DIALLS project created comprehensive guidance for developing cultural literacy in schools: A Scale of Progression for Cultural Literacy Learning. Moreover, the project promotes children and young people's active participation in practicing and advancing cultural literacy by facilitating a student-authored Manifesto for Cultural Literacy and a Virtual Gallery, for which students selected artifacts created in the program.

This book continues the collaboration between the DIALLS project and Palgrave Macmillan. The project started with an analysis of education policy documents produced by the European Union and the Council of Europe, and how they deal with the concept of intercultural dialogue. This study, *Intercultural Dialogue in the European Education Policies: A Conceptual Approach* by Tuuli Lähdesmäki, Aino-Kaisa Koistinen, and Susanne C. Ylönen, was published in Palgrave's Pivot series in 2019. This second book provides further research-based information for scholars,

teachers, educators, and students interested in children's visual expression, agency and creativity, cultural literacy learning, and multimodality in communication and education.

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Postscript. After finishing the manuscript, we faced the devastating news of the death of our coauthor and colleague Jūratė Baranova. We dedicate this book to her memory and with it, we honor her philosophical and educational work.

Acknowledgments

DIalogue & Argumentation
for Cultural Literacy Learning
in Schools

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About the Authors

Tuuli Lähdesmäki (Ph.D. in Art History; D.Soc.Sc. in Sociology) is a Docent and an Associate Professor of Art History at the Department of Music, Art and Culture Studies, JYU, Finland. Her research interests and publications include governance of diversity, cultural identities, identity politics, belonging, reception of art, cultural heritage, the European Union and the Council of Europe and their cultural policies. Lähdesmäki is currently leading a research project entitled EU Heritage Diplomacy and the Dynamics of Inter-Heritage Dialogue (HERIDI), funded by the Academy of Finland. She is leading JYU's consortium partnership in the DIALLS project. In addition, she is one of three leaders in JYU's research profiling area entitled Crises Redefined: Historical Continuity and Societal Change (CRISES). She has previously worked in various research projects exploring the roles of art and culture in contemporary societal and political contexts.

Jūratė Baranova (Rubavičienė) was a researcher in the DIALLS project and professor of Philosophy at Vilnius University, Lithuania. She has taught courses on didactics of ethics, didactics of philosophy, and philosophy of children at the Institute of Educational Sciences and courses on ethics, philosophy of history, and philosophy of art at the Institute of Philosophy. She was a member of the International Network of the Philosophers of Education. Her main publications are: *Multimodal Education: Philosophy and Practice* (with L. Duoblienė, 2020); *Rhythm*

and Refrain: In Between Philosophy and Arts (2016); *Between Visual and Literary Creation: Tarkovsky and Ivanauskaitė* (with coauthors, 2015); *20th Century Moral Philosophy: Conversation with Kant* (2004, 2015); *The Phenomenon of Jurga Ivanauskaitė: Between Surrealism and Existentialism* (2014); *Cinema and Philosophy* (with coauthors, 2012); *Nietzsche and Postmodernism* (2007); and *Philosophy and Literature: Contradictions, Parallels and Intersections* (2006). She has also been a member of the Lithuanian Writers Union and published the essay collections *Meditations: Texts and Images* (2004) and *The Fear to Be Drawn* (2009).

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Vaiva Juškiene (Doctoral Student in Education, MAs in Humanitarian and Management Sciences) is a junior researcher in the DIALLS project, responsible for running dialogue and argumentation with Lithuanian primary students and analyzing their argumentation. Juškiene specializes in Literary Studies and Education Management and is a junior researcher at the Institute of Educational Sciences at Vilnius University, Lithuania. She has more than 20 years of teaching experience in school. Moreover, she is the Dean of the Faculty of Pedagogy at Vilniaus kolegija, University of Applied Sciences that trains primary and preprimary teachers. Her research field is at the interface of children's literature, Lithuanian language and didactics of literature, communication, and dialogue training. She has published textbooks on Lithuanian literature for primary schools and is also a coauthor of several published texts for children at primary school.

Irena Zaleskiene (Ph.D. in Education) is a senior researcher at the Institute of Educational Sciences, Vilnius University, Lithuania. Her research field covers education for democratic citizenship, active participation, and social responsibility. For many years, she advised the Lithuanian Ministry of Education, Science, and Sport as an expert in curriculum development. She has been involved in different national and international preservice and in-service teacher training programs and projects in the field. Zaleskienė is a local coordinator in the DIALLS project. She is a member of the European Education Association and some other national and

international networks. She has published articles and research books, such as *The Power of Textbook: Research on Nationality and Citizenship* (2015), *Social Dimension of Citizenship Education* (2013), and a textbook for secondary students, *We: Basics of Civil Society* (2004).

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Introduction: Cultural Literacy and Creativity

Abstract The introductory chapter explains the core concepts of the book: Cultural literacy and creativity. Cultural literacy is defined as a social practice that is inherently dialogic and based on learning and gaining knowledge through emphatic, tolerant, and inclusive interaction. Creativity is seen as stimulating cultural literacy learning through openness and curiosity to test and develop something new or imaginative. The chapter introduces the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) and the research data: 1906 works created by 5–15-year-old children and young people who participated in the program in 2019 and 2020 in Cyprus, Germany, Israel, Lithuania, Spain, Portugal, and the UK. The authors discuss how the data is explored through data-driven content analysis and self-reflexive and collaborative interpretation.

Keywords Cultural literacy · Creativity · Artifact · Content analysis · Self-reflexive interpretation

Focuses, Premises, and Objectives

Literacy is a core skill for learning and development. It enables communication and dialogue within a community and allows people to engage in society. Since the 1990s, scholars and educators have approached literacy

as more than the ability to read and write language-based texts. The concept of multiliteracies, introduced by the New London Group in the mid-1990s and since then broadly utilized in education policy discourses and national curricula, stems from a wider understanding of text by emphasizing multimodality in meaning-making: Language-based communication intertwines with visual, auditive, corporal, gestural, and spatial patterns of meaning. The need to rethink and redefine literacy also reflects the diversification of contemporary societies and the rapid development of information technologies during the past two or three decades. For the New London Group, the multiplicity of new communication channels and increased cultural and linguistic diversity demanded a new approach to literacy pedagogy (Cazden et al. 1996). Since the introduction of the concept of multiliteracies, the social reality in different parts of the world has become even more culturally plural or "super-diversified," as Vertovec (2007) has described this change. In super-diversified societies, diversity itself is complex, multidimensional, fluid (Vertovec 2007; Blommaert and Rampton 2011), and characterized by the intersection of different social locations and positions related to culture, ethnicity, nationality, religion, language, gender, sexuality, and ability.

Since societies are diversifying, creating new challenges to communication, we need to approach the concept of literacy in a broader context. In this book, we explore positive responses to this context: The idea of difference and the ability to encounter, communicate, learn, and live together through empathic, tolerant, and inclusive interaction with others who may be different from us. We show how the concept of cultural literacy as a tolerant, empathic, and inclusive approach to differences can be taught and learned in schools through creative practices. Our focus is on meaning-making in children and young people's visual and multi-modal artifacts created in schools as an outcome of tasks aiming to foster cultural literacy learning. This interdisciplinary exploration is located at the intersection of different approaches to children's creativity, art, and learning: We draw on research in cultural studies, communication studies, art education, and educational sciences.

Our approach to children and young people's creative expression of cultural literacy relies on two intertwined premises about living together as cultural beings. First, in our view, creativity and imagination are essential features of humanity that particularly characterize children's way of grasping the world. A considerable body of literature discusses the nature of children's creativity and visual expression. While some scholars have

explained this as either children's attempts to draw what they know or what they see, recent studies give a more nuanced view of children's creative processes in image-making and its various possible functions. For Deguara (2015), drawing can function as a constructor of children's identity, communicator of the child's self, processor of children's knowledge, and a play process. In this book, we approach image-making and other artistic practices as modes of expression that allow children to develop their imagination, personality, dialogic relationship to others, and emotional responses in a creative way (see Lähdesmäki and Koistinen 2021); these practices help children to deal with and shape their mental images and understanding of the world in a constructive process of thinking in action (see Cox 2005; Deguara 2015). For many children, image-making and artistic creation are acts that connect their inner thoughts, emotions, and imaginings to the external world by intertwining their events and experiences that are personal to them with real-life episodes (Jolley 2010; Wright 2010; Deguara 2015). These entanglements of the inner and external worlds are impacted by the culture of the environment in which children create their images as well as by the imageries of contemporary popular culture (Toku 2001; Jolley 2010; Wright 2010). Image-making and nonlanguage-based artistic practices enable children to process what can be difficult to express in words through oral or written communication (Clark 2005; Deguara 2015). As an instrument, it is, thus, suitable for the teaching and learning of abstract topics such as cultural literacy.

The second premise of the book stems from an increasing need for respectful cultural encounter, mutual understanding, and constructive dialogue in today's super-diversified, but polarized, societies (see Lähdesmäki et al. 2020). While many societies have become increasingly diverse social spaces where people can simultaneously identify with multiple different cultural and social groups, monoculturalist views and cultural purism have struck back. Western societies have faced a rise in populist, nationalist, and extremist movements that have incited xenophobic, anti-immigration, misogynist, racist, anti-Semitic, and Islamophobic political attitudes and actions. Western societies have commonly recognized cultural pluralization as a richness that, however, entails diverse challenges when the cultural encounter is not based on mutual respect and an interest in understanding differences. Cultural literacy learning is a key to advance tolerant, empathetic, and inclusive attitudes toward diversity.

For our book, we have four core objectives. First, we seek to strengthen a sociocultural approach to children's expression moving away from developmental and cognitive approaches that have long dominated the research on children's art to understanding children as active cultural agents. Therefore, we do not take a psychological approach (using art to discover the child's inner conflicts), a behavioral approach (using art to examine the child's thinking processes), a developmental approach (exploring the child's visual expression at a particular age level), or an art pedagogical approach (helping children develop visual expression) (Nikoltsos 2001). In the 2000s, scholars (e.g., Anning 2003; Ivashkevich 2009; Atkinson 2009; Coates and Coates 2011; Deguara 2015) have noted a paradigm shift toward researching children's art as a process of communication influenced by various sociocultural contexts. This research has shown how children are influenced by the culture(s) and societies surrounding them and how these influences can be perceived from their visual expression. Toku (2001, 46) notes how the influence of culture and technology emerges in children's drawings when they start primary school. While children and young people—as all people—feel the impact of their social and cultural contexts, they are not only passive receivers but also active creators of culture. The recent participatory approach to children's art and culture has emphasized children as "social beings who are able, competent agents and active constructors of their knowledge and understanding" (Deguara 2015, 12) and agents of their own learning, "actively defining reality, rather than passively reflecting a 'given reality'" (Cox 2005, 12) in their creative practices. Our research for this book is grounded in a contextual and sociocultural approach to children's visual creation, seeing it as a valuable contribution to culture and cultural heritage (Venäläinen 2019).

Second, we seek to determine the potential and limitations of children's creations as research material. Some of these limitations stem from the power relations involved whenever adults research children. We thus critically explore the setting in which the children produced our research material, and the position of the (adult) researcher, as an interpreter of children's visual expression and as a knowledge producer based on the analysis of such data.

Third, we apply theoretical discussions on multimodality to explore children and young people's creative practices. We follow Kress's notion of multimodality as a "normal state of human communication" (Kress 2010, 1) that is based on a "multiplicity of ways in which children make

meaning, and the multiplicity of modes, means, and materials which they employ in doing so" (Kress 1997, 96). In our research, we emphasize how different modes in meaning-making interact and impact on each other in a multimodal synthesis (Jewitt 2008; Walsh 2009). Due to this interaction, all meaning-making can be perceived as multimodal (Cazden et al. 1996).

Fourth, we seek to explore the role of dialogue and creativity in cultural literacy learning and to share new knowledge about how, through dialogic creative processes, children and young people can construct and deepen their understanding of a contemporary world filled with difficult challenges such as exclusion, intolerance, and climate change.

Concepts: Cultural Literacy and Creativity

The key concept of our research, cultural literacy, is a social practice that is inherently dialogic and based on learning and gaining knowledge through empathic, tolerant, and inclusive interaction. It has been defined as a process of engaging with cultures and a cocreation and expression of cultural identities and values (Maine et al. 2019; Maine and Vrikki 2021). Cultural literacy as such is not a new concept: It has been discussed in academia since the end of the 1980s. The first scholars (e.g., Hirsch 1988, 1989; Hirsch et al. 1993, 2002) of cultural literacy often perceived it narrowly, as knowledge gained through the exploration of cultural products, such as literature and art, and learning canonical cultural and historical facts and narratives. Hirsch (1989), who utilized the concept to argue what students need to fully engage in contemporary society, even lists 5000 "essential names, phrases, dates and concepts" that "every American needs to know," as the cover of his book claims.

The idea of becoming culturally literate by learning selected facts and features of one's own and/or others' culture, history, and heritage has serious limitations. First, it does not recognize culture within a society as an inherently plural, constantly transforming, and fluid social construction based on interaction between diverse people (Otten 2003; Abdallah-Pretceille 2006). Second, the emphasis on factual knowledge of culture, history, and heritage as a key element for cultural encounters may direct people to perceive others as stable representatives of their culture or community. This may lead to cultural stereotyping, making it more difficult to see people as individuals, and even bring about prejudices (Abdallah-Pretceille 2006; Portera 2008). Third, learning facts and features is not cocreation of knowledge: It does not encourage

learning with or from others who may be different from us. As Messelink and ten Thije (2012, 81) note: "The ability to gain knowledge in interaction allows individuals to search for similarities and successfully operate in intercultural (…) contexts, regardless of the cultural backgrounds present." Cultural literacy teachers should seek to promote this tolerant, empathic, and inclusive attitude in social interaction and gaining knowledge with others (Maine et al. 2019).

The concept of creativity is embedded in our approach to cultural literacy. In our view, cultural literacy is learned in a process that allows new ideas and views to emerge, as well as knowledge of differences and similarities, one's own and others' cultural values, and how to encounter, interact, and live together with others. For us, cultural literacy learning is about dialogic cocreation of (or attempts to cocreate) knowledge that can be stimulated by concrete creative practices, such as making an artwork together.

In our approach, creativity, the act of creating, and its outcome, creation, are linked but not equivalent concepts. Dictionaries often define creativity as an individual's ability. It is seen for instance: "The ability to produce original and unusual ideas, or to make something new or imaginative" (Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary 2020) or "the faculty of being creative; ability or power to create" (Oxford English Dictionary 2020). In scholarly literature, the concept has been discussed in a more nuanced manner, emphasizing the complexity of its connotations in different historical periods and in scholarly contexts ranging from aesthetics to philosophy and from psychology to logic, to mention just a few (Pope 2005). The scholars have often concluded that creativity involves the production of novel, useful, or valuable ideas and/or products (Mumford et al. 2002; Mumford 2003; Pope 2005). These views home in on the act of creating. Taking this act as a point of departure for creativity, Mumford et al. (2002) have listed two sets of processes that are involved in creative work: Activities leading to idea generation (ideation) and activities needed to implement ideas (implementation). More recent scholars have criticized the views that equate creativity with creative work and its outcome. This "dynamic definition of creativity" (Corazza 2016; Walia 2019) focuses on ongoing processes in which individuals seek to produce novel and useful ideas or products but may not always succeed. Hence, Corazza (2016, 265) has claimed that "the dynamic interplay between inconclusiveness and achievement must be subsumed by the definition of creativity." Walia (2019, 239) continues this idea by noting how

"creation can be judged only when it has concluded, whereas creativity is active throughout the process and may not even end after having led to creation."

Many adults consider children's art as an example of fascinating self-expression and genuine and spontaneous creativity uninfluenced by cultural norms (Nikoltsos 2001). This imagined genuineness and spontaneousness has found its way into discourses of modern art. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, various artists and artistic groups have been inspired by children's visual expression and admired its creativity (Fineberg 1997). In this book, we acknowledge the creative ability of all people, including children, and understand children's visual and multimodal expression as a way to process, seek, and possibly find novel and useful ideas and outcomes. We do not seek to evaluate the creativity of the children's visual and multimodal artifacts that form the core of our data. For us, creativity is not a feature of a person or a product but a dynamic process that stimulates cultural literacy learning through curiosity and openness to something new or imaginative. Artistic creation provides children and young people an arena to practice creativity, meaning-making, and "engage their minds, hearts and bodies" (Wright 2010, 2). This engagement itself may be the new outcome. Indeed, various researchers have connected creativity and empathy, to emphasize that art can evoke empathetic responses and understanding of other people's points of view (Lähdesmäki and Koistinen 2021).

The Cultural Literacy Learning Programme, Data and Methods

As a response to the increasing need for respectful cultural encounters, mutual understanding, and constructive dialogue in today's superdiversified societies, the DIalogue and Argumentation for cultural Literacy Learning in Schools (DIALLS) project developed a Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP), that was implemented in over 250 classes in Cyprus, Germany, Israel, Lithuania, Spain, Portugal, and the UK in the school year 2019–2020. The program was built by an international group of scholars and teachers and it was aimed at three age groups: students aged 5–6, 8–9, and 14–15. In the implementation of the program, the age span in the groups was a year or two wider in some classes. The program and its pedagogy was based on the concept of cultural literacy defined above: Its builders saw dialogue, argumentation, and interactive

creative practices as tools for encountering differences, expressing one's own cultural features and values, and learning cultural literacy. In each age group, the CLLP included 15 lessons addressing different themes, ranging from one's cultural attachments to being part of a community and engaging more broadly in society. These themes fell into four groups: Living together (explored by talking about celebrating diversity, solidarity, equality, human rights, democracy, and globalization); social responsibility (focusing on social and civic competences, sustainable development, and active participation); belonging (discussion on home); and the core attitudes for cultural literacy learning (tolerance, empathy, and inclusion). These themes were selected for the CLLP through a clustering exercise of a broad array of concepts and terms highlighted in scholarly literature and education policy documents on cultural literacy and intercultural dialogue (see DIALLS 2018; Lähdesmäki et al. 2020).

The lessons in the CLLP were based on classroom and small group discussions that were stimulated by wordless picture books and films. These books and films had been selected by the project researchers in an attempt to promote the tolerant, empathic, and inclusive encounter of differences and to reflect multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual social landscape of places, people, and ways of living in Europe and its neighboring regions. Using the books and films in the CLLP enabled "an exploration of the critical and creative thinking processes involved in meaning-making, which is viewed as a dialogic process between readers together and between text and readers" (Maine 2015, 5). Moreover, each lesson in the CLLP included a creative task in which the students were encouraged to explore with visual or multimodal means the ideas developed during classroom and small group discussions, and to explain the content of their creation in a caption.

The learning process in the CLLP was based on multimodal communication in which one mode of communication became interpreted and explored through another. The wordless picture books and films were given meaning through words in oral classroom and small group discussions. The students then explored these meanings through creating (mostly) visual artifacts (which often included written text), for which the students (or their teachers as mediators of the students' voice within the youngest age group) wrote a brief separate explanation, a caption. These artifacts and their captions form the core of our data.

The intertwinement of visual and linguistic modes in our data reflects the central feature of children's creative practices: They are typically based

on the interplay of two or more semiotic resources (Deguara 2015, 4). Particularly in young children's creative practices, visual and oral modes may be difficult to distinguish. As Kinnunen (2015) notes, drawing can be perceived as a kind of dialogue between the marks made on paper and orally narrated thoughts. Some scholars (Siim 2019) have emphasized that children's visual creations cannot be interpreted outside the narrative context and explanation of the artifacts given by the children themselves. We analyze our data based on our understanding that children's creative practices are multimodal. The captions in our data function as a key to the meanings that the children themselves have affixed to their artifacts. In interpreting them, our aim is not to trace the children's thoughts: We believe this is impossible. Following common communication theories, we interpret the data based on "decoding" the signs which the students have "coded" to the artifacts within the various contexts in with they participated in the CLLP (see Rose 2001, 16). This decoding can, however, only occur between us as interpreters and the artifacts as a complex sign.

The lesson plans in the CLLP represent the pedagogical ideal for cultural literacy learning. Respectively, its implementation represents the pedagogical reality, in which the aims and ideals of cultural literacy learning were put into practice in various social and cultural contexts that differ between countries, regions, schools, and classes. The teachers received at least 18 hours of face-to-face professional development on the core ideas of the CLLP. We expected teachers would need 30 hours of working time to prepare and reflect on the lessons. The teachers were encouraged to creatively implement the lesson plans in their classes. Some of them applied the lesson plans more freely, while others closely followed the guidelines. The CLLP pedagogy was based on dialogic teaching emphasizing the co-construction of meanings among students and between them and their teachers: The teachers modeled how to engage democratically in the dialogue (Maine and Čermáková 2021). As in all teaching and learning, this pedagogy included distinct roles for teachers and learners. In the CLLP, the teachers were expected to model the discussion on the themes in the lesson plans and give students instructions for the tasks; the students were expected to participate in the discussions and follow the instructions. The implementation of the CLLP was, thus, intertwined with various issues of power that impacted on what was expressed, how, and why in the artifacts.

Various scholars have explored the impact of school on children's communication and creative expression. These studies argue that the school context effectively unifies the children's cultural and communicative resources by moving them from being communicative agents of their own worlds alone to also become communicative agents of their society and culture (Kress 1997, 2000; Deguara 2015). The school context—including teachers, peers, classroom practices, and curricula—either explicitly or implicitly emphasizes certain values, perceptions, and expectations that influence children's visual expression (Einarsdottir et al. 2009; Deguara 2015). Some scholars (Fargas-Malet et al. 2010) have seen this "acculturation to school" as the main shortcoming of research utilizing children's drawings as data: Children may create images that they think will please the teacher or researcher.

Our data includes hundreds of artifacts, mainly multicolored drawings but also a small number of collages, three-dimensional sculptures, short films, and photographs of roleplaying. Most of the artifacts were created individually, but many were made in small groups of 3–6 students, and some by the whole class connecting individually created pieces as a collage. When counting these individual pieces as separate works, the number of artifacts in our data increases to 1906 (Table 1.1). The CLLP teachers photographed the artifacts and sent the photographs and captions to the researchers. The teachers also completed a brief survey including some background information indicating the country, students' ages and genders within the groups, and teachers' description of the progress of the lesson, particularly if some changes to the lesson plan were made. These forms are included in our data. The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020 impacted on the implementation of

Table 1.1   Quantity of individual creative works per country in the CLLP

	Cyprus	Germany	Israel	Lithuania	Portugal	Spain	UK
age 5–6	265	9	222	16	199	8	149
age 8–9	134	48	93	36	97	18	94
age 14–15	0	103	117	90	97	48	2
COVID-19 works (all age groups)	25	0	0	23	13	0	0
country total	424	160	432	165	406	74	245
Total number of individual creative works: 1906							

the CLLP and thus our data collection. Due to the exceptional conditions, not all teachers were able to implement each lesson. Some of our data was created during lockdown when students were learning at home. In this book, some artifacts arising from the subthemes of democracy, globalization, and active participation are not analyzed separately but within the broader themes of living together and social responsibility. Due to the exceptional conditions caused by the pandemic, the CLLP was extended in some countries with an additional lesson in which the students reflected on how COVID-19 had impacted on their social environment and explored ways of practicing empathy, tolerance, and inclusiveness in pandemic conditions.

Our research is based on data-driven content analysis utilizing both qualitative categorizing of the data and quantification of its core features and visual elements (see Rose 2001) and a self-reflexive and collaborative interpretation of what the artifacts mean within their context in the lesson. By self-reflexive interpretation, we mean acknowledging our position as researchers and considering our cultural and social contexts, from which we look at and interpret images (Rose 2001, 15–16; Passerini 2018). Besides, our interpretations have been formed in close collaboration, open dialogue, and sharing of views within our team during the research process.

After this introductory chapter, we proceed to the core theoretical aspects of our analysis. We start by exploring a sociocultural approach to the research on children's visual expression, including the issue of power. Next, we move to multimodality as a way in which students make meanings in our data. The subsequent four chapters each focus on different thematic aspects of cultural literacy learning: Attitudes of tolerance, empathy, and inclusion; living together; social responsibility; belonging; and practicing tolerance, empathy, and inclusion during the pandemic. We start these chapters with a critical discussion of their themes and core concepts—and, in the last chapter, an overview of the pandemic conditions—followed by the data-driven content analysis and interpretation of meaning-making around the themes in the artifacts. When the data allows it, we also compare how the different themes are dealt with in different countries and age groups. To avoid methodological nationalism (creating artificial national categories), we do not systematically pinpoint the home country of students unless we consider this information relevant to the discussion. In our analysis, we also pay attention to how the

artifacts are influenced by global popular culture and imageries of children's culture that circulate symbols and images from cartoons, films, storybooks, games, or digital environments (see Toku 2001, 52; Coates and Coates 2011; Deguara 2015, 83). We end with a chapter summarizing our core results and showing how they expand the understanding of children's creative and multimodal meaning-making processes. In the concluding chapter, we suggest avenues for future research and ways to improve cultural literacy learning through creative practices.

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A Sociocultural Approach to Children's Visual Creations

Abstract This chapter locates the book within the research on children's art. It explores interpretations of children's visual creations throughout the twentieth century and situates the approach of the book within the research landscape. The authors take developmental psychological, educational, and aesthetic approaches to form a sociocultural view of children's art, challenging many of the previous research assumptions. Through adopting the paradigm of the sociocultural approach, the authors embrace its view of children as competent cultural actors and active participants in cultural production. Thus, the discussion focuses on meaning-making: the authors analyze visual artifacts made by students to understand how they engage with the idea of the difference.

