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DEALING WITH RACISM IN THE CLASSROOM – A NECESSARY COMPONENT FOR TEACHER EDUCATION IN ISRAEL

INTRODUCTION

Teachers in Israel are facing racist behavior and discourse in the classrooms. A course developed in Haifa University, in cooperation with the Association for Civil Rights, is intended to be a model for incorporating anti-racism education into teacher education programs in Israel. This article describes the structure of the course and discusses the challenges faced along the way, including insights into the experiences from delivering the course, and results of the course's evaluation.

The problem of racist behavior is wide spread within Israeli schools[1][2] and even received institutional recognition in the 2016 report of the Israeli State Comptroller[3]. The responsibility to deal with these behaviours is left in the hands of the teachers who lack appropriate training and conceptualization[4][5]. The need for instruction about race and racism at

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1 I. Yaron and Y. Harpaz, *Scenes from school life*. Bnei Brak: Hakibbutz Hameuchad. 2015, (in Hebrew).

2 S. Hassan, *Introduction*, In *A Lesson for Life: anti-racism education from kindergarten to high school*, edited by Rivlin, N., Tel-Aviv, Israel: The association for civil rights in Israel, 2015 *(In Hebrew)*.

3 O. Kashti, *Israel failing in coexistence, anti-racism education, state comptroller says*, "Haaretz",2016, (September 16) Retrieved from http://www.haaretz.com/.premium-1.742337

4 S. Hassan, *Introduction*, In *A Lesson for Life: anti-racism education from kindergarten to high school*, edited by Rivlin, N., Tel-Aviv, Israel: The association for civil rights in Israel, 2015 *(In Hebrew)*.

5 T. Rosenberg, *Racism and Anti-Semitism in the curriculum: Conflict and challenge of the civic education in Israel*, In *Civic education in Israel*, edited by Avnon, D., Tel Aviv, Israel: Publishing Am Hoved, 2013, *(in Hebrew)*.

the teacher level has been discussed internationally for many years[6][7]. Yet, the official guidelines for teacher training institutions[8] do not include a requirement to teach a course on race or anti-racism education.

Within this context, the Department of Learning, Instruction and Teacher Education of Haifa University, in cooperation with the Association for Civil Rights, has planned a course focused on anti-racism education for in-training teachers. The goal of this course is to ensure that students working towards their teaching certificate would graduate with the ability to deal with expressions of racism in the classroom and understand their social context. Their pedagogical thinking should be informed by issues of race and anti-racism. In addition, graduates would be well versed in the use of anti-racist pedagogy throughout the curriculum. This article describes the structure of the course and discusses the challenges faced along the way, including insights into the experiences from delivering the course, and results of the course's evaluation.

RACISM IN ISRAEL'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Israeli society is diverse and includes several divided social groups. The Jewish majority group is comprised almost exclusively of people who have come from different parts of the world, or their near descendants. Dahan Kalev and Maor [9], specifically highlight the cultural and material dominance of Ashkenazi Jews over Mizrahi Jews as "one of the most notable ethnic divisions within the Jewish population". In addition, the differences and tensions between religious Jews and secular Jews are widely recognized[10]. The non-Jewish minority in Israel is also diverse and includes mainly the indigenous groups—defining themselves

6 K. J. Swick and M. L. Lamb, *A conceptually based social studies model for training of teachers: Emphasis on improved racial attitudes, knowledge, and activities*. Paper presented at The National Council for Social Studies, Boston, MA 1972, (November 22).

7 G. McAllister and J. J. Irvine, *Cross cultural competency and multicultural teacher education*, "Review of educational research", *70*(1), 2000, pp. 3-24.

8 T. Ariav, *The New Frameworks for Teacher Education in Israel: Rationale, Conceptual Perspectives and Implementation*. Webinar offered December 10, 2008 by the MOFET Institute.

9 H. D. Kalev and M. Maor, *Skin Color Stratification in Israel Revisited*, "Journal of Levantine Studies", *5*(1), 2015, pp. 9-33.

10 Ibid.

either as Arab, Palestinian, Druze, Bedouin, or a combination of the aforementioned categorizations. To these we should add a group of migrant workers, mostly from the "global south." Intercultural and political enmity among all of these groups is based upon stereotypes and reinforced by relative segregation of groups from one another.[11]

Although the majority of schoolchildren in Israel are enrolled in the State education system, it is, to a large extent, segregated along the lines of nationality, religion, and degree of religiosity, as Jewish and Arab schoolchildren, as well as secular and religious Jews, attend different schools[12]. In addition, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and occupation impacts inter-group relations and especially the relations between Jews in Israel with Palestinian citizens of Israel and with Palestinians in the occupied territories. Occasionally a specific issue regarding inter-groups relations erupts and takes a dominant but temporal hold of the public sphere such the police brutality incidents against Jews of the Ethiopian community in April 2015[13] and the Druze protest against the Nation-State Law in August 2018[14]. Israel also suffers high levels of economic inequality. According to the poverty report released in 2017, 22% of its citizens are poor.