Keywords Sociocultural approach · Visual creations · Power · Participation · Voice

Different Strands of Research on Child Art and children's Drawings

Child art has generated much research since it was defined as a field of interest in the late nineteenth century. At that point, following a romantic

view of childhood as a time of innocence separated from adulthood, children's drawings came to be seen as valuable illuminations of the inner life of children as well as proof of a primitive state preceding adult intellectual enlightenment (Golomb 1993, 11). One of the first to research child art was the Italian archeologist and art historian Corrado Ricci. In the 1880s he collected and analyzed child art, which he found crude and inaccurate, but striving for a sort of "literal completeness" that manifested itself in, for example, the depiction of a horse with both the rider's legs visible from one side. Earl Barnes, an American teacher educator and early contributor to the child study movement similarly contributed to the formation of the field by arguing that children's art was a language of its own, with symbols expressing ideas (French 1956, 327–329). In the twentieth century a plethora of researchers followed these early initiatives and studied children's drawings from an artistic, educational, or psychological point of view. Most of them instrumentalized children's drawings and saw them as expressions of artistic or cognitive development, or, as a means to discover mental issues. For a long time, child study has been dominated by a developmentalist frame, which still influences much of the research on art made by children.

Research on child art can be roughly divided into psychoanalytic/psychological, pedagogical, aesthetic, and sociocultural approaches. For psychoanalysts, art has been a therapeutic practice as well as a means to discover the "inner conflicts" and "disturbing influences" of the child's development (Nikoltsos 2001, 3). Psychological perspectives generally adhere to a developmental frame and use children's drawings to trace how a child matures from a less differentiated "scribble" phase toward more skilled, more realistic expression, also known as visual realism. This strand of research was greatly influenced by the work of the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget: In 1936 he postulated a correspondence between children's drawings and their spatial-mathematical reasoning. Before this, the US psychologist Florence Goodenough had already created her well-known "draw a man test," which was used to measure children's intellectual abilities (Golomb 1993, 12). Newer studies on developmental and geographic biases about children's drawings attest to the continuing dominance of such universalist, developmental views. For instance, Justin Ostrofsky (2015, 3) states that face drawings produced by children aged 3–11 all around the world show the same "representational flaws" depicting the head "too round" and the eyes "too high up in the head."

Developmental psychology has influenced many pedagogues, although some have tried to shift the emphasis from lack and deficit to recognition of representational efforts. Viktor Lowenfeld, an Austrian American art educator, saw art as a means to further intellectual and emotional growth. In *Creative and Mental Growth* (1957), Lowenfeld characterized child art following developmental stages and promoted educational approaches tailored to the individual child's needs. He advocated the use of different kinds of art and artistic activities to support children's growth and favored free expression. His focus on the therapeutic aspects of art education also reveals an adherence to psychoanalytic approaches. Rudolf Arnheim, a German-born art theorist and perceptual psychologist likewise promoted an art educational view and criticized views that saw artistic activity "mainly as an instrument for exploration of the human personality" (Arnheim 1954, 3). He argued that children seek creative solutions to difficult graphic problems and proposed that drawing develops by its own intrinsic logic that does not merely mirror other intellectual domains. In Arnheim's view, even very young children's drawings reveal perception, creative intelligence, and sensitivity to form (a sensitivity found at all developmental levels). All in all, these educational approaches, which may also be termed art based or aesthetic, seek to develop the child's artistic skill. In such a view the creative process is more important than the result (Nikoltsos 2001, 6–8).

Members of the modernist art movement saw child art as a catalyst for creativity. Many modern artists such as Klee, Kandinsky, Miro, and Picasso were inspired by child art and sought to copy its innocent, instinctive expressiveness. To them, child art provided a point of view unconditioned by cultural influences (Leeds 1989; Fineberg 1998). Intrigued by this idea of the innocent eye, the Austrian artist and teacher Franz Cižek, who coined the term "child art," lamented the "alien influences" of cinemas and theaters on the authenticity and creativity of the child (Coates and Coates 2011, 86–87). The idea of the innocent eye still manifests itself in contemporary debates about what proper media content is like (Ivashkevich 2009, 52–54).

In our study, we discard ideas about corrupting cultural influences to maintain that even very young children know how to decode and reuse the signs and symbols circulating within their respective cultural landscapes. This view is based on a rather new trend within research on child art. Toward the end of the twentieth century, the developmentalist framework became increasingly criticized for its focus on skill and its alignment

with dominant Western cultural expectations (i.e., realism as the highest achievement of visual art, see Einarsdottir et al. 2009, 218). Researchers have, for example, criticized the subordinate status of drawing and play to reading and writing in school curricula: Drawing, in their view, is "an intrinsically valuable form of abstraction and communication, as a social practice, and as a symbolic means of bridging home and school contexts" (Wood and Hall 2011, 270). Recently, socioculturally oriented researchers have begun to examine the contexts of drawing, the narratives around it, and the manner in which drawings, embedded in talk, express meaning (e.g., Cox 2005; Einarsdottir et al. 2009; Deguara 2015). In this strand of research, drawing is used to gain access to children's lived experiences and the ways that they make meaning. This sociocultural strand of research provides an alternative, context-specific, and process-centered approach that takes into consideration the power struggles influencing the production and analysis of children's drawings (see Ivashkevich 2009). Furthermore, it regards drawing as a stage in active identity formation and play (Wood and Hall 2011).

In what follows, we clarify our sociocultural approach to artifacts created by students around Europe and in Israel, which we use to capture children's views on cultural differences and their dialogic navigation. To conclude we discuss the power relations that influence this research constellation.

Before we move on, we need to include some notes on terms. Unlike children's literature, which is created *for* children, child art is made *by* children. Yet, this term poses multiple conceptual problems. The first one is the concept of the "child." All humans under 18 could generally be defined as children, yet there is a significant difference between the visual creations of 4-year-olds and 15-year-olds. Developmental psychologists and modern artists alike have observed that "loud and gaudy" childish freedom (terms by French 1956) tends to give way to more norm-bound, "correct" representation as a person grows. Second, conceptualizations of art itself vary from institutional to naturalistic ones (Venäläinen 2019). Since most research on child art has focused on drawings, many researchers have adopted the term "children's drawings" to avoid any conceptual haziness related to the term child art. In this study, we have chosen to speak about students' visual creations or artifacts (following e.g., Deguara and Nutbrown 2018). Sometimes we also refer to them as data. One reason for this terminological choice is the fact that the visual items we examine have been produced in school

contexts. Hence, the makers were creating their artifacts in the role of students, as part of school work, following certain guidelines or tasks. That is, the artifacts were not created in a purely aesthetic noninstrumental sense (naturalistic view of art). Nor were they created by educated artists (institutional view; see Venäläinen 2019). Talking about "drawings" alone would also not be accurate as various media were used, including audiovisual expression, 3D installation, and text. By calling the creations artifacts, we position them as objects of special interest, worth displaying and studying. By talking about them as data, we refer to them as instruments of research, valuable mostly as a bulk or corpus, as items whose makers remain anonymous. In what comes to the makers of these artifacts, we use the terms "students," "children," "young people," and "age groups." Whenever necessary, we also refer to the country in which the student made the artifact.

A Sociocultural Approach
to Student-made Artifacts

The past 30 years have seen a rise in sociologically oriented research on children and childhood (James and Prout 1997; Mayall 2002; Tisdall and Punch 2012). This "new" branch of childhood studies emphasizes children's agency and social roles and promotes an understanding of children as beings instead of becomings, that is, as subjects in their own right instead of merely individuals in the process of growing up (Qvortrup 1994). This branch of research challenges developmentalist and educational views in an attempt to understand children's experiences of and effects on the social realities that they live in. Methods used in it include observation, interview, questionnaires, structured activities (such as our reading and discussing picture books/short films), and multisensory approaches such as drawing (Clark 2005). Studies that use drawings as a means to access children's experiences cover topics such as children's reflections on how they have changed during their first year at school, or what they like or dislike in school (Einarsdottir et al. 2009). In these studies, the focus is often on narratives and meaning-making (Cox 2005; Coates and Coates 2011; Deguara 2015).

We emphasize the cultural aspects of such meaning-making. Following William Corsaro's (1992) idea of interpretive reproduction, we maintain that children creatively appropriate information from the adult world through their participation in cultural routines. They do not passively

repeat or reflect the culture around them. Rather, they borrow, recycle, or reinterpret familiar representations and ideas in a creative manner. In this sense, children's art is connected to broader codes of cultural representation and signification. In cultural studies, representation is understood as a process, in which meanings are created and assigned to images, objects, and people (see e.g., Kellner 1995; Hall 1997). Children's artifacts contribute to the process of cultural representation, recycling culturally acknowledged symbols and meanings while producing new ones. The aesthetic choices made in a drawing can thus be compared to rhetorical choices in speech. As Neil Cohn (2014, 103) states, drawing "provides a method to communicate our thoughts in the visual-graphic modality." As such, a drawing—or, in our case a visual artifact—reflects the cultural frames that surround it.

If semiotics is concerned with tracing how marks on paper become signs that represent meaning, social semiotics considers the social settings of such meaning-making events (see e.g., Kress and van Leeuwen 2006; Hopperstad 2008; Deguara and Nutbrown 2018). Our study adheres to this approach in that we look at how the artifacts represent things and communicate ideas in the specific social/cultural settings of schools, classrooms, and peer groups. Specifically, we trace how the students who participated in the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) use signs, symbols, and schemas to communicate their knowledge and understanding of cultural literacy themes such as empathy and tolerance. In this, we assume that drawing (among other visual means of expression) may be used to graphically convey concepts and ideas.

Similarities in the drawings may be traced back to the influence of peers and teachers. Noting these similarities is important, as peers and possible play frames may sometimes be more influential than the pedagogical frames presented by the teacher and the task. In these cases, the resulting artifact communicates the student's other interests or play, instead of their ideas on the given task (i.e., the teacher's or the project's interests). As our analysis establishes, children in a specific class have created their artifacts or described them in strikingly similar ways. We do not see such copying or direct referencing of the cultural texts (short films and picture books) or other students' work as problematic. Rather, it is a sign of dialogic interactions and proof of learning (Cohn 2014; Mavers 2011).

Below, we consider how the classroom context places possible limits on the students' expressive freedom. This is partly related to how semiotic resources are acquired. Children in their early, preschool years enjoy

both a greater and lesser freedom of expression: Greater in that "they have not yet learned to confine the making of signs to the culturally and socially facilitated media" and lesser, in that "they do not have such rich cultural semiotic resources available as do adults" (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006, 9). Another significant factor that could inhibit creativity is the influence of classroom hierarchies and the power relations that determine each individual's role in a project such as this. As such, our approach can be described as a critical approach to reading images, "an approach that thinks about the visual in terms of the cultural significance, social practices and power relations in which it is embedded" (Rose 2001, 3).

As we trace how the students navigate the ground of cultural difference (broadly understood as encompassing different points of view and distinctions between an "us" and a "them") it is worth noting what earlier researchers have said about the role of drawing in identity formation. Children create and explore a range of alternative identities (past, present, and future) through their drawings (Deguara 2015, 380). Transitions and achievements in identity are common themes of children's drawings next to the pop cultural influences visible in depictions of cartoons, popstars, and superheroes (Clark 2005, 497–498; Coates and Coates 2011, 97–98). Many researchers have observed variations "specific and typical of the children's lives and the social, historical and cultural local context" (see Gernhardt et al. 2013; Senzaki et al. 2014; Deguara 2015, quote by Deguara 2015, 379). For example, some found that children who live near mountains are more likely to draw mountains (Ahmad 2018) and that boys are more likely to represent violence than girls (Kiil 2009). Scholars who compared cultural variations in cognitive processes between Japanese and US children's artwork state "the members of a given culture produce cultural products – tangible, public, shared representations of culture – that convey dominant cultural ideologies" (Senzaki et al. 2014, 1298).

Our approach both builds on and deviates from these sociocultural or culturally sensitive approaches and the research on cultural differences in children's drawings. We draw on these approaches, in that we focus on the context in which the artifacts were made and in that we regard them as means to access the children's ideas. We deviate from the research on cultural differences as we do not distinguish between the different nationalities (or genders etc., though we mention these when relevant) of children who participated in the project. Rather, we are interested in

how the students express their ideas on cultural difference and the dialogic engagement that helps them to navigate these differences.

Our Approach to Power Relations

As many of the sociologically oriented researchers of children and childhood have noted, accessing children's ideas is not easy. Even the most sensitive participatory methods cannot overcome the power relations that determine children's marginalized roles in today's sociocultural landscapes. Hence, it is appropriate to discuss some of the problems that our project faces in trying to uncover the student's ideas via visual expressions.

Donna Haraway (1991) and others have argued that all knowledge is limited by the social, cultural, and historical context of its production. This context includes the disciplinary practices and theoretical framework of each study and the positions of power that govern the object–subject relations of empirical research. To put it simply, it is only possible to gain objective scientific knowledge by recognizing the limits or "partial visions" of knowledge production (Haraway 1991, 190–191). This does not denote relativism, but critical scrutiny of the researcher's own positionality in the research process (ibid.). It is essential to be explicit about the reasoning behind choices made, which is why we take into account the contexts in which our participants produce their artifacts and in which we analyze them.

First, the students made their artifacts in a lesson planned and implemented within the broader framework of a research project. The Dialogue and Argumentation for Cultural Literacy Learning in Schools (DIALLS) project is funded by the European Union. Hence, its objective is to solve problems related to cultural encounters within Europe, using educational practices designed to further the EU's agenda on cultural diversity. Second, the artifacts are framed by the school context, including the influence of teachers and peers. As Pohjakallio and Pusa (2019, 22) note, children's school art is framed by the expectations of adults. Karolina Kiil (2009), who has researched forbidden images in adolescent's art classes in Estonia and Finland, lists some of the themes that were considered inappropriate in the school contexts that she studied. These themes included signs of ideology (such as symbols of Nazism or religion), race, ethnic violence, bullying, and negative stereotypes (Kiil 2009, 200–212). Third, and lastly, the artifacts are framed by the researchers' respective gazes. The researchers analyzing the student-made artifacts in this book take

approaches common to their fields of expertise, education, and cultural studies. They use power when deciding which signs are relevant and how to interpret them.

Whose voice is heard is an important aspect of power relations. As Allison James (2007, 262) notes, the idea of listening to children's voices has become a "powerful and pervasive mantra for activists and policy makers worldwide" since the UN declaration on the Rights of the Child. Yet it is not easy to uncover children's ideas (as stated in their own voice) and doing so does not necessarily contribute to sharing power or furthering equality. Like Haraway, James thus urges childhood researchers to practice "awareness of the power differentials involved in the researcher–researched relationship," including an awareness of the fact that children's voices do not represent another kind of "truth" or "authenticity" (ibid.). Researchers should, for instance, pay attention to how often they ask the children leading questions.

The uneven power relations in our project are also visible in how the data has been presented to the researchers. For example, a teacher of the youngest age group of children in Israel reported the outcomes of the home and belonging lesson of the CLLP as follows:

> The kids tell us: At first, we painted what a house was for us, we thought and we knew that a house was where we lived.
>
> Then we watched a video about Baboon living on the moon and found out that he misses the earth and whoever is in it. Thanks to the video and seeing that the Baboon is sad we understood that home is a good place to miss.
>
> If we are not with our family they will miss us and we will [miss them].
>
> Talking to friends helped us understand what a home is for them and also better understand what a home is for us.
>
> Our second painting was different from the first one because we understood well what a home is for us. Home is not always the place itself, but it's where the family and people make us feel comfortable and good.

According to the teacher, the program helped the children develop an understanding of the concepts of home and belonging. In particular, it helped the students move from an understanding of home as a house that they live in, to an understanding of home as more than a place. While this development could have occurred, the coherence in the teacher's narrative raises questions of agency. The voice we hear is the teacher's, or at best the student's voices filtered through the teacher. This excerpt clearly narrates

the children's progress as fulfilling a task. As such it paints a picture of good students doing what they were told. Moreover, the text provides an image of the teacher and the project excelling in their tasks. It can, thus, be understood as the teacher's voice reporting the desired progress to the project designers and researchers.

In the school context, the students' visual creations cannot be considered spontaneous or not goal-oriented, as in the romantic view of the innocent eye. As Einarsdottir et al. (2009, 221–222) note in their article on drawings as a means to tap into children's perspectives:

> Teachers and the classroom context are influential factors in the generation of drawings and conversations. When the teacher introduces the task to the whole class, children clearly identify it as an academic task, potentially open to correction or assessment [...] We should not be surprised then, if children completing the activity with their teacher may be constrained by regarding it as a work sample.

In the light of this, researchers should be careful when using artifacts produced by children to gain insights into children's understandings and perspectives. Contextual factors such as the teacher's influence, existing curricula, and institutional practices in general should not be overlooked in analyses of such artifacts. Recordings of what students were saying or doing while drawing provide valuable background information for researchers in this regard (Ivashkevich 2009). Yet even the process of asking children to explain their drawings cannot avoid adult interpretation as "children can become quite adept at giving information that is required to complete the task" (Einarsdottir et al. 2009, 219).

In our research, we see the students as creators of artistic content and as social actors driven by their own interests. As creators of the artifacts, they retained the intellectual property of their work. They also collaborated together to choose artifacts that could be shared in the project website's gallery. This reflects the fact that listening to the student's voices has been a central aim of the project all along. Students were, for example, also consulted in the selection of cultural texts to determine which ones might be suitable to be discussed in classrooms.

Yet in our analysis we present the artifacts without reference to the individual maker's identity. In this, we adhere to confidentiality and data protection principles that seek to protect the identities of individual

research subjects. This dual role of the students as both active participants, whose voices should be heard, and research subjects or children to be protected embodies an ethical problem faced by researchers studying child art in general (Kairavuori 2019; Pennanen 2019). As creators, children should be able to take credit for their work by being named. As research subjects and children, they should, however, be treated as vulnerable and in need of protection. Hence we, as adult researchers, use different "lenses" to navigate the two roles of the students. In general, we treat them as competent producers of the artifacts, but when it comes to reporting the study outcomes, we approach them as vulnerable and use protective measures such as anonymization (Clark 2005, 489).

Our sociocultural approach, then, is to consider the sociocultural contexts of both the creative activity and the analysis of the resulting artifacts. We acknowledge children's agency and look at the cultural influences and ideas transmitted via their visual expressions. In the end, the freedom of self-governed drawing or drawing as play is easily subordinated to the use of drawing as a tool to fulfil a preordained task. The result is a somewhat biased image of the thoughts and ideas of the child participants in this study. As Wood and Hall (2011, 280) put it "children's exercise of power, agency, risk and subversion sits uncomfortably with the normative and socially approved developmental goals in curriculum frameworks." This is the case in research projects that have a pedagogical orientation. As Clark (2005, 491) reminds us, "participation […] implies a sharing of power."

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Multimodality: Art as a Meaning-Making Process

Abstract The authors of the book see multimodality as intrinsic to human communication and texts, and as consisting of a multiplicity of signs. This chapter discusses how this applies in educational settings, to examine how different modes of communication are intertwined and utilized in learning, including children's creative learning practices. In this, the authors use the semiotic concepts that operate in all communicative contexts: Field, tenor, and mode. Through them, the authors view the CLLP as a space that enables social activities, exploration of cultural, social, and societal contents and topics, and the development of social relationships. All this occurs through various communication channels, ranging from linguistic to visual and from auditive to performative expression.

Keywords Multimodality · Sign · Field · Tenor · Mode

Texts as a Multiplicity of Signs

Every child lives in a multimodal world. Usually, children discover the power of different modalities in speech and drawing, sculpturing, or constructing designs even before going to school. School curricula, however, generally concentrate on reading and writing. In them, the arts

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commonly play a secondary role. Multimodal educators consider language to be very important, but not the main or the only way for humans to communicate. Education oriented toward the word, spoken or written, is monomodal. Multimodal education, by contrast, is based on the assumption that the literacies of different modes of communication are equally important in learning. Educators who take this approach ask how the visual arts can serve as a bridge to reading and writing and how music and movement can contribute to our expression of meanings and self. In this view, every text is a multiplicity of signs: As a consequence, writing is both a linguistic sign and a visual one.

Walsh (2009, 126) argues that the technological landscape of the twenty-first century has changed: Written text is no longer the most significant cultural tool deployed to shape our social attitudes and beliefs. Unlike many of their teachers, today even young students may develop literacy competencies in multimodal digital and media environments: This allows them to constantly reconfigure the representational and communicational resources of multiple modes through multimodal design (see Scolari et al. 2018). Yet, classrooms still remain primarily entrenched in print literacy pedagogies. Few spaces exist in schools where multiliteracy curricula are enacted, requiring students to critically read or view and design both print and digital texts, harnessing the multiplicity of semiotic systems. The Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) challenges monomodal approaches and enables different trajectories of multimodal learning by using visual narratives, talk, play, performances, video-making, and drawing tasks alongside written texts and writing tasks.

Educators implementing multimodal education generally base their approach on semiotics. Within semiotics, the concept of text can be understood as including different modes of communication besides mere writing (Barthes 1977). As Crafton, Silvers, and Brennan (2009, 33) note:

> Semiotic theory expands our understanding of literacy and communication by gently sliding language from its central position to work alongside other semiotic modes, particularly the arts, with greater parity. Semiotics is the study of signs, how acts and objects function as signs in relation to other signs in the production and interpretation of meaning. Working together, multiple sign systems produce "texts" that communicate ideas. Texts can take a number of different forms (written, spoken, painted, performed, etc.) but within each text, it is the complex meaning-relations that exist

between one sign and another that breathe life into the communication event.

Various scholars investigate multimodal education. In one of these studies, Maine explores how children construct meanings jointly by interpreting various texts through dialogue. The children in her study discussed films, books, and pictures. Maine (2015, 14) describes reading as "a meaning-making process, a co-constructive comprehension event which necessarily hinges on the interaction between children discussing texts together, and also on the way they interact with the texts themselves." Similar to the semiotic concept of text, "reading" is understood here as communication in other modes besides the written word. While the technical codes in the different modes of texts are different, many narrative features transcend them, and readers draw on many of the same strategies to make meaning from them (Maine 2016, 3–4):

> To comprehend the text more fully, we predict what is going to happen, we ask questions of the texts to explore meanings, we empathize with the characters and imagine ourselves in the story, and we make connections to situations we know, or to other stories that we have encountered. This is the same, whether we are reading a film or reading a book, we just use different "clues" to support our mental image of meaning.

Halliday sees human learning as essentially meaning-making and thus as a semiotic process. For him, "the prototypical form of human semiotics is language. Hence the ontogenesis of language is at the same time the ontogenesis of learning (Halliday 1993, 93)." Language is vital to communicating meanings and cocreating them with others—and thus meaning-making is central to learning. To use language to make meanings in collaboration, people first need to learn the language system and the common rules of communication and dialogue (see Maine 2015, 17).

Semiotic Meaning-making Categories: Field, Tenor, and Mode

Unsworth bases his research into multimodal semiotics in education on multimodal social semiotics, which stems from the interconnectedness of linguistic and social spheres. In this, he builds on Halliday who claims that "the structures of language have evolved (and continue to

evolve) as a result of the meaning-making functions they serve within the social system or culture in which they are used" (Unsworth 2020, 6). Halliday emphasizes that language is only one semiotic system among many, including artforms such as painting, sculpture, music, and dance, and other modes of cultural behavior not usually classified as art, such as modes of dress or structures of the family. All of these modes of meaning-making interrelate and their totality might be thought of as a way of defining a culture (Unsworth 2008a, 1). Unsworth (2020, 2008b) suggests that all semiotic systems can be grouped into three main categories, which he calls metafunctions: Representational/ideational, interactive/interpersonal, and compositional/textual. These three categories of meaning-making or metafunctions are related to three situational variables that operate in all communicative contexts: Field, tenor, and mode.

In Unsworth's account, "field is concerned with the social activity, its content or topic," "tenor is the nature of the relationships among the people involved in the communication" (Unsworth 2020, 6), and "mode is the medium and channel of communication" that is "concerned with the role of language in the situation – whether spoken or written – accompanying or constitutive of the activity, and the ways in which relative information value is conveyed" (Unsworth 2008b, 379). These three situational variables resonate in Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001, 2006) social semiotics. According to the "grammar of visual design," images, like language, always simultaneously represent three realities (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006): The *material reality*, the interpersonal interaction of *social reality* (such as the relations between viewers and viewed), and the *semiotic reality* (in which images cohere into textual compositions in different ways).

The situational variables of field, tenor, and mode all appear within the implementation of the CLLP. Field may be detected in the main topics of each lesson and the activities structured around them. In this social embedding, cultural literacy themes such as living together, social responsibility, and belonging—and subthemes such as celebrating diversity, solidarity, equality, human rights, home, social and civic competence, and sustainable development—are used to ignite discussion and to inspire the creation of visual artifacts. Field thus reveals the representational/ideational structures that verbally and visually construct the nature of the events, objects, and participants involved, and the circumstances in which they occur (Unsworth 2008a, 2–3). In the implementation of the CLLP, field was expressed on different levels of abstraction: Starting

from a rather abstract problem with an intense social meaning (e.g., social responsibility), a cultural text (a wordless picture book or a short film, usually a cartoon) was explored, serving as a springboard for class discussion and the creation of an artifact, reflected on verbally in captions.