In such a complex and segregated society, the issue of racism is a prevalent problem which worries teachers. A study conducted among 860 Arab and Jewish teachers examined their positions on dealing with controversial issues in the classroom[15]. In ranking the topics the teachers' themselves felt raise controversy in the classroom, it found that of numerous issues,

11 J. B. Walther, E. Hoter, A. Ganayem, and M. Shonfeld, *Computer-mediated communication and the reduction of prejudice: A controlled longitudinal field experiment among Jews and Arabs in Israel*, "Computers in Human Behavior", *52*, 2015, pp. 550-558.

12 A. Agbaria, A., The New Face of Control: Arab Education under Neoliberal Policy." In *Palestinian Citizens: Practicalities of Ethnic Privilege* (pp. 299–335). Edited by Rouhana, N., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016b.

13 T. Staff, *Ethiopian-Israeli protest against police brutality turns violent*, "Times of Israel". 2015 (April 30), Retrieved from https://www.timesofisrael.com/jlem-street-blocked-in-protest-over-police-brutality-against-ethiopian-born-israelis/

14 A. Pfeffer, *Druze Rally Against Israel's Nation-state Law: 'We're Here to Tell Jews It's Patriotic to Protest'*, "Haaretz", 2018 (August 5), Retrieved from https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-druze-rally-in-israel-we-re-here-to-tell-jews-it-s-patriotic-to-prot-1.6341636

15 E. Halperin, *The attitude of teachers and parents to school discourse on controversial issues*, 2017, *(In Hebrew)*

the teachers ranked the issue of racism as second only to the issue of Arab-Jewish relationships, which itself is race related. While 92% of the teachers who participated in the study asserted that the topic of racism needs to be dealt with in the classroom, only 34% claimed to do so.

The problem of racism manifests in pupils' violent and exclusive behavior towards disadvantaged pupils both in the classroom and at school at large. It is also possible to see expressions of racism in the violent and hostile attitudes towards groups who are not at all present in the school environment. Such situations cause teachers to feel professionally awkward, as well as helpless and incompetent. Racism in the classroom can arise on the basis of any number of factors: nationality, ethnicity, religion, culture, visual appearance, as well as socio-economic status, or place of residence.

One example of how racism is exhibited in Israeli classrooms can be found in the writings of Yaron and Harpaz, "Scenes from School Life"[16], which describes an event that took place at a high school during a bible lesson on the topic of revenge. One pupil in the lesson claimed that there is room for compassion, and as a result was nicknamed a "leftist", "a trouble maker for the Jews" and an "Amalek" (a biblical tribe hostile to the Israelites). The discussion became heated when on the one hand she called the other pupils "retarded" and on the other they attacked her by, among others things, calling her a "lover of Arabs who murdered the Fogel family" and telling her to "leave the country". The rage continued into the break, and she ran out as impassioned calls such as "death to Arabs" were heard from the classroom.

In a striking Analysis of Yaron and Harpaz's writing, Agbaria[17] claims that they are "suggesting that racism is fostered as an outcome of the Israeli educational system, rather than rejected as an undesired upshot. What is disturbing about Yaron and Harpaz's analysis is indeed the normality with which racial hatred and aggression toward Arabs have been accommodated in the education system as legitimate and acceptable. Most importantly, this study highlights the entanglement

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16 I. Yaron, & Y. Harpaz, *Scenes from school life*. Bnei Brak: Hakibbutz Hameuchad. 2015, (in Hebrew).

17 A. Agbaria, *The 'Right' Education in Israel: Segregation, Religious Ethnonation-Alism, and Depoliticised Professionalism,* "Critical Studies in Education", 59, 2016a, pp. 18–34.

between the discourse of hate and the zealous ethno-nationalistic pathos of Jewish supremacy." This is an example of a racist sentiment towards an "absent other", an "other" which is not present in the classroom. This concept will be developed further in the segment discussing the pedagogical approach of the course.