Tenor may be traced in the choice of expression influenced by the social roles that people take in a communicative situation. In the context of the CLLP, tenor is revealed in the roles that the students adopted as viewers and readers of films and books and as creators of their own artifacts, or "texts" (text here referring to images and combinations of image, text, and sound). The assumed audiences that they addressed were teachers and researchers, but also other students. As tenor is affected by expertise, status, gender, and age, one might expect the students to adopt registers that transmit their roles as learners following school conventions and their cultural adherences in general. In order to understand changes in modality, one thus needs to consider whom the students seek to address.

Mode becomes visible in the choice of medium, or in terms of semiotic reality, the choices of expression on word/image level. In this case, a focus on modes zooms in on the expressive means and the conventions followed to communicate the desired idea or effect. As Kress (2010, 28) notes, "in communication several modes are always used together, in modal ensembles, designed so that each mode has a specific task and function." Speech may combine with gesture, still/moving image, action, and color in whatever way is considered an apt means of representation.

We refer to multimodality as the intertwined use and transitioning between modalities such as written text, image, audiovisual image, sculpture, theater, etc. Yet changes in modality occur also when a written narrative is turned into a poem, or when a pencil drawing is produced by reinterpreting a digitally produced image. That is, different modalities exist within images alone or texts alone as well. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, 154–174), for example, discuss modality as a means to evaluate the reliability of messages via their "realness." In this account, "high" modality refers to a higher amount of detail as well as the use/prevalence of perspective and color (following the assumed "naturalistic" objectivity of the photographic image) while "low" modality is defined via the lack of the above, or, flatness and lack of detail and color. Yet, what is more central to our approach is that multimodal expression may include questions of authenticity and authorship (and hence creativity): Multimodal text composition may resort to practices such as downloading, sampling,

cutting and pasting, and recontextualization, and thus it is prone to accusations of plagiarism and "mere copying" (Kress 2010, 24). However, as stated before in chapter two, we view similarities in the students' artifacts as proof of dialogic engagement with the source text and with the artifacts produced by other students.

Tracing Field, Tenor, and Mode (Material, Social, and Semiotic Realities) in the CLLP

One of the positive challenges included in the project design is related to the multiple structures in the field described above. Since cultural literacy was taught via discussions of multiple abstract themes and various concrete materials it is not easy to discuss the resulting student-made artifacts as one combined multimodal narrative of cultural literacy. The question then becomes: How can the correlation between the themes and the activities be ensured? How can teachers and students maintain focus on a single theme, such as living together, throughout a lesson? To succeed in this, educators had to ask themselves: Does the cultural text that the students are asked to explore respond to *their* understanding of the abstract theme of the lesson? The wordless picture books and films included the richness of signs enabling various topics of discussion beyond the core theme in each lesson of the CLLP.

Compositional/textual meanings concern the distribution of the information value or relative emphasis among elements of the text (Unsworth 2008a, 2–3). As teaching and learning in the CLLP are based on wordless picture books and short films, the language of these texts is mostly visual. The compositional structure of images in them is expressive. For example, the picture book *Naar de Markt* (*To the Market* 2017) by Noëlle Smit suggested for students aged 4–7 to explore celebrating diversity (a subtheme of living together) contains several levels of signs of diversity. The question arises: From whose perspective is the visual story created? Each picture showing what is going on at the market reveals the interests of different groups of people. Stallholders want to sell their products so they are advertising them. Customers want to buy the best food and are watching the sellers and examining the food. Birds want to steal some of the food on display. Yet, the story focuses on a small girl, the only child in most of the pictures. The girl is not interested in the actions of the sellers and buyers since all of her attention is concentrated on the events on the ground: The dogs or cats who are running

nearby and the birds that are eating the fish. In the book, the market is full of life, energy, and colors, which all emphasize the cultural diversity of the scene(s). The illustrations depict people with different ethnic backgrounds, skin colors, and styles of dress. This book, and its imagery of peaceful everyday life uniting people with different interests and ethnic backgrounds into a harmonious whole, can be used to discuss celebrating diversity based on equality and human rights.

In the CLLP, the lesson based on *To the Market* included three optional tasks for the students. In one of these tasks, the teachers and students were asked to consider the sonic aspects of the scenes via questions such as: What sounds do you hear? What do people say? What languages do you hear? What sounds do animals or objects make? To create these soundscapes, students had to change the semiotic mode of the story from visual to auditory. In another task, students were asked to create a visual response to the story by identifying with the stallholders and imagining selling items at the market. In this task, the instructions directed the students to make a drawing responding to the question: What kind of goods do you decide to put on display and sell? This task was thus based on the same semiotic mode as the picture book. Students' visual response to the book in their artifacts was to present food items familiar to them, including traditional local or national dishes. Some of the teachers changed the semiotic mode from visual to three-dimensional by replacing the drawing task with sculpting (Fig. 3.1).

Pedagogically, *To the Market* enables the exploration of different perspectives and routines of everyday life. For instance, the story differs when viewed from the perspective of the girl, her mother, a seller, any of the customers in the crowd at the market, a dog, or even a bird.

The CLLP reveals itself as a dynamic teaching and learning practice emanating from a variety of semiotic modes. For example, in a task on sustainable development, the students were asked to create their own "want" pile (to list what they wanted) and to turn this pile into a mess monster following the book they had just read, *Balbúrdia* (*Shambles* 2015) by Teresa Cortez, which described a similar metamorphosis. The ensuing artifacts were then photographed and explained with a caption. This instruction illustrates the multitasking nature of the CLLP and its semiotic objective to transform modes of communication.

Immersing oneself even more deeply in texts (picture books and films in the CLLP), allows one to concentrate on their multiplicity of signs

Fig. 3.1 A sculpture of market stalls with local products created by a German student in the youngest age group

and reflect upon their meanings. Roche proposes in *Developing Children's Critical Thinking through Picturebooks* (2015) that the illustrations in picture books should be studied, reflected on, and discussed very attentively, even meditatively, starting from the cover page as a paratext creating meanings for the whole book. This type of study takes a lot of time. Time is needed to explore and find correlations between visual and verbal signs within a semiotic mode: within this, compositional/textual meanings are important. The CLLP did not aim at rehearsing students' visual literacy as such. However, drawing on visual literacy enabled the teachers and students to make sense of the meanings in the visual stimulus. In the CLLP, students engaged most fully with the compositional/textual meanings of the cultural texts when they were asked to describe a particular sequence of events from the picture book or film in their cultural artifact. Students did this in a lesson on the theme of living together and its subtheme of equality, targeted to the second age group and using the film *Isän poika* (*Papa's Boy* 2010) by Leevi Lemmetty as

a stimulus. Students were asked to produce a comic strip showing the father's and son's emotions at the beginning, middle, and end of the story and to write a short paragraph explaining their comic strip. Compositional/textual meaning in this case played the main role in recognizing the protagonists' emotions.

The variety of the tasks in the CLLP changed the structure of tenor. As tenor is the nature of the relationships among the people involved in communication, at the very beginning of the CLLP lessons the students can be considered as viewers establishing their relation to what is viewed. Receiving the task to create the artifact themselves changed the interactive relationship to the readers, writers, and visualizers, and thus as interpreters and meaning creators. This reflects Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) idea of relating what they call the "image act" to the system of speech act and person in language. The system of person can describe the tenor as the nature of interpersonal communication. There are three basic options: First person (I or we), second person (you), and third person (he, she, they).

In our data, the students often used the "I" perspective to explore the themes and subthemes. One illustration of this is the artifact with a very short caption in Fig. 3.2, which was created by a student in the oldest age group. On the left side of the picture, one can see the word "Mum" and the name of a city. On the right side of the picture, one can see the word "Dad" and the name of a village. The signs of the picture tell the story of a life split between different spatial locations. The child in the picture is standing alone between the different spaces and their social spheres. The artifact was a response to the task in which the students were asked to create a leporello (a concertina-folded leaflet), with a sequence of sketches representing their own everyday culture in a lesson on living together and the subtheme of celebrating diversity, using the book *Excetric City* (2014) by Béatrice Coron as a stimulus. The student preferred to work on this topic alone, focusing on her current life situation.

As most of the tasks in the CLLP were designed for small groups or the whole class, most captions were written in the first-person plural; the agent was "we" or "us." However, students could respond to the same task by expressing different perspectives. Many groups responded (as expected) to the above task by emphasizing the "we" perspective: "We are all different. We painted our celebrations, friends, the gym, school, home – the things which are personally important to us. These drawings indicate our differences," as one group of students write in their

Fig. 3.2 Artifacts by Israeli (above) and Lithuanian (below) students in the oldest age group exploring the topic of living together

caption. Another group noted: "These drawings indicate our differences because we all think differently, everybody's attitude to the same aspects is different." The perspective could also change from "we" to "they," as a caption by one group of students doing this same task illustrates:

> In this book [artifact] we wanted to show the world's uniqueness and variety. The world on its own isn't original but people make it authentic by coloring its parts. Each of us colors a little piece and together the world becomes a rainbow full of creativity and rich in its unique beauty. People's authenticity was shown in the book.

The intertwinement of the "we" and "they" perspectives is also visible in the following caption where a group of students gave their leporello:

> We tried to portray that people can help, give to each other when they don't have something. We all have some emptiness within ourselves and we are different in the way we choose to fill it. This book is trying to express those ways of filling. People who experience the same empathy usually look at it differently. But what matters is what we give, not what we receive.

The caption approaches empathy from a "they" perspective. It was, however, more common in the captions to deal with empathy from the first-person perspective.

The change of perspective and its impact on meanings is illustrated in an artifact by another student responding to the same task of creating a leporello (Fig. 3.2). In it, this student from a little town describes her own daily life. She tells the reader what she likes: Nature and meeting her friends. She ends her caption by changing her perspective from "I" to "we" and challenging the optimistic mood of the previous self-presentation:

> In my page, I liked to show that our lives and environment are not always perfect. Some of us enjoy good marks at school, popular friends, but at the same time, we do not always notice that there are a lot of different people, who are not so happy. It's a pity that we don't always try to support them, to help them. Even when they experience bullying.

In her expressive picture, one can discern various visual signs of bullying. These signs visualize bullying as a cloud full of mockery and

aggressive gestures that one cannot avoid. The cloud spreads over the horizon. The student who experiences bullying is captured in a dark circle. The faces of the other students disappear: They become like stony mannequins, not supporting or helping the classmate in trouble. By visual signs, the creator of the artifact tells the story of bullying and reveals the deep loneliness of an unhappy child. Somehow both the pictures in Fig. 7.2 express more than what can be described in words. Behind the images lurks sadness or even despair, inexpressible in words. When comparing linguistic and nonlinguistic devices, Eco (1976) noticed that both contribute to a subset of contents which are translatable from one device to the other; this conception leaves aside a vast portion of "unspeakable" but not "inexpressible" contents. The "unspeakable" but not "inexpressible" in both alternatives—verbal and nonverbal—always remains (Eco 1976, 173).

To sum up, the learning process in the CLLP is based on multimodal education, in which one mode of communication becomes interpreted and explored through another. For us, multimodality is a "normal state of human communication" (Kress 2010, 1), and every text can be perceived as a multiplicity of signs. We discuss this multiplicity with the semiotic concepts that operate in all communicative contexts: Field, tenor, and mode. Through them, the CLLP can be seen as a space for engaging in social activities; exploring cultural, social, and societal contents and topics; and creating and elaborating social relationships. Various media and communication channels are used to do this, ranging in the CLLP from linguistic to visual and from auditive to performative expression.

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Tolerance, Empathy, and Inclusion

Abstract In this chapter, the authors analyze the artifacts in which the students explore the key attitudes of cultural literacy within the CLLP: Tolerance, empathy, and inclusion. The chapter introduces each attitude with critical discussion of its meanings, connections, and relations to other key concepts of cultural literacy, such as diversity, equality, and democracy. The authors explore how the program addresses these attitudes and the cultural texts it includes. The analysis of the artifacts reveals the variety of ways in which children give meanings to tolerance, empathy, and inclusion, such as helping others. In this meaning-making process, the students draw from their own experiences and emotions.

Keywords Tolerance · Empathy · Inclusion · Democracy

Core Components of Cultural Literacy

In this chapter, we explore how the artifacts created by the students in the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) address tolerance, empathy, and inclusion—the key attitudes of cultural literacy as defined in the DIalogue and Argumentation for cultural Literacy Learning in Schools (DIALLS) project. Cultural literacy is a dialogic social practice involved in relating to others (Maine et al. 2019, 390). It includes an

assumption that we may perceive these others as different from us, and that through tolerance, empathy, and inclusion we are able to engage with each other in meaningful and constructive ways.

Dialogue, the key tenet of cultural literacy as it is understood in DIALLS, is necessary for democracy characterized by plurality and dissent. Tolerance, empathy, and inclusion as core components of cultural literacy are relevant to the public debate that is a hallmark of democracy. Particularly in deliberative democracy, dialogue is essential to equal participation in decision-making and to improving the quality of democracy (e.g., Dryzek 2000).

The data used in this chapter consists of 228 cultural artifacts made by students in five lessons who were given five different cultural texts to inspire their explorations of tolerance, empathy, and inclusion. These artifacts are mainly drawings, but the data includes collages using readymade materials, such as magazine clippings. Some of the artifacts were created individually while others were made collaboratively, in small groups or with the whole class. Some of the jointly created artifacts consist of several individually created parts.

Concepts not only reflect reality, but also create and shape it, for example by constituting norms and practices (Lähdesmäki et al. 2020). Concepts are constructed and contested in debates and used as powerful tools to both change and maintain the status quo (Wiesner et al. 2018). Tolerance, empathy, and inclusion are impactful and influential concepts frequently used in debates on contemporary problems, such as the polarization of societies and racism. Therefore, the following exploration of tolerance, empathy, and inclusion in the students' artifacts starts with a brief discussion on the respective concepts.

Tolerance: Helping Strangers

Tolerance is an attitude to perceived cultural or physical differences between people or differing opinions. Tolerance can mean refraining from interfering with an opposed other (Cohen 2004, 69), while a broader understanding of tolerance includes recognizing the other as equal instead of deviant, inferior, or marginal (Galeotti 2002, 9–10). Nevertheless, the concept of tolerance implicitly refers to something that is perceived not only as different but also to some extent as negative or undesirable—but that should be tolerated (Klix 2019). As such, the concept can sustain prejudices rather than mitigate them, create pejorative conceptions of

the "tolerated" others, and undermine their self-esteem. Moreover, the power relation between the tolerating agent and the tolerated subject(s) is unequal. What is regarded as different and by whom are questions which raise deeply problematic issues of inequality (Galeotti 2002, 8). To repair the power imbalances and to avoid unnecessarily judging and labeling things as desirable/undesirable—and in need of tolerating—altogether, it would be useful to replace the concept of tolerance with other concepts, such as openness, respect, acceptance, and appreciation of diversity. These other concepts are included in the definition of tolerance used in the DIALLS framework (DIALLS 2018).

Understanding tolerance in terms of recognition puts equality at its heart. Sometimes some differences can be markers of oppressed or excluded collective identities; people with these identities may be refused or offered second-class membership in the polity and lack the preconditions for full participation in democratic citizenship (Galeotti 2002, 6, 9). Tolerance is thus ultimately a question of justice, recognizing differences, and ensuring they hold an equal position in the public sphere (Galeotti 2002, 10).

The lesson on tolerance with the youngest age group in the CLLP was based on a book called *Owl Bat Bat Owl* (2015) by Marie Louise Fitzpatrick. It tells a story of owls and bats who end up living on the same branch of a tree. In this lesson, before starting to make the artifacts, the children were supposed to discuss respect and why it is important to respect people who are different. In the lesson plan, based on the book, the students were invited to discuss why it is "important that the two families learned to live together and share." The lesson goals focused on listening to others and respecting their ideas. The instructions for creating in-lesson artifacts ask the students to picture the "owls and bats living happily together"; after the lesson, the students were encouraged to make a collage of local nocturnal animals showing "how they all live together happily." These tasks demonstrate how animal characters were used in the lesson to deal with the questions of human life. This tradition of animal fables is used in several other CLLP lessons as well. Most of the artifacts on tolerance in the youngest age group were made by children in Cyprus (34) and the UK (14), while the other nine artifacts were made in Lithuania, Portugal, and Spain.

Most of the artifacts by the youngest children follow the book *Owl Bat Bat Owl* carefully: The children have drawn the moon, tree, bats, and owls and used the same colors as those in the book (Fig. 4.1). In some

Fig. 4.1 The images from two different countries, Cyprus (left) and Britain (right), exemplify the unified character of the artifacts and their similarity with the book that was used as a cultural text to stimulate the youngest students' exploration of tolerance in this lesson

artifacts, however, the story is relocated into daylight and some other elements, such as flowers, have been added to the scene. The instructions for the artifact advised the children to picture how the owls and bats live happily together. This is explicitly repeated in the captions, in which the children emphasize happiness, friendship, and the sense of togetherness. The instructions for the artifact also asked what the animals might do together. The children have given answers to this in their captions by mentioning activities such as sharing space and food, helping each other, playing together, and having a party. This lesson, thus, comes close to the DIALLS theme of living together (see Chapter 5).

In the second age group, a short film called *La Cage* (*In a Cage* 2016) by Loïc Bruyère was used to catalyze students' ideas on tolerance. The film shows a bear in a cage on display in a park. Time passes, seasons change, and visitors walk past the cage, until one day his longtime friend, a bird, with other birds of different species, frees the bear. The lesson was designed to start with a whole-class discussion on freedom. After watching, the students were given a list of emotions and invited to reflect on the emotions related to the film in a group activity, followed by whole-class discussion. In the lesson plan, the goal of this reflection was learning to recognize "others' emotions when they are in a difficult situation,"

which refers to empathy rather than tolerance. The cultural artifacts were made in the same small groups. The groups were asked to make a poster with the title "Save the animal from the cage." The task invited students to feel empathy not only to human beings but also to animals—at least those in a zoo (see Chapters 5 and 6). The data comprises 18 artifacts from Cyprus, 13 from Portugal, and six from Spain.

The fact that the children were given a precise task, to make a poster on freeing animals, explains the uniform shape of the artifacts and their titles. Many of the images depict an animal in a cage and the bird. In Fig. 4.2,
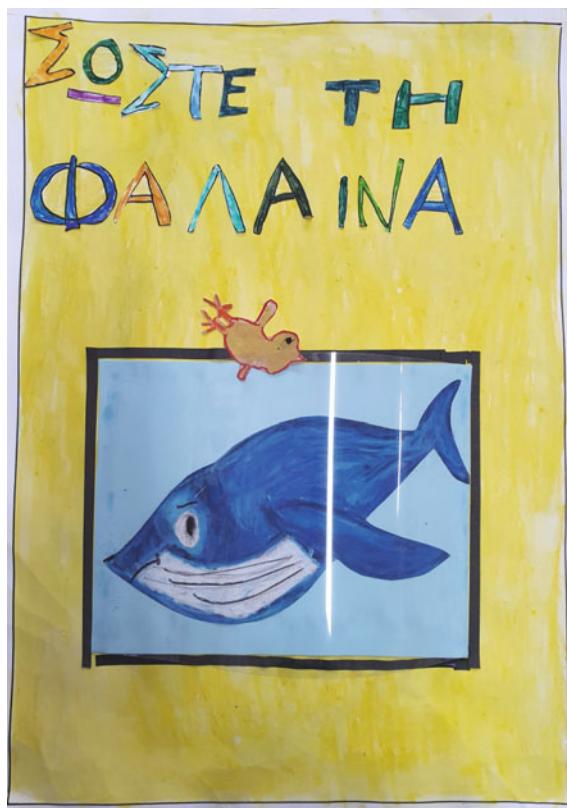
Fig. 4.2 This drawing, titled "Save the whale," was made in the lesson on tolerance by a Cypriot student from the second age group

there is, however, no cage, but the whale is inside a delineating, separating frame and the bird crosses the boundary and creates a connection with the whale. This echoes how, in the film that was used as a stimulus in this lesson, a bird brings a change to the long-term captivity of the bear. That the instructions also gave a list of emotions for the students to work with contributed to the seeming lack of direct references to tolerance in the artifacts. Instead, the captions mention animals feeling sad and lonely in cages and happy after being released.

While the film shows different bird species collaborating, some of the artifacts similarly highlight collective action to free the animals using various means, from a truck to a helicopter. Some of them also express notions of civic action and public debate: One caption explains how people organized demonstrations to save the animals and another describes how "many people got together and spoke out" to find a way to rescue the animals. These images and texts reflect complex ideas of expressing opinions, influencing, and mobilizing in a public sphere. As such, they connect with another DIALLS subtheme, civic competence, included in social responsibility (see Chapter 6). They also reflect the idea of dialogue, which is defined as a core component of cultural literacy in the DIALLS framework. In general, the artifacts do not indicate negative tolerance as noninterference (Cohen 2004), but rather active collaboration against oppression.

The catalyst for addressing tolerance in the oldest age group was a short film called *Super grand* (*Super Big* 2014) by Marjolaine Perreten. In this age group, students from Germany, Lithuania, and Spain produced a total of 11 artifacts addressing tolerance. The film depicts a giant child in a superhero cape arriving in a city. The child tries to help the inhabitants but they are afraid of the child because the child is so big. When a volcano near the city starts to erupt, the child stops the eruption, with their parent, who is even bigger. The story suggests that one should not be afraid of difference, since it may prove to be an asset in the community. In this sense, the storyline follows the logic of many superhero narratives, where difference is transformed into a superpower that helps the community (on otherness and superheroes, see Goodrum et al. 2018).

As a warmup exercise, the students were asked to give examples of tolerance. After watching the film, the group was encouraged to discuss how we could live out tolerance and how appearances might be deceptive. The question given for the discussion with the other class, also included in the lesson (see Chapter 1), was: What means might help to

promote tolerance? After this, the students were asked again to give examples of tolerance and empathy and whether the lesson had changed their thinking. The students were not asked to reflect on the role of making art or creative practices in exploring abstract issues such as tolerance during the lesson, as the cultural artifacts were made only after it.

The instruction for the cultural artifact invited the students to continue the story of the film by drawing in groups or pairs. Most of these drawings described how people cheer and applaud the superhero who has saved the community (Fig. 4.3). The artifacts can thus be interpreted as expressing the theme of tolerance as it is framed by the book: the gigantic girl's different size is turned into a superpower to be celebrated, emphasizing how differences should be tolerated and even celebrated. However, the book and the artifacts seem to suggest a problematic approach to tolerance and celebration: They need to be earned through doing something useful and even extraordinary for the community. This approach does not highlight tolerance as a matter of justice and equality (see Galeotti 2002).

Some students in the oldest age group made their own short films, thereby widening the range of the multimodal creative practices to audio-visual artifacts. In a film called *The Bird*, the students deal with intense experiences of tolerance and intolerance. A bird called Paul is violently bullied at school because he likes reading. One day he is beaten so badly that he needs hospital treatment. His situation improves when he saves another bird, Dani, from drowning, and they become friends. The film has a long temporal horizon, which helps viewers to see that situations change in time. Paul and Dani spend all their school years together and find other likeminded friends in high school. At the end, Paul is planning to become a psychologist to be able to help children with similar difficulties. In a sense, the film follows the logic of superhero narratives by transforming Paul's difficult experiences into a "superpower" that he can use for the benefit of others.

Two other films made by students use Playmobil figures that look tiny next to the hero of the story, a big doll in one and a drawn image in another. The films, similarly to drawings based on *Super Big*, present a happy end, in which the giant hero gets thankful applause and cheers for saving the community from danger. All the artifacts follow the *Super Big* film by playing with proportions, although relocating the story to another setting. They all depict music, joy, and parties expressing how fear and prejudice turn into relief, gratitude, and acceptance. Tolerance here means respect and appreciation of difference (see DIALLS 2018).

Fig. 4.3 In the artifacts on tolerance made by the oldest age group, such as this artifact by a student from Germany, it was common to depict celebrations of the superhero's bravery in defending the community against danger

The artifacts show the superhero as an individual who is alone, whereas the other members of the community are illustrated as part of a big group. Thus the unequal power relations (see Galeotti 2002) between the superhero and the rest of the community are made visible although not problematized.

To summarize, in the lessons focusing on tolerance, the cultural texts used for all age groups depict a situation in which the actors are strangers to each other at first but end up helping each other. Based on mutual help and sharing, they develop a sense of togetherness. Respectively, artifacts on tolerance in all the age groups focused on helping each other.

Empathy: Recognizing Emotions

The DIALLS project's definition of empathy drew on Buber's notion of I-Thou (1958) which describes the necessity of moving away from an objectifying world view that highlights "other" (I-It) and instead includes the relational sense of engagement (I-Thou)—underpinned by genuine dialogue (Buber, 1947). The project approached empathy as "what happens when we put ourselves into another's situation and experience that person's emotions as if they were our own" (Lipman 2003, 269; DIALLS 2018, 22).

It is more common to feel empathy—consideration of others' emotions, positions, and perspectives—toward one's own ingroups than outgroups. These empathy biases may strengthen stereotypes and prejudices against people we do not know, who seem far away, or appear very different from us (Bloom 2016). We need to develop notions of empathy that avoid these pitfalls.