TEACHERS' DIFFICULTY IN DEALING WITH EXPRESSIONS OF RACISM

In most cases teachers avoid initiating discussions on sensitive political issues and specifically the issue of racism, because in doing so they risk being labelled leftists and facing a lack of support from the system. For instance, Halperin[18] found that 87% of teachers claimed that it is important to discuss relations between Jews and Arabs in the classroom. Yet, only 47% think that this is expected of them by their supervisors, and only 23% think that parents expect this of them. This avoidance also derives from a lack of suitable pedagogical tools and from a subjective experience of helplessness and failure. Kizel describes such teachers as "quickly developing a victim dialogue, one of whose expressions is civil impotence, and a safeguarding of neutrality which threatens to silence the teacher, and a non-demonstration of civil bravery in the face of severe racist expression in the classroom, "out of fear that I will become the next Adam Verta, 'man busted'"[19].

The expression "the next Adam Verta" has come to mean the "next man busted" and refers to the firing of Adam Verta, a teacher who was fired on the basis of a discussion on ethics in the IDF and the treatment of Arabs[20]. It is of no coincidence that political issues are shrouded in fear of dealing with racism, as the phenomenon of racism is directly tied to the relationship between groups in society and the power differences between them.

The lack of skills and tools available to educators is no coincidence either.

18 E. Halperin, *The attitude of teachers and parents to school discourse on controversial issues*, 2017, *(In Hebrew)*

19 A. Kizel*., Civics class, colliding narratives, and the fearing teacher*, MOFET institute journal: Research and professional development in teacher education, 54(1), 2014, pp. 6-9.

20 U. Misgav*, Israeli education minister's creed: God, the Holocaust, and the military*, "Haaretz", 2014, (February 6), Retrieved from http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.572715.

The 2016 report by the state comptroller which dealt with educating for coexistence and the prevention of racism, criticized the lack of action by the Ministry of Education on the issue. Amongst other things, it was noted that educating for coexistence and the prevention of racism were not included in the agenda of the department of educator training (responsible for the regulation of teacher trainings). In addition, the few continuing education programs (trainings for in service teachers) on these issues "are transmitted randomly and with no structured plan"[21].

THE IMPORTANCE OF FACING THE CHALLENGE OF RACISM IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The role of teachers is a complex one, especially regarding issues like racism. Teacher trainings for in service teachers generally focus on the technical aspects of teaching, and programs for teacher certification do not spend enough time on pedagogical aspects, specifically on social contexts, such as learning about various communities in the society and the relationships between them. It was shown that the ways in which teachers approach an increasingly diverse student body is shaped by their personal background experiences and their teacher education programs[22] [23].

Skerrett[24] researched the multicultural and anti-racist education practices of 7 high school English teachers. She found that the participants' teacher education programs influenced their use of multicultural education practices, but not anti-racist practices. This finding was attributed to the fact that most of the teacher education programs described did not include anti-racist curriculum in their coursework, but the multicultural education curriculum taught in the teacher education programs continued to impact the teachers' in-service practices.

One may think this knowledge would be acquired through work

21 State Comptroller., *Education for shared life and avoidance from racism – Special oversight report,* 2016.

22 J. L. Whipp, *Developing socially just teachers: The interaction of experiences before, during, and after teacher preparation in beginning urban teachers*, "Journal of Teacher Education", 64(5), 2013, pp. 454-467.

23 A. Skerrett, *Going the race way: Biographical influences on multicultural and antiracist English curriculum practices,* "Teaching and Teacher Education", 24(7), 2008, pp. 1813-1826.

24 Ibid.

experience in the classroom, however in reality, the fear of dealing with these topics only reinforces the inability to respond, and pushes teachers away from this important aspect of educating. In the Israeli context, Salomon and Issawi,[25] in their report, which was adopted by the Israeli Ministry of Education, stress the significance of providing pedagogical skills to teachers in all frameworks, especially during their training.

Taking all this into account, the underlying theoretical assumption of planning this course was that an important part of dealing with racism is seeing the teacher as a role with special presence and responsibility towards the pupils. Equipping teachers with tools to combat racism during their training phase is significant because it is during their training that they formulate their understanding of their role as a teacher, an understanding they later strive to implement throughout their teaching careers. This understanding is their professional "ideal me", and as such serves as a personal compass for professional development. While continuing education programs for teachers on dealing with racism are desirable, their contribution and effectiveness are dependent upon the understanding of the role of the teacher (which is developed particularly in pre-service teacher training) as broad, and inclusive of dealing with social issues in the classroom, and with the phenomenon of racism in general.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT OF CREATING THE COURSE

Since 2010, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel has dealt extensively with the issue of education for racial tolerance, and within this framework developed a pedagogical approach for training teachers. The approach has been used in dozens of various teacher training settings, such as continuing education programs for school staff and continuing education programs for teachers of various disciplines (such as Arabic and Civics). In 2105 the pedagogical approach for anti-racism education was described and discussed in the book: *A Lesson for Life: Anti-racism Education from Kindergarten to High School.* This book was also the foundation for planning the syllabus for the course.