Solhaug and Osler (2017) define intercultural empathy as fostering encounter between multiple groups with perceived cultural differences. It includes both cognitive and emotional aspects, feelings and expression of empathy, empathetic awareness, acceptance of cultural difference, and empathetic perspective-taking (Wang et al. 2003). Intercultural competencies influence our ability to recognize and enable solidarity across differences. Solhaug and Osler (2017, 6) emphasize the capacity and willingness "to empathize and identify with others in a spirit of solidarity." Perceiving similarities and being open to different perspectives can facilitate intergroup relations and trigger positive feelings, a sense of togetherness, and inclusiveness, for instance in schools. This is important for inclusive citizenship in the current global and European climate.

Solhaug and Osler (2017, 9) highlight experience and knowledge of diversity as an important predictor of intercultural empathy. It can be learned through experience, and schools are crucial arenas for intercultural contact, for practicing and learning the inclusiveness that can stimulate intercultural empathy and inclusive citizenship (ibid., 8, 23).

Teachers can harness this potential to create harmony and mutual understanding by inviting students to reflect on and discuss diversity, and to address potential controversies and concerns that could affect inclusive citizenship in practice (ibid., 13, 28). Open dialogue is a way to engage with differences and controversies in class through deliberative democratic practice (ibid., 27; see also Habermas 1994; Englund 2006; Hess 2009).

Conceiving of it as a process that involves both affective and cognitive components, Morrell (2010, 114) claims that empathy is necessary for citizens to show toleration, mutual respect, reciprocity, and openness to others. All this is needed for deliberative democracy to function, so that everyone affected can be involved in decision-making processes. Empathy as openness and responsiveness to other perspectives is needed for developing political judgment, a core skill in democracy. For Arendt (1993a, 217–221), political judgment is dialogic and multi-perspective (though she denies that it is about empathy). "The more people's standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place, the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my final conclusions, my opinion" (Arendt 1993b, 241).

This kind of political judgment relates to the principle of *audi alteram partem* (listen to the other side), a cornerstone of justice and equality. According to this principle, no person should be judged without a fair hearing in which each party has the opportunity to respond to the evidence against them. The same idea is central to the parliamentary *pro et contra* principle for fair debate of opposing arguments in the same discussion (Palonen and Rosales 2015). Empathy, listening skills, and openness to other perspectives can be seen as prerequisites for these principles to work. The reverse is also true: inclusive processes of deliberation, where people are encouraged to consider others' positions, can enhance empathy toward outgroups and eventually result in altruistic behavior (Grönlund et al. 2017).

Activity has been defined as a core dimension of empathy (Aaltola and Keto 2017), and according to Solhaug and Osler (2017, 6), empathy is required for collective action. For Fraser (2009, 2013) parity of participation means the ability of members of a society to act together as peers, willing and able to put themselves in each other's shoes and take others' perspectives into consideration—in sum, parity of participation is about being empathic.

In our data, empathy is explicitly dealt with only one lesson for the youngest age group. Based on a book called *On the Trail* (2016) by Anna Ring, students from Cyprus produced 39 artifacts exploring empathy, students from Portugal, 24, and students from Spain one artifact. The book describes how a girl and her father notice that someone is stealing food from their house. They soon find out that the thief is a stray cat and start chasing her. Once they discover that the cat is stealing food to feed her kittens, they change their mind about the "thief" and help to take care of the cat family. The instructions for the lessons proposed a discussion about finding reasons for why someone does something, ability to change your mind, and the importance of not judging someone's action straight away. For the cultural artifact, the students were asked to picture "happy/sad/angry/excited children" with thought bubbles to indicate several reasons for their feelings. Hence, the task focuses clearly on affective rather than cognitive or active components of empathy (Morrell 2010; Aaltola and Keto 2017), even though the film offered ideas about changing one's mind and giving help. While this lesson enables approaching empathy through the ideas of dialogue, deliberation, and openness to other perspectives (Arendt 1993a, b; Grönlund et al. 2017; Solhaug and Osler 2017), it does not explicitly encourage the children to engage with these aspects of empathy.

Making this artifact gave the children the opportunity to recognize their own emotions (Fig. 4.4), which is important if empathy means understanding others' feelings and insights. Most of the artifacts deal with happiness. For example, the children explain in their captions that they feel happy for several reasons and related to various activities, people, and locations, such as playing, friends, animals, family, parties, and nature. The reasons the children give for happiness include going on a trip to the mountains and making a snowman, playing with dad and being tickled by him, sleeping over at grandma's in the summer, the ice cream man passing by, going to school with friends, and playing with a cousin.

Inclusion: Doing Things Together

As a central aspect of inclusion, the DIALLS project (2018, 11) emphasizes the need for building deep mutual relations with other people. Inclusion is about membership of a community. Social inclusion has been described as individuals and groups participating as valued equals in the social, economic, political, and cultural life of the community; it involves

Fig. 4.4 A collage exploring empathy by students in the first age group from Cyprus depicts a range of emotions

mutually trusting and respectful interpersonal relationships at the family, peer, and community levels (Crawford 2003 as quoted in Babacan 2005, 11).

Inclusion is often discussed in the context of diversity and asymmetrical power relations (e.gYoung 2000; Ahmed 2012). Groups that perceive themselves as excluded may seek full membership of the society. In some cases, those already included may seek to include others in particular groups, institutions, or the society at large. A broad literature on inclusive education explores the equal opportunities of students from various backgrounds to participate in the school institution (Jagdish 2000; Allan 2003; Potts 2003; Armston 2006). Inclusion has a flip side: Exclusion can refer to rights, recognition, socioeconomic status, access, and barriers to participation (e.g., Hayes et al. 2008). Inclusion and exclusion are thus core issues of justice and equality.

Elements contributing to social inclusion include access to social goods and services, resource allocation, empowerment, participation in decision-making, and institutional trust (Babacan 2005, 11). Citizenship as a legal status, access to rights and active public participation is a significant vector of inclusion (Babacan 2005, 12–13); however, citizenship has exclusive

implications. Inclusive citizenship includes values such as justice, recognition, self-determination, and solidarity (Kabeer 2005 as quoted in Lister 2007, 50–51). When solidarity is understood as the ability to identify with others and act with them in their claims for justice and recognition (Kabeer 2005, 7 as quoted in Lister 2007, 51) it comes close to belonging (see Chapter 7), which is crucial for inclusion. Creating understanding between people fosters inclusion (Babacan 2005, 11), which connects it closely to empathy and other dimensions of cultural literacy.

Inclusion was the explicit topic of only one lesson for the youngest age group in our data. Fifteen artifacts from Cyprus, 23 from Portugal, and 21 from the UK dealt with inclusion based on a film called *Big Finds a Trumpet* (2017) by Dan Castro. In the film, two characters, one big and one small, interact with a trumpet. They need to find ways to take turns in playing the trumpet and play it without disturbing others. The instructions for the discussion advise the group to identify what skills the main characters in the film have and what are they good or less good at, and provide justifications for these interpretations. In their cultural artifacts, the students were asked to draw a character to be glued on a lolly stick. Finally, the group was supposed to discuss how the pictures differ to create debate on "how we are all different but we all accept each other."

The task given for this lesson was very general, referring as much to tolerance as inclusion, and so some teachers may have adjusted the task. For example, the children were asked to write in a thought bubble and draw things which they are good at, such as drawing, playing football, swimming, playing cards, and waking up early to go to school. This task probably stems from the question for the discussion on the film, asking what the main characters are good or less good at. Perhaps making these artifacts can help the students to recognize their own strengths, which makes them feel they belong to a group and can welcome others, and thereby develops their thinking about inclusion. Students in another group also made an artifact that was not mentioned in the lesson plan, a collage depicting the games they play together. This may have encouraged students to reflect on their own group and how they spend time together, and as such rouse their team spirit. This reflection may promote inclusion, provided everyone can participate in the activities. Both tasks show that different people have different skills and preferred activities, which may feed into the idea that this diversity makes the group or community stronger.

Conclusions: Entangled Attitudes

The attitudes of tolerance, empathy, and inclusion are closely connected, also to other CLLP themes, particularly to living together. This entwinement was visible in the lesson plans and the instructions for making the artifacts. Consequently, the artifacts made by students elaborated on the three attitudes simultaneously.

When dealing with these abstract topics, students drew from their own experiences and concrete things in their lives. Influences from contemporary popular (children's) culture were less frequent. Even though the students used their own experiences, the artifacts share a notable number of similarities, thus manifesting the dialogic chain of thinking (Maine 2015; see also Chapter 9). The unifying influence of the school context (see Chapter 1) is clearly present in the data. The artifacts reflect the instructions and cultural texts used in the lessons so strongly that based on these artifacts, we cannot get a complete picture of how the students themselves understood tolerance, empathy, and inclusion.

Emotions play a central role in the lessons and the artifacts made in them. Emotions are a channel through which the three attitudes are expressed. Although the link between emotions and the three attitudes is somewhat abstract in the lesson plans and the artifacts, emotions can be seen as essential in developing tolerance, empathy, and inclusion. In effect, learning about emotions is needed in schools and in the surrounding society, and creative practices can contribute to this. Previous research has discussed how various artforms can increase empathy and influence others (see, e.g., Stout 1999; Fialho 2019; Lähdesmäki and Koistinen 2021). They can provide a space for using the imagination, constructing relationships with "the imagined other" (Leavy 2017, 199), and imagining their experiences.

Creative practices provide a channel to train cultural literacy and its key elements, tolerance, empathy, and inclusion. Dialogue, a core component of learning cultural literacy in the CLLP, helps people to gain new knowledge and to understand various standpoints (see Arendt 1993a, b; Morrell 2010; Grönlund et al. 2017). It enables encounter and provides experiences of diversity. Such interaction can mitigate prejudices and encourage people to look beyond the polarizations constructed in populist discourses. It strengthens critical thinking and can help to combat misinformation and conspiracy theories. All this makes dialogue an important resource for democracy.

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CHAPTER 5

Living Together

Abstract In this chapter, the authors analyze the artifacts in which students explore the idea of living together as a peaceful interaction between people and mutual enrichment of their difference based on basic rights and freedoms as well as mutual respect. In the CLLP, living together is approached as celebration of diversity intertwined with solidarity, equality, and human rights. The analysis reveals that students often approach living together from their own point of view, but are able to see others' perspectives. The chapter discusses how learning about solidarity requires sensitivity for difference and thus lessons on the subject need to be planned carefully to ensure inclusive cultural practices and respect for diversity and difference.

Keywords Living together · Solidarity · Equality · Human rights

DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF LIVING TOGETHER

Living together is a theme of multicultural and intercultural education. These concepts have been broadly discussed in scholarly literature with varying emphases and definitions. Some authors prefer to use the term "intercultural," since it captures the interactions between people from different cultures, similarly to "interpersonal" for encounters between

people and "international" for interaction between nations. In contrast, the term "multicultural" may be perceived as simply referring to the presence of people from different cultural groups (Grant and Portera 2011). These people do not necessarily interact or form a group, but constitute an aggregation or a category. A multicultural school, college, or university, in this particular sense of the term, is an educational setting where the students come from different cultural backgrounds (Spiteri 2017, 5–6).

In 2010, a group of "eminent persons" including European policy-makers and scholars commissioned by the Council of Europe's Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland, prepared a report on the resurgence of intolerance and discrimination in Europe. The report recognizes the confusion about and challenges to the concept of multiculturalism in Europe in the 2000s (see Lähdesmäki et al. 2020, 4–15) and proposes that in response, Europeans should focus on living together (Council of Europe 2010). The authors of the report argued that living together is a concept that enables European societies to combine diversity and freedom and guides them to live in peace, mutual respect, and mutual enrichment based on basic rights and freedoms (Council of Europe 2010, 34). A key to this is interaction and dialogue between members of different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups (Council of Europe 2010, 48).

The report ends with a series of proposals to advance living together in European societies. It identifies educators as the key group of people able to change the way people in Europe think about each other and, thus, enable them to live together better. The report urges "educators and education authorities in all member states to develop 'intercultural competencies' as a core element of school curricula and to extend these beyond formal education to non-formal settings" (Council of Europe 2010, 61).

The CLLP Approach to and Data on Living Together

The first step to learning to live together is celebrating diversity: Respecting and enjoying the variety of lifestyles, cultures, and religions, which includes learning to know one's own culture, appreciating it, and developing cultural identity (DIALLS 2018, 22). In the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP), living together was discussed in terms of celebrating diversity, with the intertwined themes of equality, human rights (basic rights and freedoms), and solidarity. The latter theme

extended the discussion to the idea of empathy and the will to act jointly sharing both advantages and burdens equally and justly (DIALLS 2018, 23).

In the CLLP, the subtheme of the celebrating diversity was explored in five lessons stimulated by three wordless picture books and two short films. The books were *Naar de Markt* (*To the Market* 2017) by Noëlle Smit; *ZaterDag* (*Saturday* 2018) by Saskia Halfmouw; and *Excentric City* (2014) by Béatrice Coron. The films were *Head Up* (2015) by Mentor Gottfried and *Anders Artig* (*Otherwise* 2002) by Christina Schindler. These deal with various aspects of diversity, ranging from physical to cultural differences, and explore how to overcome difficulties through teamwork and solidarity. Solidarity was the focus in two lessons based on the film *Novembre* (*November* 2015) by Marjolaine Perreten and the book *Out of the Blue* (2014) by Alison Jay. Equality was the theme of one lesson that used the film *Isän poika* (*Papa's Boy* 2010), directed by Leevi Lemmetty to stimulate a discussion of gender roles. Human rights, particularly poverty, were addressed in one lesson stimulated by the film Όνειρο ζωής (*Dream of Living* 2011), directed by Alkisti Kokorikou and Pinelopi Kokkali.

Our data for this chapter includes 695 individual artifacts from Cyprus (216), Germany (89), Israel (32), Lithuania (65), Portugal (204), Spain (49), and the UK (40). All three age groups explored the subtheme of celebrating diversity. The first two groups explored solidarity, only the second age group explored equality, and only the oldest students explored human rights. However, during the lessons and in the artifacts inspired by the books, films, and classroom discussions, the abovementioned subthemes intertwine.

Food and Everyday Activities as Signs of Cultural Diversity

Three of the lessons—stimulated by the picture books *To the Market*, *Saturday*, and *Excentric City*—were designed to spark discussions on celebrating diversity through accepting and respecting different ways of living. *To the Market*, aimed at the youngest age group, centers on how food and material goods signal cultural differences. The book narrates a story of a mother and a daughter taking a trip to their local market where a multicultural and multiethnic array of tradespeople sell different foods and goods. The customers at the market look different and are

interested in different products. At the market, everyday life unites people from different ethnic backgrounds into a harmonious and peaceful whole. The Dutch book ends with a picture depicting the daughter at home next to a table with different foods from the market that recalls still lives in old Flemish paintings. In their artifacts, the children were asked to explore their own cultural identity through material culture: "You have a stall at the market selling products from your country. What do you decide to display and sell?" Instead of a drawing, the children could "work in groups to create a soundtrack for your favorite double spread. What sounds do you hear? What do people say? What languages do you hear? What sounds do animals or objects make?".

Most of the classes drew foods and goods. Their artifacts are images of market stalls with piles of vegetables, fruits, fish, and other products. For instance, a group of Portuguese children drew eight different market stalls with written texts: "Watermelon stall," "Strawberry stall," "Grape stall," "Pork meat," "Fish and fruit stall," "Vegetable stall, carrots and broccoli," "Sea fish stall," and "Sardine stall." The market stalls themselves look inviting with different forms and cheerful colors. Another Portuguese group created a collage of recipes and images of local dishes. The classes from other countries also focused on drawing or making 3D models of market stalls with various items representing the local material culture and traditional dishes. Their locality could be emphasized in the titles of the artifacts. For instance, the Cypriot children titled their artifacts "Traditional products" and include text labels in the images, naming dozens of local dishes and foods.

In the UK, the children also created a soundtrack by playing out an imagined situation in which they were at the market. The voice of a stall-holder selling potatoes is at the center of this soundtrack. The teacher reflected on the task by reporting: "They loved the text [*To the Market*] and we spent a long time exploring each picture. The children worked in small groups to create their own market stall using pictures to create a collage. We then created the sound clip with the hustle and bustle you might hear at a market. They loved it!".

The teacher's comment reflects the enthusiasm with which the children responded to the marketplace as a space of cultural diversity. In the artifacts, the children focused on their own material culture and its local, regional, or national features. The instructions for creating the artifact led most of the children to draw products, not people, or to include only

market stallholders, not the customers or people interacting in the marketplace. Only a few artifacts include children and explore the marketplace from a child's perspective. In these pictures, the market stalls look huge and the items are placed on such high tables that they are difficult to see from the ground (Fig. 5.1).

The topic of food enables discussions on various cultural issues and social challenges in the classroom, such as: What do we know about the food of other cultures? Why does food represent someone's native culture? Why do children starve in some parts of the world if there is so much food at the marketplace? How can we help people who are starving?

The lesson for the second age group shifted the focus from material goods to activities. The stimulus, the book *Saturday*, depicts a heterogeneous group of people doing all sorts of weekend activities in an unnamed town. The first double spread depicts a football game or tournament, the second a scene at the market, the third the inside of a grocery store, followed by other settings including a swimming pool, a library, the beach, and a museum. The scenes are depicted from a bird's eye

Fig. 5.1 A drawing made by a Cypriot child in the first age group depicting a marketplace with goods from Cyprus

view. The different ethnicities, age groups, and lifestyles reflected in how people look are thus portrayed from afar. This creates distance between the readers and the protagonists. As Jewitt and Oyama (2004, 147) put it in their study of visual meaning: "To see people from a distance is to see them in the way we would normally only see strangers, people whose lives do not touch on ours. We see them in outline, impersonally, as types rather than as individuals."

In this lesson, students were first invited to discuss the following questions: What do you do on a Saturday? Do you have chores to complete? Hobbies? Prayer time for Sabbath? Rest time? Why do you take part in these activities? Next, the students were asked to collaboratively create a scene that would fit into the narrative of the book by depicting what they do on a Saturday. Many of the artifacts are filled with a bustle similar to the one on the pages of *Saturday*. Only a few artifacts depicted calm scenes.

In general, the artifacts reveal their creators' familiarity with and interest in diverse cultural and social activities. A group of Spanish students, for example, created a drawing with multiple scenes that portrayed visits to the zoo, parties, the theater or cinema, and playgrounds (Fig. 5.2). Their class teacher reported that the task inspired the students:

> They really enjoyed talking about what they were doing over the weekend and sharing it with the rest of the class. […] The students enjoyed the book (which we projected on the screen) and joint conversation. They liked being able to draw and explain it to classmates.

The book, the classroom discussions, the artifacts, and their explanations formed a continuum in which students explored diversity, plurality, and difference through their own everyday activities and interests.

Even though *Saturday* focuses on one day, it includes a broad temporal span and contextual variety. The scenes in the book represent different seasons and contexts: the streets during summer, a park during autumn, and a town-center skating rink during winter. In their artifacts, students represent several of the locations and activities depicted in the book. The students depict themselves, their friends, and families in the playground, swimming pool, or garden, or at an amusement park. A group of German students explained their artifact in a caption as follows: "We have decided that we will play with friends because we often meet friends on Saturdays.

Fig. 5.2 An artifact created by a group of Spanish students in the second age group exploring what they do on a Saturday

Here you can see that we're in the playground." Another German group explained: "Our group drew a swimming pool because we like to go to the swimming pool on Saturdays." A group of Portuguese students wrote: "We chose the pool because we all went there and it is a fun, cool, beautiful activity and a good place to go for a weekend walk with family and friends." Sports were depicted in the artifacts in all countries: Commonly, the children drew scenes in which they are playing football or cycling.

The oldest students explored living together as celebrating diversity in a lesson based on a leporello (concertina-folded book) entitled *Excentric City*. The book is made up of elaborate papercuts illustrating a plethora of stories and episodes set in this city. Similar to the two previous lessons, students were asked to create artifacts reflecting their interests in their hometown or city: "Create a leporello with a sequence of sketches representing their own everyday culture."

The students responded to the task in two different ways. The first group of students made artifacts following the instructions to focus on their own everyday life and its episodes, locations, and activities from the point of view of "I." Most of these artifacts illustrate carefree and happy living with one's family and friends. Other students chose to depict struggles that they, their family, or others in general face in their everyday life. For instance, a student from the UK made a papercut depicting a room with a woman dressing followed by images of bombing, graves, and a crying face. In the caption, the student explains:

> My story is called "life" because it's about the daily struggles and worries families have in Afghanistan. It starts with a room showing a person waking up. As this person wakes up she puts on her abaya. An abaya is a black dress that is loose. As she goes out she can see a plane overhead. In Afghanistan bombs by the Taliban are usual, whether it be a suicide or an explosive. As the plane goes ahead it drops a bomb on a school and there's a big explosion. This causes much grief and pain for mothers, fathers, and families as they have lost their children, siblings. I have chosen to write about this because it is a daily thing. For some it might be a happy day like weddings etc. But now going out is a struggle. I chose this because it is very dear to me as I have a lot of family members there and they are in constant danger because of the terrorists.

This artifact brings forth the multidimensional reality that many children with a migration history face in their everyday life: Life in Europe is intertwined with life on other continents.

The second group of students explored everyday culture in their artifacts from the point of view of "we." These artifacts emphasize the differences between people and the variety of activities they do in their everyday life. In the captions of these artifacts, the students draw abstract conclusions. In one caption, students from Lithuania stress the idea of difference as the essence of social life:

We are all different. We painted our celebrations, friends, the gym, school, home – the things which are personally important to us. These drawings indicate our differences because we all think differently, everybody's attitude to the same aspects is different. Everybody is creating a different life and we don't see it as a problem.

Some of the artifacts and their captions reflect even broader openness to difference, which is understood as enriching. Another group of Lithuanian students explains their artifact as follows:

In this book, we wanted to show the world's uniqueness and variety. The world on its own isn't original but people make it such by coloring its parts. Each of us colors a little piece and together the world becomes a rainbow full of creativity and rich in its unique beauty. People's originality was shown in the book. The book shows the brightness of the world. On all of the pages, we can see people. We can make an assumption that the world wouldn't be bright without humans. The world isn't created in colors, we color the Earth with different colors!

This kind of openness to difference can be seen as the premise for an open society in the terms of K. R. Popper (2013). He identified a radical difference between two types of social relations leading either to a closed or an open society. The members of a closed society are united by their ties and belonging to the same group (tribe, nation, family), while the members of an open society overstep the boundaries of these closed groups and use reason to open their minds to the different other, the stranger, the one who is not from their group. This kind of openness is key for living together.

Otherness and Challenges in Teaching Solidarity

The lesson aimed at the first age group used the film *November* to stimulate a discussion on solidarity reflects on negotiation between the ideas of open and closed society through the topic of help. In the film, a hedgehog escapes a flood—that threatens its and other animals' habitat—by making a boat from a leaf, like the biblical Noah. On this trip, the hedgehog is accompanied by a snail and a worm—all of them different but sharing the same living environment. This lesson focused on discussing the events in the film: Who helps whom and who needs help. Students were asked to reflect upon occasions when they had helped others. The children

were asked to create a freeze-frame drama (where they are "frozen" in acting positions like statues) about helping someone. They acted out these frozen positions in pairs and the teachers photographed them. The artifacts and their captions revealed a broad variety of situations where someone needs help and the children are able to respond to the need. The situations ranged from finding help for a peer injured in a game to making friends with a peer who is excluded from others' play, and from covering one's sick father in his bed at night to cuddling a lost puppy on the street.

A lesson for the second age group based on the film *Otherwise* dealt with solidarity on a more intimate level. In the film, a group of chameleons realizes that one of them is different: This chameleon cannot change its reddish skin color to adapt to the environment and behaves differently from others, acting independently and strangely. The group responds to the difference like the closed society in Popper's (2013) theory, revealing the downside of group egoism—selfish defense of one's own group interest and a tendency to expel difference. When a green chameleon is seized by an eagle, the group decides that the chameleon with a different color is guilty and starts to persecute him. While escaping the persecutors, the chameleon climbs up a mountain and by accident finds the seized green chameleon and rescues it. After this, the rescuer is accepted into the group. The story serves as a challenging starting point to discuss and explore solidarity.

In this lesson, the students were asked to create a drama freeze-frame to show scenes before and after someone is excluded or included. The artifacts and their captions created in that lesson imply that the exercise of first excluding and then including someone emphasized how the students are aware of the narrow social norms for becoming accepted and the difference as a "reason" for exclusion, and they are also able to critically assess exclusive processes. The task thus invited the students to critically explore exclusion and inclusion, or the practice of choosing scapegoats to be excluded from "us" (see Popper's 2013). The exercise did not only provoke the students to recognize differences as reason for discrimination but also to question the logic of discrimination based on difference.

Discussions on difference require sensitivity since pinpointing difference may also deepen the stereotypes that lead to exclusion. It is nevertheless crucial to recognize cultural stereotypes and discriminatory practices in order to prevent exclusion (see Crenshaw 1991) and learn openness, empathy, and a will to understand the other's points of view.

Therefore, teachers need to make sure that the students do not only recognize existing stereotypes but learn to see how stereotypes are culturally and historically constructed. Only through this can they learn to overcome prejudices related to these stereotypes.

Solidarity with Nonhumans

Plants and animals are other for human beings as a species. Should people care about all the creatures living on the Earth? Solidarity as the idea of empathy and the will to act jointly, sharing both advantages and burdens equally and justly, can be extended to cover nature and nonhumans (see Chapter 6). In the CLLP, one of the lessons for the second age group sought to explicitly deal with solidarity as understood in this broad view. The lesson was based on the book *Out of the Blue*, which tells a giant squid that becomes beached upon the shore. Holidaymakers, birds, dolphins, and sharks all work together to return the squid into the sea, demonstrating the interrelated connection between animals, humans, and nature on the coast. In the instructions for artifacts, the students were asked to create a comic strip showing the rescue of a sea creature stranded on the beach. The students were instructed that the comic strips should emphasize solidarity through collaborative—not individual—action and explore how different people have a different part to play in the rescue.

In the artifacts, the students depicted various kinds of sea creatures experiencing trouble. The most popular creatures in the artifacts were different types of whales that were, for instance, "bleeding," "stuck in a plastic," "taken by a storm to the beach," or "trapped in a fisherman's net," as Spanish students explain in their captions. Furthermore, dolphins, swordfishes, jellyfishes, and octopuses were depicted as being stranded or as feeling unwell due to having eaten trash. These images highlight how the students recognize and utilize media images and discussions related to human impact on marine life. After all, the imagery of plastic reefs, stranded whales, and marine animals with their intestines full of plastic is typical media coverage today. A whale full of plastic may even be called a symbol of the pollution of the seas. The stories in the artifacts have, however, a happy ending as other animals and people show solidarity to the sea creatures and rescue them from the trouble. In many of the artifacts, the importance of the sea creatures is emphasized by their huge size compared to people (Fig. 5.3). The size also underlines the huge effort

Fig. 5.3 A drawing by a group of children in the first age group from Cyprus explores solidarity through the rescue of a sea creature stranded on the beach

the humans have to take in helping them. This effort seems to be eased by the number of people and other animals helping the sea creatures.

The captions of the artifacts bring forth the understanding of solidarity as empathy for all living creatures and nature and as a will to act jointly with humans and nonhumans to help others. For instance, a group of Portuguese students explained solidarity in the caption as "the pleasure of helping," "particularly important for humanity," and "a form of friendship." The captions also emphasized the power of collaboration: "When we see a problem, we must help because it is better with more hands. Many people helping makes the problem easier to solve," as another group of Portuguese students wrote. In the captions, solidarity as help and respect for others was extended to nonhumans. As another group of Portuguese students noted: "We have to help others and respect everyone. We must always help animals when they are in danger."

Living Together and Complex
Child–adult Relationships

The CLLP included three lessons, one for each age group, in which students explored the relationship between children and adults through different problems. In their lesson, the youngest age group looked at living together and solidarity through the film *Head Up*, the story of a baby goat who helps an adult goat to jump over an abyss. The baby goat teaches the adult goat, which can be interpreted to be his parent, to look at the sky when he jumps to overcome his fear. The second age group discussed equality using the film *Papa's Boy*, about a mouse boy who wants to be a ballerina, which also reflects the power relations between a child and a parent. In the film, the father mouse, who used to be a famous boxer, is sad as his son is more interested in ballet than boxing. Yet the boy's dancing skills come in handy when a cat attacks the father: He escapes the clutches of the cat and saves his father. This helps the father appreciate his son's interest in ballet. The oldest students explored human rights by watching the film *Dream of Living*. The story is about another child–adult relationship: A homeless person's family attempts to encourage him to return home. All three films end with the child and parent living happily together.

The students in each age group created different types of artifacts. To respond to *Head Up*, the children were given the outline of an adult's hand and asked to draw the outline of their own hand inside it to depict a situation where a child helps an adult. As a response to *Papa's Boy*, the students were asked to draw a comic strip showing the father's and son's emotions at the beginning, middle, and end of the story. In response to *Dream of Living*, the students were asked to design crosswords or puzzles with key words from their discussion during the lesson.

The drawings by the youngest children indicate their close relationship with their families: typically, they drew themselves helping either their father or mother, sometimes a sibling. The children depicted various situations where they help their parents with different tasks and depicted themselves as caring for their parents' feelings and emotions. For instance, a Cypriot group of children wrote:

> I cut flowers from the garden and I give them to my mum to make her feel happy. I cut flowers from the garden for my mum. I help my dad with his tools and we do crafts. I remind my dad to clean the excavator and

I help him do it properly. I hug my mum in the dark so that she is not afraid. I cut flowers from the garden for my mum's vase so that our home is cozy and we can be happy. I help my mum to prepare my school bag. I tell her what I want so that she doesn't make any mistakes. I hold my mum's hand when it's raining so that she is not afraid. I hug my mum and dad to make them feel happy. I help my dad clean the truck so that he is happy.

The artifacts illustrate various everyday situations in families very color-fully but also reflect typical gender roles: Children help their fathers repair things, and help their mothers "sweep the floor" and "wash the dishes," as some Portuguese children put it. Besides the film, the children seemed to be inspired by their peers: Cutting flowers for one's mother is repeated by students throughout the Cypriot group. The children's enthusiasm for the idea of being able to help adults was recognized by a Spanish teacher who reported that they "felt very important in explaining to other classmates their experiences about how they help people older than themselves."

After watching *Papa's Boy*, the children's task was to reconstruct the plot, following its emotional dynamics. Most of the students depicted the emotional turning points: The father's shift from sad to "proud" (as it was commonly expressed in the artifacts or their captions) and the happy ending where both father and son are cheerful and thankful. A group of students from Cyprus describes the emotions at the end of the story with imagined lines: "Bravo son! You can continue ballet and become a famous ballerina," and the son replies: "Thank you, Dad." In such responses, typical to our data, most of the students uncritically explore the characters' emotions and ignore the father's authoritarian pressure on his son. Nevertheless, in each country at least one group of students ques-tions the gendered expectations in the film. In one of the artifacts from Israel, the cat teaches the dad, saying "one has to accept the difference of the different person." Students from different countries wrote captions emphasizing that parents support their children's choices. "Our parents are different from the mouse's father, because our parents believe in our dreams," a group of Portuguese students wrote. These students under-line a liberal discourse of "staying true to ourselves" (as stated by a group from Lithuania) reminding that "you can be anything you want and don't let anyone hold you back" (as stated by a group from the UK). The right to individual and equal choices is expressed by a group from Cyprus as follows:

> We can choose whichever dance, sport, or activity we want regardless of a member of our family being a champion in something else. In addition, we can wear the clothes we want because each of us should be ourselves. We can also work in a job we want. Father – a radiologist, mother – a doctor, children – YouTubers or accountants.

The data reveals that already at this age, some children saw their future choices as their right and themselves as independent actors uninfluenced by pressure from social norms or their parents' expectations.

In the lesson stimulated by *Dream of Living*, the students were asked to explore the theme of living together through abstract concepts inspired by the film. While the artifacts reveal different interpretations, some concepts recurred: Help, company, support, solidarity, and home. The film seemed to raise empathic emotions in students, but they did not explore in the artifacts its core struggle, poverty forcing one to beg, with the concept of human rights—although this was the key subtheme of the lesson.

Instead of making conceptual crosswords, some Lithuanian students reflected on the film through drawings. These artifacts include some explorations of the causes of poverty. One group of students noted how the key in life is to feel happy and not to be alone, but "sometimes people feel unhappy because of their life situations. Sometimes because of using alcohol/drugs, playing in the casino, etc. Sometimes because beloved people leave us alone."

The film inspired another Lithuanian group of students to draw pictures illustrating the challenges of living together. In one of these artifacts (Fig. 5.4), a father is close to his family but at the same time enclosed in a cage. A child, presumably their son, is with his mother, but the father stays apart, alone, and unhappy—emphasized by the grayness of the cage. The father is holding a cigarette and surrounded by bottles, playing cards, and money. The family relations are not further explored in the caption but the students explain the illustrated situation through loneliness:

> All humans need warm feelings, attention from others, everyday communication. Everybody needs to come back from work and somebody has to wait for them, listen to stories of what happened during their day, share good and bad feelings. When somebody stays alone, he loses self-trust, becomes depressed, uses alcohol. That is why he needs help from others.

Fig. 5.4 A drawing by a Lithuanian student in the oldest age group exploring the themes of living together and human rights

In the CLLP, all three age groups of students explored the theme of living together through books and films about celebrating diversity, solidarity, equality, and human rights. Their artifacts demonstrated that the students, particularly the older ones, explored different aspects of the themes in an abstract and multifaceted manner, not only from an "I" but also from a "they" perspective. Learning about solidarity requires sensitivity for difference. Lessons on the subject need to be planned carefully to ensure inclusive cultural practices and respect for diversity and difference.

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Social Responsibility

Abstract In this chapter, the authors analyze the artifacts in which students explore social responsibility. A broad understanding of social responsibility includes nonhumans and nature. In the chapter, the authors approach social responsibility through two subthemes: Social and civic competences and sustainable development. The analysis shows how students learned to address social responsibility to encounter the other and participate in the collaboration with other people. Many of them, however, took an anthropocentric view, centered on humans. The older students were able to extend the idea of social responsibility to the wellbeing of nonhumans, nature, sustainability, and the Earth.

Keyword Social responsibility · Social competence · Sustainable development · Participation

Extending the Notion of Responsibility: I, We, Animals, Environment, and the Earth

Responsibility is always about how "I" as an independent and egocentric person can encounter the other who is not "me." This encounter may lead to a fight, indifference, friendship, or love, but also to responsibility. Responsibility can be described as a human relationship at its highest level

of sociality, close to duty. For Levinas (1985, 95), moral responsibility is "the essential, primary and fundamental structure of subjectivity." This sort of responsibility is *for* the other: "I am responsible for the other without waiting for reciprocity" (Levinas 1985, 97). The responsibility that Levinas has in mind is also always *my* responsibility, not responsibility as shared, as *ours*. Levinas grounds this view of responsibility in an unconditional encounter with other human beings and interprets it as the origin of all human ethical obligations toward other people. Levinas has been criticized for dismissing the question of responsibility beyond humans (e.g., Derrida 2008). One way to extend responsibility toward the nonhuman is to address the relationship between humans and nonhuman animals. The first step could be to ask: Am I prepared to take responsibility for an animal? For my own animal? For an abandoned animal? Wild animals? Do even the smallest creatures have the right to live without the interference of humans? This approach to responsibility emphasizes animal rights as part of ecological ethics (Singer 1975; Horsthemke 2018). We use the word "animal" with knowledge of the fact that the dichotomy between human and animal is often used as justification for violence—not only toward nonhuman animals but toward those human beings that are deemed "animalistic" and "other" in the Euro-American context (Butler 2004, 1–4; Wolfe 2003, 6–8). In some instances, we have decided to use the concept "nonhuman animal" to remind the reader of the constructed nature of the human/animal divide.

The kind of responsibility advocated by Levinas comes close to the notions of solidarity that Rorty (1989, xvi) discusses when claiming that human "solidarity is not discovered, but created by increasing our sensitivity to the particular details of the pain and humiliation of others, unfamiliar sorts of people." It is easy to feel solidarity with a close friend or family members, but less easy to do so with *unfamiliar sorts of people*. How can I feel solidarity, for instance, with a newcomer to my school class? Or with nonhuman nature? These were some of the questions that the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) posed to students.

Responsibility can be approached from the point of view of "I" or "we." The latter can be defined as social responsibility, which various social agents increasingly emphasize. It is also increasingly on the agenda of corporations, often referred to as corporate social responsibility (Crowther and Aras 2008; Aras and Crowther 2009). Our societies today face challenges that can only be solved together. One of these is human impact on the Earth's natural resources. This has prompted

some scholars to argue that humankind has recently left behind the era of the Holocene—"Recent Whole," the postglacial geological epoch of the past ten to twelve thousand years—and entered the Anthropocene, an era dominated by increasing, obviously lasting, human influence on the environment (Ehlers and Krafft 2006; cf. Visconti 2014).

Due to the pressing ecological problems caused by the Anthropocene, sustainable development is now an unavoidable part of school curricula across Europe—though its role, focus, and implementation varies greatly and it may even be marginalized. Recent scholars of educational science have taken the idea of the Anthropocene seriously and reflected on how the future of the Earth is discussed in environmental and sustainability studies (Ehlers and Krafft 2006). These studies can be perceived as "Earth literacy" seeking to find solutions to enhance the sustainable future of our planet (see Gosselin et al. 2019; for environmental literacy see Reynolds et al. 2010). While some scholars stress the aspect of environmental health and take an interdisciplinary approach (see Hursh et al. 2011), others focus on the concept of environmental justice and a sense of place (see Palmer 2006). Moreover, ecosocial and ecojustice education have extended the idea of social responsibility to include the broader nonhuman world (Salonen 2014; Martusewicz et al. 2020). In this line of thinking, human wellbeing is seen as deeply connected to the wellbeing of the natural environment, and therefore education should focus on advancing both.

In this chapter, we move from discussing responsibility between humans as outlined by Levinas to encompass broader social relations, and finally the nonhuman. As the United Nations' Human Development Report (2007) emphasizes, there is an urgent need for human solidarity to fight climate change together in a divided world. In its broadest meaning, social responsibility can thus be understood as Earth literacy that covers human responsibility for the fate of the entire biosphere. This sense of responsibility emanates from concern about unseen and anticipated future events: How can we take responsibility for the future of the planet? The challenge is that while adults teach children this kind of "planetary responsibility" (Salonen and Åhlberg 2012), they often neglect to take it. As noticed by Žižek (2008, 94), we know all about the threat of ecological catastrophe "but we somehow don't really believe that it can happen." Hence, the EU still sees education as key to mitigating climate change and other ecological crises. In 2020, the European Commission published the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, one aim of which was to train people

in skills to protect and restore biodiversity and the functioning of Earth's ecosystems (EC 2020). This Earth literacy connects to the cultural literacy promoted by the DIALLS project. Byrne (2016) has explored learner-centered activities to advance environmental and sustainability teaching and learning. The CLLP seeks to advance such learner-centered activities.

The CLLP Approach to and Data on Social Responsibility

In our data, we approach social responsibility through two subthemes: Social and civic competences, and sustainable development. We define social competence as including personal, interpersonal, and intercultural competences, covering all forms of behavior that equip individuals to effectively and constructively participate in social life in increasingly diverse societies and to resolve conflict where necessary. We perceive civic competence as equipping individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of key social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation (DIALLS 2018; EP & CofEU 2006). Since the 1980s, sustainable development has become a highly influential concept in national and international policymaking for governments, organizations, and businesses alike. This has led to a plethora of definitions and interpretations of the concept (Mebratu 1998, 494). In the CLLP, we relate sustainable development to various social, societal, economic, and environmental issues and define it as meeting the needs of present generations without jeopardizing the ability of future ones to meet theirs, thus ensuring a good quality of life and a livable environment both for current and future generations (DIALLS 2018).

The cultural texts used in the lessons on social and civic competences were the book *Mein weg mit Vanessa* (*I walk with Vanessa* 2018) by Kerascoët and the films *Le velo de l'elephant* (*The Elephant and the Bicycle* 2014) by Olesya Shchukina, and *Igel und die Stadt* (*The Hedgehogs and the City* 2013) by Evalds Lacis. These texts deal with themes of participating in social life and resolving problems and conflicts, such as bullying, exclusion, and diminishing animal habitats. To explore sustainable development, we used the books *Changeons!* (*Let's change!* 2017) by Francesco Guistozzi and *Free the Lines* (2016) by Clayton Junior, and the film *Going fishing* (2018) by Guldies. These texts deal with different

aspects of climate and environmental change, such as the transformation of coastal life, everyday decision-making, and justice and equality in globalization. To explore both subthemes, we used the book *Balbúrdia* (*Shambles* 2015) by Teresa Cortez and the film *Chiripajas* (2017) by Olga Poliektova and Jaume Quiles that deal with overconsumption and pollution.

Teachers provided students with discussion topics and points of view to guide their exploration of social responsibility. In their artifacts, the students portrayed social responsibility as a key for the wellbeing of humans and animals, nature, and the sustainability of the Earth. The data we use in this chapter includes 190 works from Germany (27), Israel (77), Lithuania (36), Portugal (15), Spain (16), and the UK (19). Children from the first and second age groups explored social and civic competences, while the youngest and oldest students learned about sustainable development. These subthemes were intertwined in the students' creative practice during the lessons.

Art and literature can offer imaginative solutions to contemporary phenomena and invite viewers and readers to consider other points of view, whether human or nonhuman (see Karkulehto et al. 2020; Lähdesmäki and Koistinen 2021). Writing on art and ecojustice education, Foster and Martuzewicz define imagination "as an essential means of engaging the forms of responsibility needed to generate healthy communities": Since art has potential to stimulate imagination, they call for creative practices to be included in education (Foster and Martusewicz 2019, 6–7). Using art, such as wordless texts, in teaching social responsibility toward human beings and the biosphere is therefore justifiable.

Social Competence as the Ability to Include Others

The book *I walk with Vanessa*, aimed at the youngest students, deals with social and civic competences by encouraging its readers to respond to an "unfamiliar other." In the story, Vanessa is new in class and is initially bullied or ignored by her classmates. One of the girls in the class nevertheless empathizes with Vanessa and helps her to integrate into the class. They meet other students and, finally, Vanessa starts to feel happy as she becomes a member of the group. The girl who noticed Vanessa's unhappiness can be interpreted from the Rortian and Levinasian point of view

of responsibility and solidarity: This girl is able to feel the pain of the other, face her unconditionally, take responsibility, and act accordingly.

For this lesson, students were instructed to "draw ways in which they could make their new classmate feel part of their community." Our analysis of the artifacts and their captions indicates two tendencies in responding to the task. Some of the students seemed to avoid a personal encounter with a newcomer, depicting them as already integrated into the everyday activities of the class. One student had even changed the dynamics of the situation by imagining a group of newcomers with only one student welcoming them. Both the artifact and its caption indicate a willingness to include the newcomers, and that the student has the power to do it: "I would let them play hopscotch with me. I would let them go first on the AB frame [in the playground]. I would give them a flower and say 'I'm your friend'."

Some of the artifacts revealed the students' willingness to meet the other in person, to see "the face of the other" in Levinas' words (1985, 96). In one artifact, a student is meeting a girl who looks like Vanessa in the book and sharing with her the rules of a game she needs to know in order to be part of the community of her class (Fig. 6.1). In the caption, the student addresses the newcomer directly, including her in the community: "I'm showing how you do the thing like football. You could all go and play hide and seek." Another artifact depicts pairs of children in a playground, some of them holding hands (Fig. 6.1). In its caption, the student suggests friendship to a newcomer with a direct question: "I could say 'hello, do you want to be my friend'? We could go on the AB [frame in the playground] together and play on it together." In the artifact, the response to encounter with the other is to include and create togetherness: One student says to the other "Follow me" to which the other responds "OK." In the artifacts that emphasize encountering the newcomer in person, both the creator and the newcomer they imagine could be depicted with distinct characteristics: The creators recognize them as individuals with personal features (Fig. 6.1, upper drawing).

The Interrelation Between Social and Civic Competences and Sustainable Development

In the CLLP, our understanding of social responsibility is broad; it includes the environment and sustainability. *I walk with Vanessa* is the only cultural text used to explore social responsibility that clearly focuses
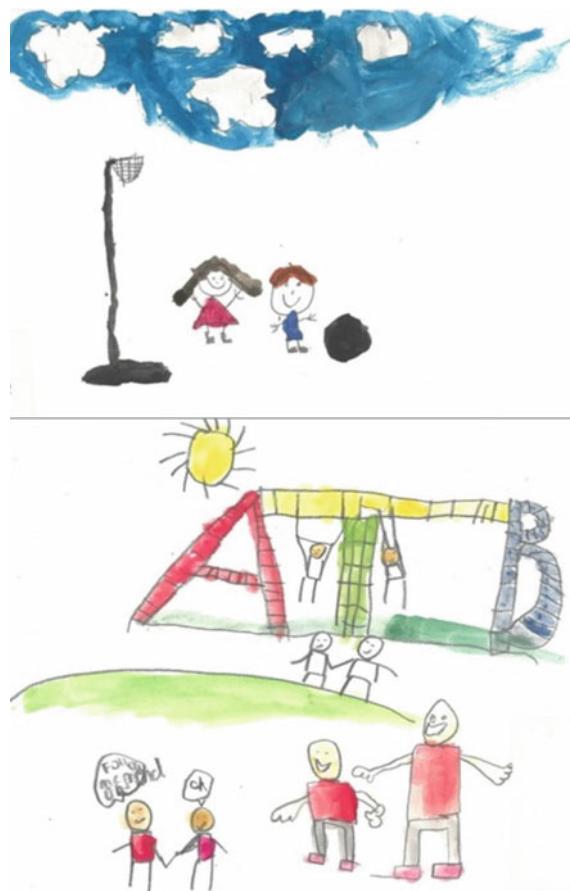
Fig. 6.1 Drawings by two students in the first age group from the UK exploring how to make a new classmate feel part of the community

on human social relations only. The other two lessons—stimulated by the films *The Hedgehogs and the City* and *The Elephant and the Bicycle*, both aimed at the students in the second age group—also deal with human responsibility for nonhuman animals and the Earth.

The story of *The Hedgehogs and the City* starts when the hedgehogs awake from their hibernation only to find themselves in a town

constructed by humans, instead of the woods they went to sleep in. They have to live together with people who constantly face various troubles: Keys fall down the drain, a ball gets stuck in a tree, a child cries, and so on. Different animals in the story kindly help humans to solve these problems. An unexpected plot twist reveals that the animals have a secret project: They ask for money for their help in order to persuade the people to leave the place, bulldoze the city, and return it to the wilderness. The story emphasizes humans' selfishness and lack of responsibility for nonhumans and the environment.

In this lesson, the students were instructed to design a park for their community. Perhaps since this task was rather anthropocentric, the artifacts do not address the issue of humans taking over the living space of other animals. Therefore, the artifacts can be interpreted as presenting an anthropocentric understanding of the environment. For instance, a group of students states that "the park is for everyone" but the artifact itself illustrates humans in the center while animals have limited space around them. In some artifacts, students have drawn themselves playing in the park, as noted in a caption describing that "the people on the swings are us" feeling happy since "the animals feel good with us." While these artifacts seem to express responsibility for animals and seek harmony between humans and nonhumans in the park, they often focus on pets or treat animals as domesticated. Even wild animals are named creatures and human property, as one group of students states in their caption: "The red fox is Pabby, our fox." Even artifacts that do not depict human beings show traces of humans: Benches, swings, ladders, ropes for climbing, fences, and so on. It seems that for the students, a park (a human construction) is for humans first and only secondarily for other animals. Except for one student who drew a hedgehog sculpture on a high pedestal as a hero of the city, the students did not draw the hedgehogs from the film. Even though the statue in this one artifact honors the hedgehogs, it can be interpreted as a sign of anthropocentrism, where respect for animals is determined by human logic.

The Elephant and the Bicycle deals with the problem of rubbish, combining the subtheme of sustainable development with exploration of social and civic competences. In the narrative, an elephant cleans rubbish from the streets for living. It dreams of buying a bicycle and saves money to buy one, only to realize that the bicycle is too small for such a big animal. So the elephant loses interest in its work, the rubbish piles up, and people plead for the animal to return to work. In the end, the elephant

does return and gives the bicycle to a small girl who it sees drawing a bicycle. Seeing the girl happily riding the bicycle around makes the elephant content as well. In the instructions for creating artifacts students were advised to "discuss rules/suggestions they can have in their class, school, family, or city about producing and throwing away rubbish and create a booklet which visually depicts these rules." The alternative task beyond the lesson was to create a 3D craft (model of a school or a town with houses, parks, streets, etc.) that shows how each person has a role to play in their community.

A class from the UK implemented the alternative task by jointly creating a 3D model of a town (Fig. 6.2). In its caption (probably cowritten with their teacher), they emphasize how the artifact was created together, "showing how different jobs contribute to a community and that we all have a joint social responsibility for taking care of our society. We all enjoyed designing and creating our scenes and working collaboratively." A bicycle at the center of the model functions as a sign that

Fig. 6.2 A 3D model by a class in the second age group from the UK explores how each person has a role to play in the community

unites the story of the film with the people and spaces in the students'
living environment. In the model, some people are in a swimming pool,
some are crossing the street, and some are in school. The elephant in the
model has fulfilled the dream it had in the film: It is riding the bicycle. The
animal is situated at the center of the model, which might suggest a less
anthropocentric worldview. However, since it is anthropomorphized in
the CLLP text (doing tasks usually reserved for humans and dreaming of
a human means of transport), and in the model based on it, the elephant
could be read as an allusion to a human doing lowpaid work. Indeed, the
students' caption emphasizes that different occupations make important
contributions to human society.

In the 3D models created by German students, there are no traces of
the elephant. The models made from paper, plasticine, and Lego depict
people doing various activities, such as happily walking their dog in a
clean blossoming park, swimming in a pool, lying on the grass near a lake,
playing in the yard, or working. In this task, exploration of the roles that
one may have in the community was often turned into play, where the
models functioned as toys. The places and environments in the models are
clean: The topic of rubbish has been bypassed, pushed to the background,
or "solved" by showing an ideal, clean version of the environment.

The students from a Lithuanian class created 3D models from plas-
ticine. Their teacher suggested that they imagine which other animals
could take the role of the elephant in cleaning rubbish in the film. One
of the groups had titled their model "Garbage Collection" and placed it
in Spain. The caption states "The Spanish beach is dirty," and continues
by describing:

> [A] cat carries a can to the trash. A squirrel carries pear peels. A puppy
> is pulling a bag with trash. A snail sweeps paper [trash]. Kaspar the Dog
> carries a purple packet of chips to a green trash can. A turtle transports
> an orange seed to a bucket. There is a lot of rubbish at sea. Animals are
> trying to save the beach.