25 G. Salomon, & M. Issawi, *Report of the Public Committee on Developing State Policy on Education for Coexistence between Jews and Arabs in Israel,* 2009, *(In Hebrew).*

In 2016, at the encouragement of the head of the Department of Learning, Instruction, and Teacher Education at the University of Haifa, it was decided to make a collaborative effort to insert anti-racism education into the teacher education program of the department.

Two main points were taken into account. Firstly, teacher education programs either create one stand-alone course where race issues are discussed, or the program attempts to infuse race issues into all of their courses[26] [27]. Secondly, student resistance to explicit discussion of diversity, especially as it pertains to race, within teacher education courses[28] [29]. It was decided that the course would start as a pilot program that would address the double challenge of being both beneficial to teachers at the start of their career, as well as an influential model for teacher training in general.

In the 2016-17 academic year, an academic course was held as a part of the Masters program for Pedagogical Development of Educational Systems, for students who were also studying for a teaching certificate for elementary education. The course was required for first year students in the program. It included 13 students, 12 female and one male, 5 of whom were Israeli-Palestinian and 8 Israeli-Jews. An evaluation program was implemented, and in the following academic year (2017-18), the course was transformed into a mandatory course for all teaching certificate students studying in the faculty of education. The program then included 152 students, 113 female and 39 male, 81 of whom were Israeli-Palestinian and 71 Israeli-Jews.

THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH OF THE COURSE

The Association for Civil Rights sees racism as a threat to humanity and

26 K. D. Brown, *Breaking the cycle of Sisyphus: Social education and the acquisition of critical sociocultural knowledge about race and racism in the United States*. "The Social Studies", 102, 2011, pp. 249-255.

27 A. E. LaDuke, *Resistance and renegotiation: Preservice teacher interactions with and reactions to multicultural education course content*, "Multicultural Education", 16(3), 2009, pp. 37- 44.

28 Ibid.

29 W. S. Gershon, C. Bilinovich, & A. Peel, *Race, social studies content, and pedagogy: Wrestling through discomfort together,* "Canadian Social Studies", 44(1), 2010, pp. 29-37.

as a disaster for democracy. Hassan[30], claims that in nations that nurture their democratic culture, education against racism constitutes a central component in Civil or Social Studies. Sometimes it is presented as a part of education for multi-culturalism which highlights the positive value of cultural diversity and sees in diversity a basis for growth and development. A different approach for education against racism, which stems from critical pedagogy, critiques education for multi-culturalism on account of its disregard of its own source in the very structural public and academic social discourse which itself is rooted in racism[31]. In other words, much of the racism that exists in society is structural, and results from unseen historical, institutional, and political influences expressed in the structural discrimination of disadvantaged populations.

For this reason, education against racism, according to the Association for Civil Rights, "isn't satisfied by education for democratic ethics, tolerance and multiculturalism generally, but rather raises the issue of racism in society to the social and educational agenda, and teaches it in depth, both in the historical and current context of different societies, in as much as the local context"[32]. This approach is influenced by the critical pedagogy related to the struggles of minorities and nations against oppression, exclusion, and colonialism, and also class, feminist, gender and other struggles. According to this approach, education against racism, like all other fields of education, is political, because it promotes a social agenda of fighting racism.

Also, according to this approach, racism is an emotional-cognitive pattern which dichotomously categorizes people into good and bad based on their population group[33]. This pattern is a tool which enables one to quickly feel emotion towards, or assert an opinion of, someone else in circumstances of partial information. Social messages intensify and reinforce racist thought patterns and turn them into something

30 S. Hassan, *Introduction*, In *A Lesson for Life: anti-racism education from kindergarten to high school*, edited by Rivlin, N., Tel-Aviv, Israel: The association for civil rights in Israel, 2015 *(In Hebrew)*.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 M. Wexler, *Dealing with racist behaviors and statements inside the classroom*. In *A Lesson for Life: anti-racism education from kindergarten to high school*, edited by Rivlin, N., Tel-Aviv, Israel: The association for civil rights in Israel, 2015 *(In Hebrew)*.