The creators of a model titled "Guardians of Order" also imagined a
scene where different animals are responsible for cleaning. The students
write:

> Our characters work in a Vilnius restaurant. We have molded three charac-
> ters. They are – a dog, a crocodile [named Cocodile], and a turtle [named

Bomb]. The turtle is getting better. The turtle collects food. Later on, it puts the food into the bag. And then the food is being carried to the container. The crocodile is collecting paper, pasta, and pieces of meat. I have molded a dog. It looks after the restaurant. It brings the garbage to the container. That's how everyone handles it.

Another group of students who titled their artifact "The Managers" also delegating the responsibility for cleanliness to animals. In their artifact, different animals are cleaning the environment. In the caption, the students note how "they [the animals] care about nature." They continue to consider their own responsibility from the perspective of the animals: "We [the animals] do not pollute nature. And you [the humans] try not to pollute nature. Take care to keep the world clean!"

The students imagined different animals cleaning rubbish since their teacher had guided them to do so. As a result, many of their artifacts do not explicitly address the core lesson of the film: Who is responsible for littering, and who has to clean up litter in a reality where people are constantly producing more and more rubbish? Is it us or the "others"? Why did humans in the film try to avoid this responsibility and why is the only responsible creature the elephant? Who does the elephant represent? Some students considered that cleaning up was the job of volunteers. As one group of Lithuanian students noticed in their caption: "The voluntary workers can collect sweepings. It will help everyone." Artifacts like this suggest that social responsibility for a shared environment can be transmitted to someone else, someone "other."

The groups of students who followed the task more closely concluded that they had responsibility and identified with the elephant, as highlighted by expressions such as "we, the students." One group of Lithuanian students created an artifact titled "Clean Forest," expressing frustration with the littering of forests and deforestation. The teacher of this group reported that the students were concerned that litter might harm animals and wanted to give a good example to others by keeping their environment clean.

In several other artifacts, the students emphasized everyone's responsibility for the environment, including their own role as "we" in cleaning up litter. In some of the captions, they discussed environmental impact in more detail, noting how sunshine may heat pieces of broken glass in the forests and cause forest fires, or how it helps nature to use reusable dishes and going to school on foot or by bike.

Social and civic competences, including commitment to sustainable development, were explicitly referenced in some of the children's artifacts. In the lessons, social responsibility was understood in a broad sense as covering humans and nonhumans in both urban and natural settings. For Smith (2011, 20), ecological ethics awakens us to the wider more-than-human world through "raising questions concerning the singular significance of beings other than animals, too: Trees, fungi, rivers, rocks." Social, civic, and sustainable development competences can thus be seen as belonging to the sphere of ecological ethics.

Exploring Sustainable Development

Most of the wordless books and films used for stimulating discussion on social responsibility in the CLLP deal with topics related to sustainable development. One of these cultural texts, the book *Shambles* used in a lesson for the youngest age group, narrates the story of a boy who lives in a very messy bedroom cluttered with toys. The mess starts to grow, taking on a life of its own and scaring the boy. The story helps the students to discuss overconsumption and the need for a sustainable lifestyle. The children were instructed to make artifacts in which they turn their "want pile" into a "mess monster." They created installations by making piles of items such as toys they had brought from home. The aim of the lesson was to stimulate discussion about the quantity of the items that people own and purchase, and whether these are all necessary.

The film *Chiripajas*, also used for the youngest age group, tells the story of a little turtle who gets trapped in the rubbish left on the beach while trying to reach the ocean and unite with its family. The turtle is finally able to escape when two human hands appear in the picture to collect the trash and make way for the turtle to get to the ocean. The film includes a double message: Humans can both damage and save the environment. Students were instructed to draw a poster illustrating the impact of rubbish on animals in their local environment, to persuade someone not to litter.

The artifacts students made in this lesson reflect a deeper view on the wellbeing of animals and the environment, and thus reveal an understanding that can be described as planetary responsibility or Earth literacy. The students focus on issues such as animal rights and plastic in oceans. In their artifacts the turtle gets stuck in rubbish not only on the beach but also in the ocean. One caption states that: "I have drawn a turtle,

it is stuck in rubbish in the Great Pacific garbage patch. It is telling people to stop using plastic, and stop throwing plastic in the sea." In their work, the students represented the plight of other sea animals and plants, attempting to save them from rubbish by persuading people to put their rubbish in bins. The artifact illustrated in Fig. 6.3 is one example of this: In it, nature (not tarnished by rubbish) and rubbish are clearly distinguished with colors. In the caption, the student suggests that people should put their rubbish in the bin, and repair broken items to avoid creating rubbish in the first place: "Put the things that you don't want, put them in the bin, but if it's a toy that is broken then you could fix it, fix it, fix it, fiiiiiix it! Make it colourful."

Several of the oldest students depicted the symbol of human hands saving the Earth from pollution in artifacts created in the lesson based on the film *Going Fishing*. One group of these students drew the Earth lying in human hands three times (Fig. 6.4). Their artifact seems to suggest that humans need to hold the planet gently, that is, to take care of it.
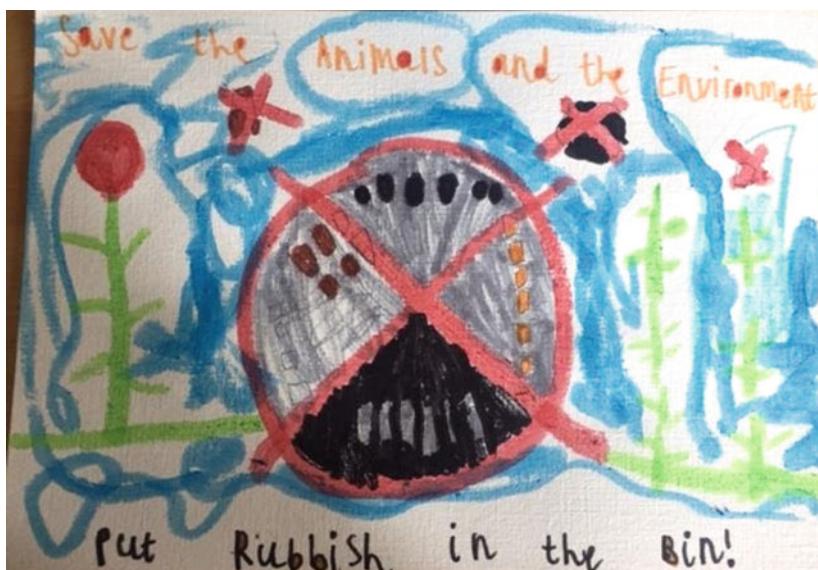

Fig. 6.3 A drawing by a student in the youngest age group from the UK exploring the impact of rubbish on animals and the environment
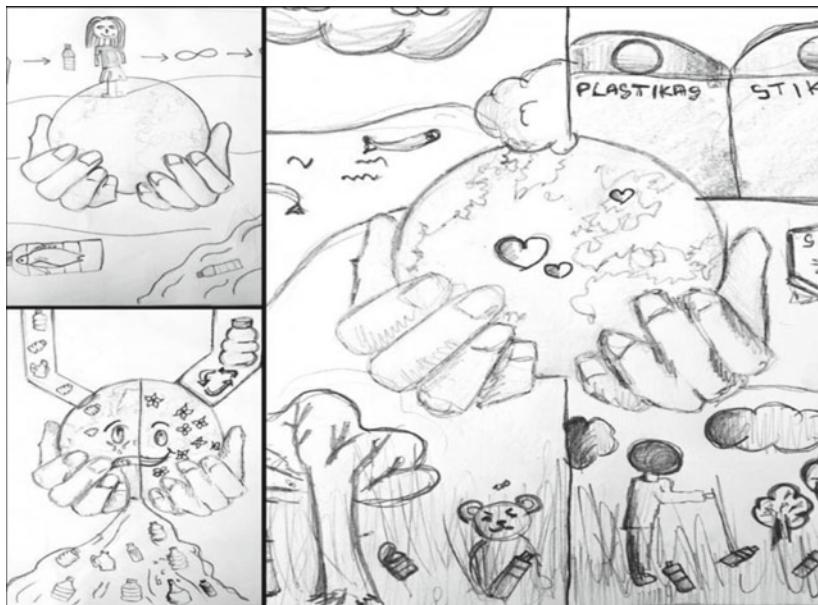
Fig. 6.4 A drawing by students in the oldest age group from Lithuania depicting the journey of a plastic bottle, exploring solutions to this nonsustainable situation

The students note in the caption how the destiny of the globe depends on human beings. However, other artifacts created in this lesson reflect more pessimistic views that humans cannot change the fate of the Earth. One group of students note in their caption that "we live immersed in consumerism, more and more products are disposable and no matter how many recycling campaigns there are, we are still generating too much waste that harms the planet and endangers future generations."

The artifacts responding to the book *Let's change!* include more optimistic views of the future of the Earth. In this lesson, the oldest students were instructed to select one ecological problem and draw a proposed solution to highlight how the sustainability of the Earth's natural resources is everyone's responsibility. In their artifacts, the students identified various unsustainable practices and suggested ideas and tools to transform these into sustainable development, such as replacing airplanes with electric cars, or cars with using trains and bicycles, or, since many

detached small houses leave no space for forests, building apartment blocks could leave more space for them. A teacher of a Spanish class summed up the students' optimistic discussion about the future of the Earth in his lesson diary as follows:

> Plastic is abundant nowadays. We should find some solution to avoid it, such as banning plastic bags in supermarkets. If we continue to pollute and deforest our planet, we will soon have trouble living in a healthy and sustainable way. We need courageous government action to eradicate these situations and the conscious involvement of each of us in issues such as recycling, renewable energy consumption, and the conscious consumption of what we eat and buy. As we have understood from the end of the book, all is not lost. Even in the most difficult situations, it is possible for tender plants to sprout. If we all become aware of the serious situation, if we all act bravely, we can achieve great things and, above all, bring our blue planet back to life.

In sum, our analysis indicates that many of the students in all age groups understood social responsibility as "our" responsibility to encounter the "other" ethically. In their creative works, however, students often approached social responsibility from an anthropocentric point of view. This is at least partly due to the instructions and suggestions given in the CLLP. Nevertheless, the wordless picture books and films with their nuanced stories about human and nonhuman relations encouraged the students to extend the idea of social responsibility to include the planet, paying attention to nonhumans, nature, and sustainability in general. Our analysis thus supports the claims that art can be a fruitful framework for teaching students to consider the viewpoints of others and to contemplate complex ecological issues.

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Belonging and Home

Abstract In this chapter, the authors discuss artifacts in which children explore belonging and home. The chapter defines the sense of belonging as a core feature of humanity and living together. The feeling of having a home and being at home is both an intimate and a socially shared aspect of belonging. The children expressed belonging to a wide range of spaces in their artifacts. This spatial span extends from macro to micro scale and indicates belonging based on spaces, social relations, and materiality. Even very young children can see and depict their belonging as multiple and including spatial and social dimensions. The analyzed artifacts reveal both concrete and symbolic approaches to belonging and home.

Keyword Belonging · Nonbelonging · Identity · Home

Defining the Concepts of Belonging and Home

The sense of belonging is one of the core features of humanity; people live with other people in a world determined by interlinked, constantly emerging, and transforming social relations. The feeling of having a home and being at home, one's own safe and secure place filled with familiarity, comfort, and emotional attachment, is a both intimate and socially shared aspect of the sense of belonging. In this chapter, we analyze the artifacts

in which students in the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) explored their understandings of belonging and home. We analyze where students claim to belong and how they give meanings to their feelings of belonging. Since the students often connected belonging to the idea of a home, we scrutinize what home means to them and what makes them feel at home (see also Maine et al. 2021).

The concept of belonging has been broadly discussed in scholarship during the past decade. It has emerged alongside, and partly replaced or challenged, the concept of identity (Lähdesmäki et al. 2016). Even though the two concepts seem to address similar kinds of feelings of being in the world with others, several scholars have emphasized the difference in the experiences and positions that the concepts are able to capture. For Probyn (1996, 19), the concept of belonging "captures more accurately the desire for some sort of attachment, be it to other people, places, or modes of being, and the ways in which individuals and groups are caught within wanting to belong, wanting to become, a process that is fuelled by yearning rather than the positing of identity as a stable state." Scholars have used the concept of belonging to address diverse forms of attachments and experiences of being and becoming part of a community.

A review (Lähdesmäki et al. 2016) has shown how previous researchers have usually approached the concept of belonging through a personal–public axis and/or in relation to place and politics. For example, Yuval-Davis (2006) distinguishes between psychological and political belonging, while Antonsich (2010, 645) explains the discussions on belonging as structured around two dimensions: "Belonging as a personal, intimate feeling of being 'at home' in a place (place-belongingness) and belonging as a discursive resource which constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging)." Other scholars (Bauböck 2005; Fenster 2005; Jones and Krzyzanowski 2008) have drawn an analytical distinction between micro and macro structures: Belonging spans from public-oriented official membership in a community, such as citizenship, to a private sentiment of attachment and an informal subjective feeling. In addition, scholars (Sicakkan and Lithman 2005, 27) have mapped the practices in and through which the belonging occurs.

How can we approach belonging to analyze children and young people's attachments, experiences, and positions in the world? Following Lähdesmäki and her colleagues' (2016) analysis, we emphasize that it is difficult to perceive the concept from two-dimensional polarities based on

either personal–public, spatial–social, or micro–macro relations. Instead, we understand belonging as an interrelated network of these diverse relations where attachments, experiences, and positions occur and emerge simultaneously as personal, public, spatial, and social. Belonging is not micro- or macro- but "multiscalar" (Huot et al. 2014): Attachments include a wide range of interdependent spatialities connecting homes, neighborhoods, suburbs, villages, cities, regions, countries, and even the planet—as our analysis indicates.

We also relate belonging to materiality: It is commonly expressed and constructed through material objects, physical environments, and embodied practices. Boccagni (2014, 289) claims that "there is a need to relocate belonging in something real." Researchers have often investigated the materiality of belonging in terms of migrants' or other mobile people's longing for (another) home or through homemaking practices in which people invest their houses with social and emotional meanings (Lähdesmäki et al. 2016). Even though home usually has a material basis, we define home "less as a particular geographical and/or architectural entity, and more as a space where specific forms of sociality take place," as Botticello (2007, 7) notes. Indeed, scholars have typically located the core of the idea of home in social relations: A material place gets its meaning as a home through its intersecting cultural, sociodemographic, and psychological dimensions (Haywad 1975; Saegert 1985; Lawrence 1987).

Besides spatial, material, and social aspects, we understand belonging as multiple and intersecting various spatial locations, material settings, and groups of people. Longing for and constructing belonging often stems from the fear of its flipside, nonbelonging, which is typically considered as negative and something to be avoided. For Gerharz (2014, 553–554), the concept of belonging has the advantage that "it emphasizes the relational dimensions of inclusion and exclusion." In our analysis, the idea of belonging and being included comprises the possibility of being excluded.

The CLLP Approach to and Data on Belonging and Home

The CLLP included a lesson for each age group that explored the ideas and experiences of belonging and home. These lessons use the same cultural text, Christopher Duriez's puppet animation *Baboon on the Moon*

(2002), to stimulate class discussion and the creation of cultural artifacts. In this film, a sad figure, a blue and gray baboon, lives alone in a blue house on the dark and empty Moon and longs for the bright and colorful Earth that they can see through space. Their longing for the Earth is emphasized by melancholic music that the baboon plays with their trumpet. The film does not explain why the baboon is on the Moon, but includes hints of what the Moon could represent: The baboon has *Africa Today* magazine on the floor next to their bed and a poster on his bedroom wall depicting a colorful landscape captioned "Mali." The film can be thus interpreted as a story of a migrant or refugee, in a place that they feel to be far from home or not yet their home.

The CLLP lesson plans did not explicitly bring this interpretation into the discussion. Instead, teachers were advised to encourage students to form their own narrative of the film, emphasizing the concepts of belonging and home. The lesson plans guided the teachers to take a relativist approach: Home does not mean the same thing for everyone and it is not only a house, but includes social and emotional dimensions.

The classroom discussions inescapably impacted the cultural artifacts that the students created at the end of each lesson. Students in the youngest age group were instructed to "draw a picture on the puzzle piece 'What does home mean to you'?" on a jigsaw template given to them by their teacher. Students in the second age group were asked "to create a collage of where they belong." The oldest students were "to create artwork to reflect the keywords and phrases that define 'home'." Moreover, the visuality of the figures, environments, and scenes in the film impacted how the students reflected and depicted home and belonging in their artifacts.

Our data for this chapter includes 743 works from Cyprus (77), Germany (32), Israel (339), Lithuania (32), Portugal (111), and the UK (152). Some of these artifacts were created individually but most in small groups, or (especially in the youngest group), created individually but then combined as a collage for the whole class. The collaborative artifacts could include dozens of individual creations. The artifacts dealing with belonging (184) were all made by students in the second age group, while the artifacts on home (559) were created by all age groups (since some teachers used the same instructions for the second and youngest age groups). Many of the artifacts that dealt with home also reflected on the idea of belonging, especially those made in the oldest age group. Even though these two themes are closely connected in our data, we explore

the artifacts on belonging and home in turn for analytic clarity, ending with a discussion on the intersections of these themes.

Ideas of Belonging in the Cultural Artifacts

Students in the second age group focused on exploring belonging in their artifacts. This age group included students from Israel, Lithuania, Portugal, and the UK. In these artifacts, students expressed belonging to a wide spatial span of locations. This span reaches from macro to micro scale including following categories: Earth; other countries; home country; home town or village; home district or street; the natural environment in one's living area or yard around one's home; house or home; one's own room or own space at home. In their artifacts, students also commonly expressed belonging based on social relations and ties to groups of people. We categorized these relations as follows: Family or family members; friends; social networks related to free time or hobbies; and school. The artifacts also often dealt with the materiality of belonging. Students depicted their personal items and belongings, such as toys, books, or their own desk or bed. All these social categories were connected to locations, while the spatial categories were intertwined with social networks. Both categories include a material dimension as the attempts to represent them with visual means materializes them. For instance, home was typically expressed in the artifacts through an archetypical image of a house (Figs. 7.1 and 7.2), social networks were commonly represented through items related to leisure activities, and belonging to one's home country was expressed through national symbols such as the flag.

In this task, students most often expressed belonging to their house or home, followed by belonging to a family and family members; the Earth; social networks related to free time or hobbies; their own room or own space at home; their own belongings; and friends. In all four countries from which the data was collected, belonging was most often expressed in terms of house or home, but there were some country-specific peculiarities. In Lithuania, students talked about their home country in comparison to foreign countries (Fig. 7.1) and drew the national flag more often than in other countries. In Portugal, many of the students emphasized meeting basic needs as a basis for belonging. As one Portuguese group explained in the caption to their artifact: "We belong to this place because: We need people to help us; we need a place to live;
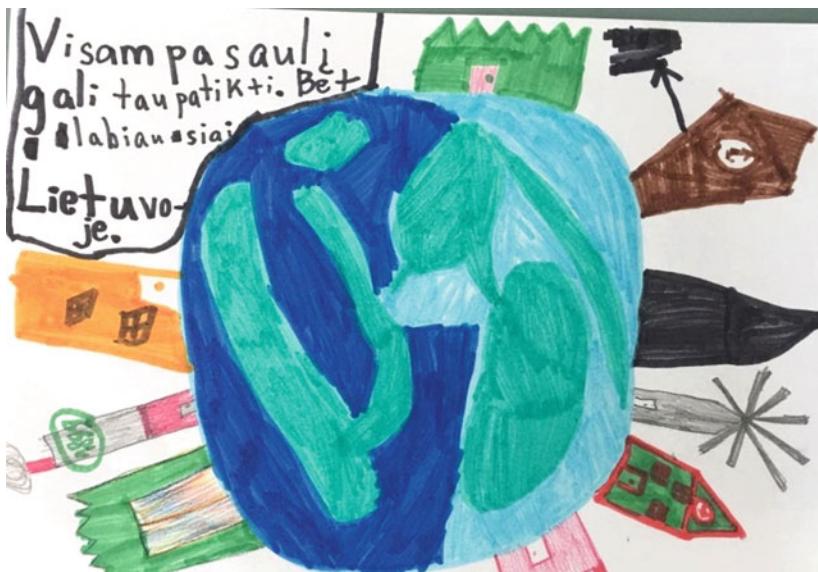
Fig. 7.1 A drawing on "Where I belong" by a Lithuanian student in the second age group

we need food; we need a place where we feel safe." Their artifact depicts on a blue background the Earth, a house, a bed, a drawer, a TV, an apple, and two glasses of something to drink. In the UK, the students several times referred to their school as a place where they belong; students did not mention school as a place of belonging in any other country. In Israel, students drew the Earth and explained belonging to it more often than in other countries. One Israeli student explained the reasons for this: "I belong to the Earth because on the Earth I was born, on the Earth I also learned and grew up, it is the place I belong to, it is my home." This caption extends the idea of home to include our planet. These differences in the artifacts may not reflect any broader cultural differences between these countries, however, but may relate to the differences in the topics teachers raised during the lessons.

Even very young children were able to perceive and depict their belonging as multiple, including several dimensions, and simultaneously occurring on different scales. For instance, one of the artifacts illustrates belonging through a family holding hands next to an apartment building

in which they have their home. Next to the family, there is a flagpole with a Lithuanian flag and a signpost with the name of the district of the city where they live.

Nonbelonging is implicit in these artifacts as a condition to be avoided or fixed. These views stem from the film *Baboon on the Moon* in which the main character is interpreted as being in the wrong place and thus not belonging to the Moon. Influenced by the film, many of the students emphasized that they—like the baboon—belong to Earth. As the Moon was depicted in the film as a dark and uncolorful place, some students saw the Earth as its contradiction. As one writes in a caption of a colorful drawing depicting a family next to their home: "I feel sorry for Baboon because in his house on the Moon, he is lonely. My house is bright and on the Earth. And there are people on the Earth. The Earth is colored, the sky is blue, the Earth is green, and the sun is yellow. There are no colors on the Moon." In several artifacts, the students ponder how to get the baboon back to the Earth, where the baboon belongs. These artifacts reflect empathy for the baboon which becomes an attempt to help them. These artifacts indicate the potential of art to promote empathy (Lähdesmäki and Koistinen 2021).

Several Lithuanian students dealt with the idea of nonbelonging by comparing their own home or home country with experiences from foreign countries. In these artifacts, traveling in foreign countries is seen as positive and "fun," but as one student notes in the caption of a collage depicting their room: "Although [it is] good in another country, everything is foreign, you want to go home." Here, homeland is filled with positive meanings of familiarity, friends, and belonging. These meanings are depicted in another artifact with this explanation: "NASA has decided to do an experiment to see if Baboon could be without friends on the Moon: We all travel the world, it is very beautiful and fun, but it is best to live in Lithuania because it is your homeland and here you have friends." In the artifact, the student has drawn the Earth with historical buildings around it. The text in the corner of the drawing reminds viewers that "the whole world may like you, but [you are liked] the most in Lithuania" (Fig. 7.1).

The analyzed artifacts reveal both concrete and abstract or metaphoric approaches to the idea of belonging. Many function at both levels at once, so it is difficult to distinguish clearly between the concrete and abstract. For instance, an artifact may represent a concrete building, as a symbol of what a home looks like and a visual metaphor for a place to live. Children's creative artworks are typically multimodal: The visual outcome is

extended by children's imagination and a broader narrative, so it is difficult—and unnecessary—to evaluate the expressive capacity of the visual outcome. Some teachers were tempted to evaluate the students' responses in their artifacts. This is exemplified by the following note from a British teacher in the data collection form:

> We then discussed the question 'where do you belong?' and 'where is home?' This took a bit of time for the children to come up with answers linked to the question but I noticed that their responses where [went], mainly, back to a superficial level. For example, I belong to cubs/school/my family and My home is in my bedroom. However, some children expressed a deeper level of thinking by answering 'I belong to the world' and 'I belong where my heart takes me.'

Ideas of Home in the Cultural Artifacts

As said above, the concept of home was explored in particular within the youngest and oldest age groups, yet some classes in the second age group also did so. In their artifacts, the youngest and second age group tended to represent home as a colorful house that resembles the resource image given to the teachers in the lesson plans. This image is a clip from *Baboon on the Moon* depicting an archetypical house with a cut pyramid-shaped roof. The oldest age group depicted this archetypical house in only a few artifacts.

The artifacts about home made by the two youngest age groups are quite similar, with only few differences between the artifacts created within students from different countries. The instructions and resource image were perhaps the reason for this similarity, but it may also reflect relative universality of symbols used in children's culture. Specific school classes produced similar artifacts and captions: All students in some classes drew a colorful house. Since the younger children were asked to create a collaborative collage, peer influence has affected their artifacts (see Chapters 2 and 9), which were created through dialogue. There were more differences between countries in the oldest age group, both in the form and content of their artifacts.

The artifacts and captions nevertheless indicate that for most students, home is more than a house. Children in the first and second age groups often drew smiling people next to (or inside of) the archetypical houses. Students did not necessarily draw a house at all, but only focused on people. The collages created by the German children in the second age

group focus more on the interiors of the houses and the people who live there. In the oldest group, family, friends, and other loved ones were the most recurring theme, though often expressed in a more symbolic manner. In all of the age groups, the captions identify the people in the images as family members, relatives, and friends. The oldest students from Lithuania, Israel, and Germany also associated home with memories shared with family. Pets are also included in the artifacts or at least mentioned in the captions as family members by all age groups. In a caption by the youngest students from Portugal, home is described as a place "[w]here we eat and sleep. Where we take care of our pets."

The depictions of family members and other loved ones in the images and their captions highlight the importance of home as a place of living together—being taken care of and taking care of others. In the oldest group, Israeli children especially highlighted the difference between home as a "physical" place and as a "spiritual" space constructed by loved ones such as family and friends. Both the youngest age groups mentioned activities, such as play. A Cypriot child from the youngest age group connected home solely to the family and the activities done with them, as their caption states: "Home is when I am with my family and my father when we go fishing." This kind of notion of home has been identified in previous research: Even though the concept of home tends to be associated with a concrete house, it also includes a social (as well as cultural and political) dimension (Aaltojärvi 2014, 40).

In the artifacts, home is represented as a place of happiness and other "good feelings." In the youngest age groups, this is reflected by the fact that the home is almost always drawn with bright colors. The good feelings associated with home are also depicted by smiling faces and hearts. Other recurring images, such as rainbows, flowers, trees, butterflies, green grass, blue sky, and the sun shining brightly can also be interpreted as symbolizing happiness. Home as a happy place is also emphasized in the captions, which describe home as a place of care and love. The youngest children often described home as a place of warmth, which can refer to the physical aspects of the house as well as to the warm feelings shared with the family. A Cypriot teacher of the youngest age group summarizes their class discussion as follows:

> Each child draws a piece of the puzzle on "What is home for you? Where do you belong?" Then they put their pieces together and make a complete puzzle that forms a house making the definition of what a house means.

Home is a place to play, work, take a bath,warm up, a place that has a yard, trees, and flowers, it's where we were born and are safe, where those you love and love you are, where our parents, siblings, cousins, friends, kitten, and dog are. Where you feel happy, you have a hug, a caress, love, a rainbow, where our heart is. At the end of the lesson, the children were given time to complete their work, because they asked for it themselves. They added that home is where we feel loved, happy, where we feel friendly and where sometimes we can also feel sad, but our family and friends are there to help us feel happy again.

Here, the rainbow, for example, is associated with touch, intimacy, and love. The outward appearance of the home as a colorful house surrounded by hearts, stars, rainbows, and flowers can thus be interpreted as reflecting the love shared inside it (Fig. 7.2).

Fig. 7.2 These artifacts from the youngest age group (the collage by students from Cyprus and the single puzzle pieces from Portugal) illustrate how home is often depicted as an archetypical house, yet images of people and symbols like hearts signify that home is more than just the building

Safety, mentioned in the above caption, was referred to by all age groups. In the youngest group, it is mentioned at least once in the captions in each country; Portuguese students in the youngest age group, one German student in the oldest age group, and Israeli students in all age groups also mention home as a place of protection. Whereas the Portuguese students mainly describe protection from natural forces, for one class of Israeli students in the youngest age group, home was "[a] place where they also feel safe and protected from projectiles," as their teacher put it. Even though this one caption is not representative of all Israeli students' ideas of home, it highlights how different living conditions shape what home means for the children. In the second age group, Israeli children also emphasized safety more than the students from the other countries; they were the only ones to mention protection. Safety and protection are even more present in the artifacts made by the older Israeli children. In them, home becomes a private space shielded from the outside, which may culminate in the symbol of a shield. One group of students drew tanks, missiles, and a fence protecting a house decorated with hearts. In the caption, the students state:

> [W]e chose to draw a fence since the home is our safe zone and the warning signs express the fact that the home is our private zone and often we [keep our] distance [from] people since we are in our private zone.

Here home is aligned with safety and privacy: The artifact and its caption reflect fear of a threat from the outside, which is contrasted to the love and warmth felt inside the home.

Home as a private sphere was also mentioned in two Lithuanian artifacts, one (Fig. 7.3.) illustrating the student's symbolic thinking, as explained in the caption:

> We pictured a winged padlock with a small key. The lock symbolizes security, the privacy of a family and home. A family is like a fist, like the fingers of one hand, nothing can separate them. The golden color implies that a family is the most precious spiritual asset. The blood ties are very strong. A brother, sister, parents are your closest ones, nobody will substitute them. The wings symbolize freedom and strength. We leave home strong because loving people inspire us and wish us success. Although we belong to a family, we feel free to start our own lives, choose a desirable profession and work, and start our own family. The small sized keys indicate that only family members, the spirit of that home, can unlock the padlock and

Fig. 7.3 In the artifact from the oldest age group from Lithuania, a lock with wings symbolizes home as a private place, where one can feel free

live a private, safe life. No outsiders will be able to unlock the locks. It's a sign that the family has its secrets which can never be revealed to anyone else.

This illustrates how the artifacts and captions by the oldest students entail complex symbolic expression. This complexity is also visible in the depictions of animals. Whereas all age groups mentioned pets, in the oldest group animals are also treated as symbols. One student from Germany describes how they always feel at home with a cat, "because for me, animals in general symbolize a feeling of security/comfort and love and I feel comfortable around cats." The cat thus becomes a symbol for home. Another student from Germany made an origami fish that represented home and important life events within the family. In one Lithuanian artifact, the national bird of Lithuania—the stork—is used as a symbol for nationality, or the nation as home. In the oldest age group, the Lithuanians were most likely to express the idea of nation. In their artifacts, the Lithuanian students also explored home in relation to a broader sense of belonging to one's neighbors, the living environment, the nation, or the entire Earth. In one caption, the students explained how home is: "The Earth, Europe, Country, City, Street, House, Family, Feelings." This reflects Aaltojärvi's (2014, 40) notion that home is not necessarily "a single and static place," and can be understood more broadly, for example as a city or nation.

In the youngest age group, Portuguese children linked home to broader spatial entities, such as their homeland or the municipal area where they lived, more often than the students from other countries. They also often mentioned the beach, which reflects their everyday surroundings. This indicates that the feeling of home goes beyond the house or the people that live in it, to encompass their broader environment. In the second age group, the Israeli students mentioned their spatial surroundings, such as a village or a state, more than the other students. Moreover, children in the youngest age group (only once in the second age group) made some artifacts depicting the Earth, which may reflect a broader sense of home as the entire planet. That said, the film used in these lessons represents the Earth as the home that the main character longs for. In the oldest group, Portuguese children were specifically asked to draw a film script based on *Baboon on the Moon*, which clearly affected their choice of imagery.

The theme of acceptance was raised a few times by the youngest students and the Israeli students in the second age group. As the previously cited caption from the youngest age group states, home is a place where "we can also feel sad, but our family and friends are there [to] help us feel happy again." In the oldest group, the theme of acceptance, with freedom and self-expression, recurred even more often. The ability to be oneself and express oneself freely is raised especially in the Israeli data. Acceptance, freedom, and self-expression can be connected to empathy, for instance family members' ability to treat each other with kindness and mutual understanding and to allow each member to be themselves freely. Empathy was particularly expressed by the Portuguese students in the oldest age group who drew a script for a film based on *Baboon on the Moon*. In these artifacts, the students consider the baboon's point of view and emotions, such as longing for home, thus empathizing with the animal. Even though the baboon may serve as an allegory for a human being, this empathy can be interpreted to encompass animals. Indeed, in one of the artifacts, the baboon is depicted as missing the fellow baboons—subjugated by humans—on the Earth.

These findings indicate how belonging and home become intertwined in the data. Some of the oldest students explicitly mention belonging in statements such as: "A home for us is a place where you feel you belong," and "at home there's a family who loves and you feel toward it most belonging in the world." Once belonging was mentioned in relation to

dialogue, and once to solidarity. The student describes the artifact dealing with solidarity (Fig. 7.4) as follows:

> With a 3D pen I created four figures that join hands in the middle. For me, this means solidarity/belonging because they are all different, this is the reason for the different colors, but they still hold together. They are standing on a "sun" because home means to me that you feel good and the sun radiates warmth and you feel good under its rays.

This artifact and its caption beautifully sum up the idea of the CLLP: Creating cultural artifacts can stimulate children's thinking on questions such as solidarity, difference, and belonging.

Fig. 7.4 Solidarity despite differences is expressed through differently colored figures holding hands in an artifact by a German student in the oldest age group

Intersections of Belonging
and Home in the Cultural Artifacts

Our data reveals that both teachers and students commonly approached belonging through the idea of home. This was influenced by the assignments given to the students. The youngest students rarely explicitly used the word "belonging" but the teachers wrote it in the captions of their artifacts. For instance, a teacher from Israel describes the lesson with the youngest children as follows:

> After watching the video and a plenary discussion we came to the conclusion that a home is not only the building where I live but also a place that I feel I belong to, where I feel loved. After conceptualizing again what is home for us the students thought about additional ideas such as: An afternoon class they take, their parents' homeland, a place where they love spending time with their family.

The quotation shows how teachers explicitly linked belonging and home in their lessons.

In the artifacts and captions, belonging was explored in relation to various spatial entities, material items, and social networks (in this order of frequency): House or home, a family and family members, the Earth, social networks related to free time and hobbies, one's own room or space, own belongings, and friends. Respectively, home was explored in relation to family, friends, and pets, yet also to the school, the neighborhood, the state or nation, or the entire Earth.

In sum, in their artifacts, the students commonly explored belonging and home as multiple and interconnected concepts, including attachments to different spatial locations and groups of people. Children and young people's sense of belonging seemed to easily range between and simultaneously include different scales. Our analysis shows how the students commonly perceived belonging as positive and as something to strive for. Some explored this in terms of nonbelonging, by identifying places or social networks to which they do not belong, where they feel uncomfortable, displaced, or lonely, or in which they miss their home. Hence, nonbelonging was seen as negative and something to strive against.

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Cultural Literacy During COVID-19

Abstract As implementation of the CLLP was challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic, the DIALLS project included in the program an additional lesson in which children reflected on its impact on their social environment. In this chapter, the authors analyze how the children's artifacts express their understanding of the COVID-19 situation, including themes such as care and protection. The chapter focuses on how the students address empathy, tolerance, and inclusiveness under pandemic conditions. It starts by contextualizing the artifacts with international COVID-19 imagery and nationally similar or differing COVID-19 circumstances. Then, it analyzes the artifacts and their textual narratives.

Keywords COVID-19 · Pandemic conditions · Care · Protection

Reporting and Research on the COVID-19 Pandemic and Its Imagery

As our data collection for the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) was challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020, we chose to include an additional task in the program about the impact of the pandemic. In this additional task, students in some countries where this was possible were asked to reflect on the question: How can I be

empathetic, tolerant, and inclusive in pandemic conditions? The students visualized their reflections. Some of their works included captions which consisted of a title and short textual elaborations. In this chapter, we analyze how, in their artifacts, students who did this supplementary task reveal their understanding of cultural literacy themes in relation to COVID-19. In particular, we analyze how the students approached the task of depicting empathy, tolerance, and inclusion in this situation of worldwide emergency.

Since the COVID-19 task was an unplanned supplement to the CLLP, only three of the countries that participated in testing the program chose to carry it out: Lithuania, Cyprus, and Portugal. The data set is quite uneven, as some of the countries only gathered items made by one age or school group. Most of the COVID-19 images (28 artifacts) came from the oldest age group, roughly half each from Lithuania and the other half from Portugal. The fewest images were made by students in the second age group (four artifacts, all from Lithuania). In the youngest age group, apart from one Lithuanian image, all the artifacts were made by Cypriots. Since the artifacts from Cyprus (24) and Portugal (14) only included short titles or no descriptive captions at all, most of the textual elements we refer to in this chapter derive from the Lithuanian data. Altogether there were 57 artifacts in the COVID-19 data set.

In order to contextualize the images, it is worth noting that the COVID-19 pandemic yielded a wealth of imagery and research topics. National and international health campaigns provided images of health professionals in protective clothing and reminded citizens of the importance of handwashing and correct coughing and sneezing. Visualizations of the virus accompanied the news on the subject (Valko 2020) and artists interpreted the crisis from various viewpoints (McCarthy and O'Rawe 2020). Moreover, pandemic-related memes flooded social media platforms and the pandemic was reported to cause similar imagery in people's dreams (McKay and DeCicco 2020).

After the initial turmoil of lockdowns and state-imposed restrictions on people's free movement, many researchers analyzed the pandemic through humanistic, educational, or artistic lenses, investigating subjects ranging from mitigating the impact of COVID-19 to related humor (Academy of Finland 2020; University of Amsterdam 2020). Meanwhile, newspapers and magazines published calls for people to keep diaries of their experiences and reports on how museums and research centers started to document this "period of deep historical import […]

a time of both ascendant empathy and exposed prejudice, of collective fear for the present and collective hope for a brighter future" (Smith 2020, 1; see also Landdeck 2020; Popescu 2020). NGOs, universities, and newspapers collected children's drawings reflecting the coronavirus pandemic (UNICEF 2020a; Staffordshire University 2020; *The New York Times* 2020). UNICEF even presented drawing one's feelings about the pandemic as a way to maintain one's mental health (UNICEF, Facebook post, 2020b), an approach that was mirrored in other reports (Richards 2020; Taylor 2020).

In journalistic and academic reports of a humanist perspective, the state of emergency was approached through disciplines such as history, education, aesthetics, science fiction, and popular culture. A recurring question in these speculative writings was what humanity might be able to learn from the pandemic (Kovalčik and Ryynänen 2020; Robinson 2020; Kale 2020; Callard 2020). Discussions about how the pandemic influenced minority rights mixed with reportage about how to feel connected during quarantine (Wilson and Frey 2020). Other reports highlighted the role of social media in alleviating boredom, fatigue, and fears during the pandemic. *The Guardian*, for example, recounted how the memes, jokes, and skits on the video-sharing app TikTok were a "surprise lockdown hit," where anarchy and absurdist jokes coexisted with health campaigns (Kale 2020). *The New York Times* noted that even high-profile institutions such as the Uffizi Gallery turned deliberately clownish on TikTok (Marschall 2020).

The lockdown procedures were similar in many countries. The three countries from which our COVID-19 data stems all introduced restrictions and safety measures such as quarantine, maintaining a safe distance, and wearing masks. "Social" (or physical) distancing encompassed refraining from social contact outside one's own household—a measure accompanied by the "stay home" hashtag in social media postings all over the world. In order to break chains of infection, kindergartens were closed in many countries and schools moved to remote learning. Workers who were able to do so also began to work remotely from home. The most fiercely protected, and hence isolated, groups included senior citizens.

As the pandemic continued, people increasingly discussed mental health. Researchers at the Vilnius University Psychotraumatology Center, for example, published a study that revealed that four in five Lithuanian adolescents (aged 13–18) experienced learning difficulties due to the pandemic. Furthermore, three in four adolescents indicated that their

leisure activities were impaired and one in four adolescents reported having relationship difficulties within the family (Vilnius University 2020). Research in Cyprus likewise indicated a relatively high prevalence of generalized anxiety disorder and depressive symptoms in the Cypriot population during the COVID-19 outbreak. One researcher identified a statistically significant increase in major depressive symptoms among students and people aged under 21, which was attributed to the fact that closing schools destabilized their regular study routine (Stylianou and Samouti 2020). Portuguese research on the state of public mental health due to COVID-19 also found increased levels of anxiety and stress (Paulino et al. 2021).

Altogether, the pandemic had a large-scale impact on students' lives, as is clear in the images they produced for our project. In what follows, first we provide a general overview of themes that the students discussed in their visual artifacts on COVID-19. Second, we discuss the artifacts in relation to the themes of empathy, tolerance, and inclusion by engaging in a closer reading of some selected images and captions. To conclude, we look at exceptions and peculiarities, to determine which ideas and experiences the project design captures and which understandings are probably beyond the scope of this particular research constellation.

COVID-19 in Student Artifacts: Obeying Rules and Taking Care of Oneself and Others

In our analysis, we initially categorized the COVID-19 images according to their visual theme. Some of the images fitted in more than one category, but one theme dominated in most. These visual categories were: Communication (2), scenarios (2), feeling and time (4) global cooperation (7), rules (10), home and family (12), and protection—in particular face masks (20). Since the captions added extra layers of meaning to the images, we also grouped the artifacts into two general themes: Obeying rules and taking care of oneself and others.

Communication features prominently in two drawings by Lithuanian students, one of the oldest age group and the other one of the middle age group. The first one drew two teenage girls keeping in touch via an "ancient" type of communication, two cups attached to a line; the second depicted a girl keeping in contact with her grandparents via a laptop computer. Furthermore, two of the drawings categorized as depicting "home and family" (both made by Cypriots of the youngest age group),

also have captions referring to long-distance communication: "I will call you on Viber to share our news in the evening. We stay safe at home!"; "I love you but I am telling you from a distance."

Two further drawings depicted scenarios divided by a vertical line down the middle of the paper. In both, the left side of the image depicts a somewhat gloomier scenario (using color, e.g., gray and violet), while the right side is happier (e.g., in yellow). In both drawings, the positive scenario on the right depicts children happily playing outdoors. The left side depicts faces with the mouth turned downward in sadness in one and a medic wearing a face mask in the other.

Feeling and time was a notable feature in four artifacts that depicted the experience of waiting and isolation during lockdown. This was mostly done by referencing the passing of time. A group of Cypriots in the youngest age group, for example, created a colorful wheel titled "A clock that shows us when the quarantine will end and the coronavirus will disappear." Two Lithuanian students from the oldest age group depicted a person or a family trapped in a glass or an hourglass.

Global cooperation was depicted by one Lithuanian student in the oldest age group as people building a huge puzzle together. Eight other images by the oldest students (one from Portugal, the others from Lithuania) depicted or featured the globe, but not all of these were categorized under the theme of global cooperation, since some of the images also fitted in the category of protection/masks.

Rules was the third most common theme. Although many of the artifacts mentioned the rules or restrictions related to the pandemic in textual form, most of the visualizations categorized in this theme were produced by the youngest students in Cyprus. Many of these referred to the "three don'ts" that prevent the virus from spreading: Don't touch your mouth, nose, or eyes. The similarities of the images in this category suggest that they were made under rather specific instructions that deviated somewhat from the researchers' intention for this task. As such, they probably reflect the teacher's educational goals. Although some of these images are rather charming, they do not provide many opportunities for readings focusing on tolerance, empathy, and inclusion, as they lack deeper textual captions referring to these subjects (Fig. 8.1).

Home and family was the second most common theme, prominent above all in the artifacts produced by the youngest age group. A handful of the youngest Cypriot students glued together colorful paper cutouts made by tracing their own and their family members' hands in order

Fig. 8.1 "The three don'ts that will make the virus disappear at once: Don't, don't, don't" by a student from Cyprus, youngest age group

to show who was part of their immediate family. Another group of the youngest Cypriots all depicted similar images of seemingly happy people, defined as family, standing outdoors in the sun among flowers and butter-flies, dressed nicely and colorfully. Only the captions of some of these images relate them to COVID-19 with phrases such as "we stay home" or "#stayhome."

Protection, or masks, was the most common visual theme within the COVID-19 artifacts. In the Portuguese data, a whole group of students painted declarations on face masks. Furthermore, many of the Lithuanian students depicted face masks in images that showed medics and ordinary citizens in protective gear. The accompanying captions often address the rules and regulations and refer to the importance of wearing masks as an example of good conduct.

Visualizations of the virus were also very common and appeared in many of the different categories. This attests to the fact that the students, even the youngest ones, were clearly aware of how the virus has been depicted in the media and news reporting, as the images all depicted a round form with similar round appendages (Valko 2020).

Obeying rules and taking care of oneself and others were the two main themes that we identified from the images and the captions. All the artifacts referenced the need to adhere to the regulations related to the pandemic, or the selfless effort it demanded of individuals: Behaving sensibly and following the rules would ensure that everyone, oneself included, might get through the situation and resume normal life. We give more examples of this in the next section, where we focus on how the students discussed empathy, tolerance, and inclusion in their COVID-19 artifacts.

Empathy, Tolerance, and Inclusion in the Context of the Global Pandemic

The task students had was to reflect on the question: How can I be empathetic, tolerant, and inclusive in pandemic conditions? The COVID-19 imagery produced by the students in our project was quite uniform in terms of these central attitudes of cultural literacy. Generally, the artifacts emphasized obedience, community effort, and the idea that the restrictions were for the common good. There is a strong focus on conformity in the data. The images and captions promote compliance with the national health campaigns and WHO guidelines and reflect the educational stance of these campaigns.

Tolerance was explicitly mentioned in six captions. In the interplay of word and image, the students often promoted the view that the restrictions and guidelines or "rules" drawn up during the pandemic were something to be tolerated. Yet, tolerance was often unspecified, as exemplified by a Lithuanian student of the oldest age group, who first states

the importance of staying safe and then adds that this includes adherence to the rules:

> At the moment the most important thing is to stay safe. I think that all people adhere to the rules: Wear masks, keep [your] distance, wash [your] hands [when] coming home. Tolerance is most important in such times. Elderly people are in danger, that's why my mom buys everything for the neighbors. I help my mom to disinfect the stairwell. The Covid virus is very dangerous, that's why we need to follow strict rules, and help each other. Probably we will succeed to survive and live our lives as before.

The drawing accompanying this caption depicts a woman sitting on a giant virus and wearing a face mask. In her hand, she holds a drooping red flower and in front of her we see the world, a blue planet with green continents. From behind the globe, a flock of birds appears (Fig. 8.2).

Fig. 8.2. Drawing by a Lithuanian student of the oldest age group with the title "We are all responsible"

The image is full of strong symbols. The drooping flower indicates sadness and hardship. The woman's sitting pose may be interpreted as a sign of endurance, of "sitting it out." And the birds may be seen as signs of freedom. Hopefulness is a strong element in many of the artifacts in this data set, as exemplified by another caption that a Lithuanian student in the second age group added to her artifact. In it, she openly rejoices about springtime, which is a common symbol of new life and change for the better: "Blooming apple trees around as well as gently swaying grass. Spring is coming!!! I want to stop the pandemic very soon and children could play in the courtyard."

The image accompanying this rather cheerful text depicts people greeting each other respectfully when walking in the park. Instead of shaking hands, they place their hands on their chests. Respect and civility are mentioned as attitudes that are related to tolerance.

As a rule, the students mostly related tolerance to tolerating the restrictions imposed upon one's own personal freedom. It was framed as something to be done for the greater good, the good of the community—especially to save the lives of elderly people. Elderly people and medics were the two most commonly mentioned groups of "others" in all these artifacts. In both cases, these demographics are presented as reasons to endure the restrictions. They are in most danger, or on the front line; adhering to the rules particularly protects their lives. People from these two groups are depicted as the objects of empathy, as in the following caption by a Lithuanian student from the oldest age group:

> My family's greatest help to each other, I think, is to take care of each other, to keep the risk of virus infection at home as low as possible, and not to forget each other, because that's very important now, especially for grandparents or just older people, because I think they are undergoing very difficult times, and we shouldn't allow them to go through it alone. Every call can cheer them up, knowing that someone cares about them, in my opinion, means a lot to them.

Empathy toward medics is illustrated in this text excerpt, likewise by a Lithuanian student in the oldest age group:

> We go shopping one by one. Let's be tolerant, distancing on the line, don't touch the thing which we don't intend to buy. Coming back home, wash our hands, disinfect, remove our masks. My family is very empathetic to doctors, we stay at home and save each other.

In some instances, determining the subjects and objects of empathy is harder. An example that relates tolerance and empathy explicitly to elderly people, without being clear about whether they are the objects or subjects of this disposition, it is given by a Lithuanian student in the oldest age group, who drew a "no touching" sign accompanied by the text: "Older relatives at risk buy the necessary goods, do not allow them to visit public places or use public transport. This shows a high level of tolerance and empathy for people in that age group." This use of the concepts of tolerance and empathy could be seen as rather paradoxical, since the restrictions on older people exclude them from public spaces. Although the lawmakers had the best interest of this group in mind, they seriously hampered old people's rights to self-determination.

In many of the COVID-19 artifacts, empathy also becomes something connected to the shared feelings of sadness caused by isolation. The ones feeling empathetic are the students and the people that they associate themselves with, expressed in the pronoun "we," as the following text written by a Lithuanian student of the oldest age group illustrates:

> In such a situation in which we are right now, we have to be more tolerant. Each of us has similar feelings, understanding better. We feel a little bit sad, not having possibilities to meet our friends, family members who live separately. Our lifestyle has changed, so we need to start to live in another way than before.

Altogether, then, there is a considerable amount of definitional vagueness in the manner in which the artifacts reference the concepts of tolerance, empathy, and inclusion. This can also be seen in a statement that begins the caption of an older Lithuanian student: "During the quarantine, I am empathetic when I don't leave home." The same vagueness is visible also in another caption by another older Lithuanian, who describes the suffering that the virus has caused via "the loss of loved ones, illness and isolation" and who then goes on to state that "[t]here is a great deal of empathy and tolerance at this difficult time."

Representations of inclusion were somewhat harder to track within the data. Inclusion was not referenced explicitly by any of the captions, but there are many visualizations of family and references to a "we," as the quotes above exemplify. As a Lithuanian student of the youngest age group put it:

Our family stays at home all the time. Other people are afraid to go outside. Streets seem empty. It's good to stay at home not meeting corona[virus]. But everybody likes everybody: Saying good words to each other. That's why I drew a lot of hearts. Sometimes a boy goes outside to play football. But his behavior is not good, he did not follow the rules. It would be nice if somebody could tell him about that.

In this case, "our family" and "other people" are aligned by shared fear of the virus, their adherence to the rules, their goodness, and the nice things that they say to each other. Their behavior is contrasted with that of the boy who goes out to play football. One could read envy into the sentence describing him but also simple concern for the boy's health. After all, he might not know better. There is no hint of the desire to engage in dialogue with the boy or to question the rules imposed by the state. As such, this image and caption might stimulate discussion, but do not reflect dialogic engagement with differing viewpoints as such.

Visually, the most powerful signs of inclusion are the depictions of global joint effort to overcome the pandemic. These images of people holding hands across the globe illustrate the need to stand united and to work together. One student explicitly depicts people of different ethnic backgrounds standing united by the COVID-19 situation (Fig. 8.3).

Since our data on this subject is relatively small and uneven, it is nearly impossible to make comparisons between age groups or countries. Most of the quoted captions stem from the Lithuanian data, as the Lithuanian artifacts included much longer captions than the ones from Cyprus, while the Portuguese artifacts include only short titles or no captions at all. It might thus be more relevant to identify similarities within images made in the same classrooms or under peer influence than to decipher cultural differences. Nevertheless, newspapers have reported similar iconography on the pandemic in children's drawings from around the world. *Gulf News*, which showed images drawn by children in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Japan, Australia, Morocco, Cuba, Switzerland, South Africa, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Chile, summarized this observation in a news item titled "COVID-19: Children's drawings from lockdown show the world what they miss most: Regardless of where they are, the themes are often the same" (AFP and Lacsina 2020). The same news was reported by Reuters, who listed grandparents, friends at school, football, and green open spaces among the things most dearly missed by children
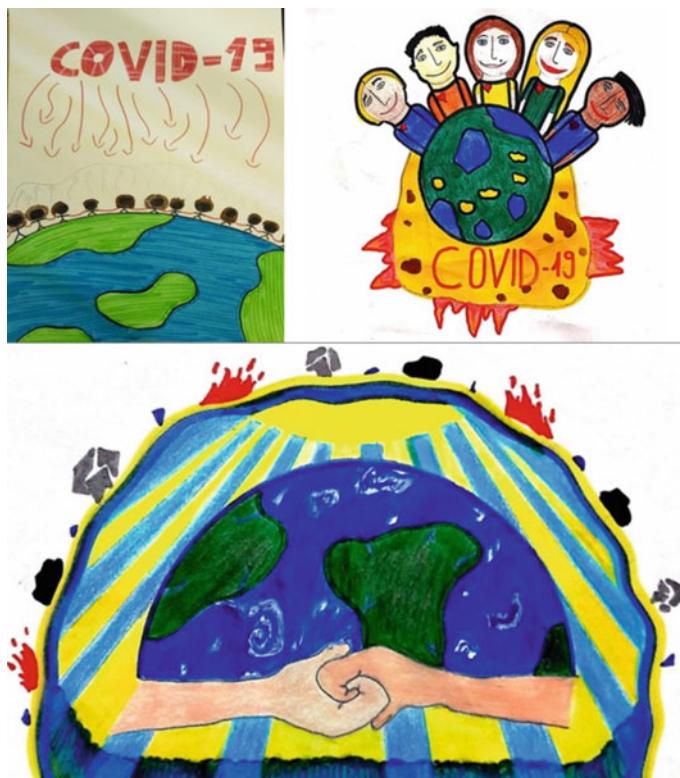
Fig. 8.3 Three drawings by Lithuanian students of the oldest age group depicting the need to stand united, globally, to fight the pandemic. The lefthand corner is titled "All together," the one below "Importance of unity experiencing COVID-19," and the righthand corner "The good work of everybody can improve the bad situation"

during the lockdown (Reuters Staff 2020). Children's COVID-19 lockdown drawings exhibited by *The Hindu* (2020) again show that children all over the world depict similar themes of the pandemic. Homes, virus visualizations, health campaigns, and the globe are all featured in these reports on COVID-19 drawings. The drawings in our data set differ from the images gathered by these news outlets, because they were made

for the CLLP. The pictures produced by the students in our study were framed by the themes and pedagogical aims and theme of our project.

Conclusions: Exceptions, Peculiarities, and Missing Ideas

As dialogic engagement with cultural difference (including different views on a subject) is central to our idea of cultural literacy learning, it is worth noting that the conformist approach which dominated most of the artifacts in our data makes it impossible to imagine dialogue on the subject. A great deal of the artifacts relating to COVID-19, especially the ones referencing the rules or guidelines, reflect compliance and the internalization of existing health instructions. Many of the artifacts in our data set hence merely recycle the existing coronavirus imagery. This may be because the images were produced as school work. School work naturally reflects the objectives of the given task and the educational aims of the teacher, and, in this case, the project researchers who designed the tasks. This educational frame might also explain why the explicit references to tolerance and empathy often seem so mechanical.

One notable exception to the lack of dialogue could be the Portuguese artifacts, all drawn by students in the oldest age group. Unlike the Lithuanian or Cypriot students, the Portuguese ones were able to choose between two tasks: Either photograph graffiti in their hometown (as proposed in DIALLS lesson 11) or make a face mask with a statement of their own. As Portugal was in lockdown when they did this lesson, all the students produced masks (either pictures of masks or actual masks) which they decorated and combined with statements such as "invisible $\neq$ nonexistent" or "graffiti art $\neq$ vandalism." The "does not equal" rhetoric invites disagreement and discussion—it implies views that actually equate invisibility with nonexistence and graffiti art with vandalism. Invisibility probably points to the invisibility of the virus, but could also be interpreted as invisibility of women in many contexts, as the person wearing the mask in this image is apparently a girl (Fig. 8.4).

These Portuguese students allude to cultural difference on the level of differing opinions or points of view. Some of their artifacts use powerful symbolism by depicting birds in the sky and chains. While the birds can be read as expressions of freedom (longed for in lockdown), the chains can be interpreted in different ways. One possible interpretation is the feeling of being "chained up" indoors caused by the lockdown. When the chain

Fig. 8.4 A photograph of a mask with the text invisible ≠ nonexistent made by a Portuguese student of the oldest age group

is depicted as breaking, this could depict the need to break the chain of infection. In the lessons on home (see Chapter 7) images of locks and chains signified safety, which is one more possible interpretation, but less likely to be what these students aspired to communicate.

Since these artifacts have no captions, we do not have any additional information on the thoughts of the students who made them. Yet, they refer to the global impact of the pandemic. One mask is decorated with an image of the globe and an equally large virus that looms behind it. Another one features a face painting that follows the round shape, blue and green colors of the globe and features the text "save me."

One of the most striking artifacts is a mask with an image of a uterus. The uterus seems to raise two hands that show the viewer the middle finger—an obscene gesture that represents defiance. This obviously strays quite far from the typical COVID-19 imagery, but links to the abortion debate. In this sense, the mask represents compliance with government rules to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, yet expresses a clear protest toward other contemporary phenomena. Abortion is a

hot topic in Portugal and, sometime after these masks were made, there were solidarity protests in Lisbon against the Polish abortion law (Torrisi 2020). Therefore, the mask could be interpreted as an expression of solidarity and empathy with women striving to rule over their own bodies.

In raising questions and making strong, possibly controversial claims, these artifacts could represent a desire to engage in dialogue. Yet it is sometimes hard to determine who they engage with or where this dialogue might lead. For our project, we defined empathy, tolerance, and inclusion as understanding, openness, and including differing views or cultural otherness. Can we detect instances of (differing) viewpoints or cultural otherness within the images or captions? The artifacts within the COVID-19 data set do not contain straightforward references to cultural otherness, but they do express actions to include elderly people on an ideal level at a time when they are very much excluded and isolated from society.

This COVID-19 data set reflects both the official, educational discourses that guided coronavirus imagery in the media and some exceptionally confrontational works that seem to tap into less-discussed issues. Since many of the artifacts include only short titles with no deeper textual elaborations, we are left wondering how these works reflect the themes of empathy, tolerance, and inclusion. As is clear from the analysis above, some of the images can be interpreted in multiple ways, while the claims of others remain somewhat vague.

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Conclusions: Cultural Literacy in Action

Abstract In this chapter, the authors emphasize how even very young children can deal with complex and abstract ideas and emotions through creative practices and how the differences between people are not an issue for children. The analysis indicates that children have a multifaceted capacity for empathy. The authors stress that image-making is an important mode of communication through which children and young people shape their understanding of the world. This is a constructive and dialogic process of thinking in action. It allows children and young people to develop their imagination, emotional responses, personality, and position in the community, in relationship with others, and with the external world. The "dialogic chain of thinking" occurs not only in linguistic, but also in visual communication.

Keywords Chain of thinking · Repetition · Dialogues · Thinking in action · Storytelling

Repetition as Creativity, Dialogic Chains of Thinking, and Multimodality

The artifacts analyzed in this book range from simple pencil drawings to multicolored collages, and from three-dimensional sculptures to videos.

Despite this diversity, the data includes many artifacts that recall each other in detail or which directly borrow scenes, visual elements, events, and points of view from the picture books and films that were used in the Cultural Literacy Learning Programme (CLLP) to stimulate discussions. Are these artifacts based on repetitive copying rather than reflecting a creative process? Children's visual expression often involves copying ideas, scenes, and events and imitating visual elements and patterns from cultural texts around them, such as those familiar from television, movies, cartoons, and social media. Adults have sometimes considered this kind of repetitive image-making as a less valuable and passive practice that does not involve imagination and creativity (Dyson 2010; Mavers 2011). However, scholars have pointed out that copying is a semiotic process that often includes selective borrowing: The repeated visual elements, ideas, scenes, and techniques are evaluated and transformed from the existing source in a process of reinterpretation, recontextualization, and reconfiguration into a new design (Dyson 2010; Mavers 2011; Deguara 2015). In this process, children typically link their own experiences, emotions, and understandings to the borrowed elements and thus extend their existing meaning. As Deguara (2015, 67) notes: "Copying should not be considered as a haphazard or effortless act, but rather as a process of reselecting, redesigning and reproducing meanings which are transformed to supplement, extend or diversify a text into another." Based on our analysis, we claim that repetition and copying in children and young people's creations should be perceived within a broader context of meaning-making and as essential for a creative process of grasping the world.

In this book, we have emphasized the role of dialogue and creativity in cultural literacy and discussed how students cocreated meanings through dialogic creative practices in the CLLP. We consider borrowing elements from the picture books and films used, as well as from the artifacts created by their peers, as a form of visual dialogue and thus as an intrinsic part of students' cultural literacy learning. Instead of passive copying or repeating, the similarity of the artifacts to others within a small group or class or to elements in the picture books and films can be perceived as the fruit of active dialogic negotiation. Maine (2015, 88) explains the mechanism of dialogic negotiation as follows: "When faced with visual texts the children create verbal stories and more visual imagery. They move beyond the frame of the text to contextualize what they are experiencing, and this is true for both the purely visual and the multi-modal text types they encounter." In the CLLP, the students received influences, inspiration,

and stimulus from both the books and films and their peers. They also mediated and transmitted influences and inspiration to their peers and thus participated in "dialogic chains of thinking," as Maine (2015, 55) calls a linguistic meaning-making process in a similar pedagogical setting:

> Analyzing the dialogue through looking at the chains enables us to see how the children use co-constructive moves to develop their thinking, and how their dialogue ebbs and flows as ideas take form and are either developed or discarded by the respondent.

Children and young people's visual expression is shaped by a similar dialogue, illustrated by Fig. 9.1. In these two artifacts, students from the second age group explore what home means to them. In the first group, all students have pictured the interiors of their rooms with similar furniture, for instance three include a lava lamp. The caption for the artifact reflects a dialogic chain of thinking and meaning-making about home, repeating the same items, emotions, and activities (underlined by the authors). Three of the students in this group explain their artifact as follows:

Fig. 9.1 Two groups of students in the second age group from the UK explore what home means for them

I drew my bedroom because I feel happy there, I dance to songs from my Alexa and then lay on my bed. I relax for a bit [;]
I did my bedroom and added a few more bits that I wanted to and that make me happy. My TV, a sofa and my gaming stuff [;]
I thought about my bedroom with some of my favourite books, relax and have fun with games

Both the artifact and the caption indicate a dialogic interaction within the group, which distinguishes their chain of thinking from the meaning-making processes in other groups. In the second group, all students have depicted the exterior view of the house where they live. Three of these drawings simultaneously show students' family members and some furniture inside the house. The form of the houses is identical. Four students' lines in the caption express similar ideas of home with similar vocabulary (underlined by the authors):

I drew my family because they live in the house with me and I think of them when I think about home [;]
Home is somewhere safe where you can have fun [;]
Home is where your [you are] safe and where you stay for most of your life, I drew my house [;]
I drew my house and my family in the living room and playing games on the switch

The dialogic chain of thinking led the first group to discuss and draw their bedrooms, including things that are fun, make them happy, and can be done in one's own space. The dialogic chain of thinking guided second the group to explore home as the house where one's family lives and where one is safe.

This book has emphasized multimodality as a key feature of cultural literacy learning. Multimodality characterizes the artifacts in our data and the processes through which students express meanings. Multimodality is closely intertwined with imagination: Children constantly select, transform, modify, and combine modes and signs to create new meanings (Kress 1997; Deguara 2015). Multimodal meaning-making and imagination are also key elements of play. Hence, scholars have approached children's image-making, particularly drawing, as a play process in which both the act of creating and its outcome, the creation, are embedded with storytelling. Storytelling had a central role in the CLLP, in which learning was based on verbally narrating the story of the wordless picture books

and films and visually exploring abstract themes and topics arising from the story. Our analysis of the artifacts and their captions showed that, in this process, verbal and visual expression are intertwined and may develop into play.

Previous researchers have perceived the entanglement of image-making and play to include different modes of children's engagement with their creation. Wood and Hall (2011) have conceptualized these modes as playing *in* drawings, playing *with* drawings, and playing *at* drawing. Our data can be interpreted to include all these forms of play. Playing *in* drawings occurs in the artifacts that include figures in various playful activities as well as their toys, games, and places of play. Sometimes the artifacts received the role of an object that students played *with* as part of the lesson. Playing *at* drawing can be perceived from the artifacts that continue the story of the books and films either by borrowing their narrative contexts, such as episodes or scenes, or by constructing a fully new narrative, as in Fig. 9.2. In it, a student in the second age group explores

Fig. 9.2 A Lithuanian student in the second age group explores the meaning of belonging

the idea of belonging. The student has drawn an archetypical house, his home, in front of which he stands. The common idea of one's house and own room as a place of belonging is broadened in the artifact by an imaginative story in which the student and the home are transferred a thousand years back in time to another world. In the caption, the student writes:

> I live in a house. I like to be in my room. When I go outside alone, I imagine my house is a palace and the fence is the courtyard of the palace. I then go to war with the Vikings, with the Crusaders.

In the artifact, the house is surrounded by a massive fortress and a wide moat. The student has written onto the picture the same description of imagining his house as a palace but developed the story of going to the war only after creating the artifact when writing the caption. This example indicates the intertwinement of visual and verbal modes of expression in children's visual creations and the importance of interpreting them within the narrative context given to them by the children themselves (see Deguara and Nutbrown 2018).

Ability to Empathize and Approach Differences

The CLLP was based on several themes varying from cultural attachments (belonging) to being part of a community (living together) and engaging more broadly in society (social responsibility). These themes were explored in the CLLP with subthemes of home, celebrating diversity, solidarity, equality, human rights, social/civic competencies, and sustainable development. The core attitudes for cultural literacy learning—tolerance, empathy, and inclusion—permeate all tasks and topics of discussion in the CLLP. Our analysis of the artifacts showed that these themes were closely entangled in children and young people's understanding. For them, belonging to people meant living together with them. Respectively, living together with others was related to social responsibility and taking care of others within one's community but also to helping those who do not feel belonging or are excluded. The three core attitudes are intertwined in our data into a set of empathetic approaches to people and their ideas and cultural features that may be unfamiliar or different. These attitudes were concretized in the artifacts and their captions, for instance, through sharing something of one's own, such as food or space, and doing things together, such as playing or having a party with others.

The COVID-19 task that was included in the CLLP in spring 2020 yielded artifacts in which compassionate empathy, solidarity, and care reached from individuals to a global scale: While the artifacts reflected the students' concern and care for themselves and their families, they also dealt with the pandemic as a phenomenon that can be solved only through broad, even global, collaboration.

Our analysis shows how even the youngest children are able to deal with complex and abstract ideas and emotions through dialogue and creative practices. They are also able to utilize cultural symbols and recycle cultural imageries. Creative practices functioned in the CLLP as a mode of thinking in action (Cox 2005; Deguara 2015), and the artifacts themselves served as spaces for the children and young people to reflect on the entanglement of their internal and external worlds. Through a dynamic creative process and the artifacts that were its concrete outcome, the students were able to negotiate with themselves and their peers and test their ideas about belonging to a place or a group of people; living together with others who may be different; rights and responsibilities as members of a community and society; and tolerant, empathetic, and inclusive attitudes toward other people.

Even though the wordless picture books and films used in the CLLP emphasize themes of difference, such as ethnicity, migrant background, gender roles, size, or different habits or ways of living, and challenges related to being different, the students did not usually underline these differences or challenges in their artifacts. In them, different characters join in various daily activities and environments: They go to school, relax at home with their family, meet their friends, and spend time on hobbies. Even if the stories of the books and films often first depict differences through disagreement, nonbelonging, or exclusion, in their artifacts the students commonly focused on ways to strengthen agreement, belonging, or inclusion of the characters. The CLLP's instructions for the artifacts guided students to this approach but did not give advice on how to reflect on difference as such. Students often responded to the instructions by imagining episodes and scenes of happy living together beyond the story in the books and films. For instance, several students imagined how to save the lonely and sad Baboon from the Moon by bringing him by rocket back to the Earth to his family and friends—to a place he belongs. Others portrayed how bats and owls, despite their differences, play and have a party together after getting to know each other. In the captions,

the students could even celebrate diversity by underlining equality and togetherness.

The fact that in their artifacts children do not discuss specific differences, for example related to gender or ethnicity, does not necessarily reflect equality and acceptance of difference in those children's cultures: It may mean that some differences are ignored or not recognized (see e.g., Crenshaw 1991). Furthermore, projects such as this one need to be aware of the dangers of "superficial appreciations of cultural differences that reinforce stereotypes, instead of creating new understanding about cultural perspectives and global issues" (Arizpe et al. 2014, 309). That said, when differences are addressed in the artifacts, the children typically approach these as a normal and positive feature of everyday life.

In the CLLP, emotions were a key way of addressing the themes of living together, social responsibility, and belonging, as well as tolerance, empathy, and inclusion. The students interpreted emotions from the stories of the wordless picture books and films and were able to emotionally identify with the characters in them. In the captions, many of the students explained feeling sad or happy, depending on whether the characters in the books and films were interpreted as facing difficulties or positive turns in the stories. Our data, thus, indicates the students' multifaceted capacity for empathy: Many of them recognized and named emotions of the characters in the books and films, explained how they themselves feel similar emotions, and wanted to act to help the characters, make them feel better, and include them in their/our community. These forms of empathy have been discussed in the literature as cognitive, affective/emotional, and compassionate empathy (e.g., Ekman 2003; Maxwell 2008; Aaltola and Keto 2017). This finding supports the verdict of previous research that engaging with literature and art and their fictional characters may be useful for teaching empathy, as it evokes empathic responses (Lähdesmäki and Koistinen 2021). Moreover, our data indicate students' capacity for multispecies empathy: They can empathize with the emotions and experiences of animals, and they value and respect both human and nonhuman living creatures. In this sense, engaging with and creating cultural artifacts in the CLLP inspired the students to consider differences between species. In scholarly literature, multispecies empathy has been considered as a key to supporting and promoting biodiversity and environmental sustainability and as a step for acting more responsibly in ecological, economic, cultural, and social terms (Rosenberg 2020). Education that encourages multispecies empathy considers

all living beings as ontologically equal and thus promotes the interrelated wellbeing of animals, humans, and nature that is seen as the core condition for the existence of the Earth (Värri 2018; Rosenberg 2020). Nevertheless, the picture books and films used in the CLLP directed the students to consider their relation to wild animals rather than broader questions of domestic and farm animal rights including the students' own everyday choices, such as meat consumption.

We did not analyze the impact of gender on students' creative practices and exploration of the themes in the CLLP. The researchers and teachers who created the program did not want to emphasize gender as a factor of difference. Most of the artifacts were created jointly in small groups including different genders. We claim that the gender-focused analysis of children and young people's artistic creations may unintentionally produce gendered interpretations and understandings of visual expression, and thus continue and foster a binary notion of gender. This kind of analysis becomes even more problematic when the students themselves are not able to define their gender identity, but their teachers do, perhaps relying on binary notions. A broad body of literature has scrutinized how children's drawings link to surrounding popular culture and its gendered visual and narrative norms (Flannery and Watson 1995; Chen and Kantner 1996; Anning 2003; Anning and Ring 2004; Wright 2010; Deguara 2015). These studies suggest that usually boys (or male-typed children) prefer to draw action scenes with vehicles, weapons, monsters, and heroes, while girls (or female-typed children) focus on family scenes with houses, elements of decoration, and people engaged in social and harmonious relations. Girls' drawings have also been noted to include symbols interpreted by (adult) researchers as romantic, and beautiful natural elements (that have been interpreted as romantic symbols), such as hearts, flowers, butterflies, and rainbows. This gendered visual expression has been explained as reflecting the gendered social relations in children's social environment, as well as gendered messages emanating from media and popular culture that construct beliefs about girls' and boys' cultural and gender identities and positions in society.

As discussed in previous chapters, the artifacts in our data include visual elements—such as hearts, flowers, and rainbows—borrowed from the imageries of contemporary popular and children's culture. While these imageries may have influenced the artifacts, we have not approached their elements as gendered, but as symbols of positive emotions, such as happiness and joy. Based on our findings, we claim that children's

visual expression is typically based on intertwined iconic and symbolic communication (see Anning 2003, 4–5). Even though the artifacts often include images of concrete objects, these images commonly symbolize some event, action, environment, or emotion. The archetypical image of a house (see Figs. 9.1 and 9.2), for instance, is not only a sign referring to the student's own home but a symbol for a place affixed with various emotions and social relations related to the idea of home.

Learning Cultural Literacy Through Creative Practices

Our notion of cultural literacy reflects how the concept of literacy has transformed over the past decades. Literacy as a concept has extended from normative expectations about reading and writing texts to the idea of social practice and capacity for cultural communication and encountering differences (Arizpe et al. 2014; Maine and Vrikki 2021). Instead of emphasizing cultural or historical canons as a key for cultural literacy, as Hirsch (1988, 1989) does, or understanding it as a literary theory-based approach to cultural and social phenomena, as Segal (2014, 2015) has defined it, we see cultural literacy as an ability to encounter, communicate, learn, cocreate knowledge, and to live together through empathic, tolerant, and inclusive interaction with others who may be different from ourselves. In our view, cultural literacy learning can be stimulated by concrete creative practices, such as joint cultural or artistic tasks.

The effectiveness of the CLLP was measured in the DIALLS project by investigating the views of the teachers whose classes implemented the program in 2019 and 2020 (DIALLS 2020). The researchers and teacher educators interviewed teachers in each country after every lesson. They were asked to evaluate their students' cultural learning guided by the core themes of the CLLP. A broad majority (80%) of the teachers considered that their students had engaged with the cultural objectives of the program. Teachers saw engagement as slightly higher among children in the second than in the youngest age group. The teachers emphasized that respectful and inclusive interaction enabled a dialogic and democratic atmosphere where everyone was able to share their views. The attitudes guiding the CLLP—tolerance, empathy, and inclusion—are key to developing such an atmosphere. These attitudes were particularly pertinent with the challenges to schools and learning caused by COVID-19.

Our sociocultural approach to children and young people's art revealed that hierarchical relations between children and adults impact on the creation, reception, and evaluation of children and young people's visual expression. These power relations are part of adult-modeled cultural literacy learning practices. The hierarchical relations may hinder children and young people's agency to make meaning within the CLLP. In the program, teachers introduced students to various notions and values, following the ideas and ideals embedded in the lesson plans. Some instructions for the artifacts either explicitly or implicitly introduced the point of view from which students were asked and expected to explore the selected themes.

To develop cultural literacy learning through creative practices, we suggest strengthening the agency of children and young people in cultural encounter and within it, in dealing with difference. In their creative practices, children and young people should be able to initiate and test ideas dynamically: This would promote creativity as an ongoing process of seeking novel and useful ideas, points of view, and understandings. Instructions that explain what they should think or feel when creating artifacts may not encourage students to produce knowledge and engage in "dialogic thinking in action." In programs seeking to promote cultural literacy learning through celebrating diversity and respect for difference, teachers should be careful not to unintentionally create that difference. The difference which is real for adults may be meaningless to children and young people, who may not even recognize it. At the same time, it is important to encourage children and young people to open their eyes to various types of difference and the related inequalities. This requires careful balancing in education.

Artistic creation and image-making are important modes of communication through which children and young people can deal with and shape their mental images and understanding of the world in a constructive and dialogic process of thinking in action. As our analysis has demonstrated, this process allows children and young people to develop their imagination, emotional responses, personality, position in the community, and relationship with others and the external world. Our research indicates how dialogic chains of thinking occur not only in linguistic but also in visual communication. It is the task of future research to scrutinize the mechanisms of visual dialogue in such chains of thinking and to explore limitations and best practices, to enhance cultural literacy learning through visual dialogue.

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