consistent, particularly concerning the other, those who are different and unknown, who are not necessarily physically present. Power dynamics and racism can be expressed towards another in any setting, including the classroom. Wexler[34] demonstrated that children and teens tend to maintain power dynamics that exclude others. If so, the pedagogical approach of the Association for Civil Rights, sees the classroom as a micro cosmos of society, in which there are strong and weak groups, and where mechanisms of inclusion, exclusion and the labelling of the other, and those who are different, exist. Hogg[35] suggests that the extent of "otherness" in a group is determined by the scope of variance from the group "prototype" which is derived from the leadership figures within it. This approach highlights the role of the teacher as a leadership role. The teacher is not just a technician who passes on information, but rather a significant figure in the shaping of pupils' social world-views. Marcelo Wexler claims that "the teacher, as the authority figure in the classroom, has the central role of the role model. As teachers, every one of our messages, including those actions we comprehend to be insignificant in our work, are perceived, either consciously or not, by our pupils who then create their own interpretations. Furthermore, it is important as teachers, that we recognize, understand, and interpret the personal narratives of our pupils, in order to understand the source of their behaviours "[36].

Shaking off racist outlooks requires working on both the emotional and rational levels. Scholarly lectures and information alone will not change pupils' stances; people have difficulty comprehending and dealing with information that breaks or stands in opposition to their own cognitive thought patterns (which are also emotional). (Ibid.). To this end, the Association for Civil Rights developed principles of behavioural didactics as the foundation for teacher trainings. This approach is aimed

34 Ibid.
35 M. A. Hogg, M. A., *All Animals Are Equal but Some Animals Are More Equal than Others: Social Identity and Marginal Membership.* In *The social outcast: Ostracism, social exclusion, rejection, and bullying.* Edited by Williams, K. D., J. P. Forgas, & W. Von Hippel, Psychology Press, 2005.
36 M. Wexler, *Dealing with racist behaviors and statements inside the classroom.* In *A Lesson for Life: anti-racism education from kindergarten to high school*, edited by Rivlin, N., Tel-Aviv, Israel: The association for civil rights in Israel, 2015 *(In Hebrew)*.

at the creation of processes leading to insight, and the teachers' choice of effective modes of actions in "real time" in the classroom. The behavioral didactic is based on:

a)   The teacher's response – the teacher must respond to, and not ignore, expressions of racism.

b)   The mapping of power dynamics – the teacher must have a clear picture of the power dynamics between the different groups in the classroom.

c)   Abstention from moralism – expressions of moralism will distance pupils, and as such teachers must abstain from them.

d)   Solidarity, not competition – the teacher will work off of cooperation and solidarity between pupils.

e)   Encouragement of dialogue between pupils – the teacher will encourage dialogue between pupils and will demonstrate a dialogical conversation through his or her own behaviour.

f)   Reflective process – the creation of insight in relation to racism and the development of awareness regarding the process of change.

These principles aid the teacher in choosing the desired response to pupils' racist behaviours, and in due course, to a change and reduction of pupils racist viewpoints and behaviours.

It is important to note that these principles are mostly applicable when discussing racist behaviour towards a person (or group) which is present in the classroom. Mapping of power dynamics or dialogue between students are a powerful tool to address issues of racism between the students in the classroom. This is not the case when discussing racist statements towards people or groups who are not a part of the class. Such behaviour towards an "absent other" should still be responded to by the teacher while being careful not to engage in moralism. Yet, it is one of the premises of this course's approach that the preferred way to deal with racist cognitive patterns is through engaging with racism towards the "present other".

In conclusion, the pedagogical approach of the Association is a broad one which is situated within the parameters and the ideas of critical pedagogy. It maintains that teacher trainings need not focus solely on the body of knowledge of the discipline taught, or on didactic pedagogical tools regarding the teaching of disciplinary knowledge, or the treatment of

disciplinary issues in the classroom; but rather, also on the development of critical social awareness in teachers, whilst emphasizing democratic ethics and the phenomenon of racism. The behavioural didactics which were developed as part of this approach, aid teachers in translating their social awareness into suitable behaviours, and provide them with a foundation of professional self-confidence and behavioural skills to deal with complex situations regarding racism.

COURSE DESCRIPTION ADDRESSING THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

The Course objectives presented to the students were:

1. Analyzing the term 'racism', its sources, and different definitions, as a moral-social-ethical aspect in the educator's work.
2. Investigating the various ways in which racism is likely to be expressed in the classroom. Recognition of racist expressions and the pedagogical tools for educational response, while considering the different needs and social-cultural backgrounds of pupils.
3. The development of skills for integrating education against racism in various areas of discipline, in accordance with the premise in the Ariav[37] framework: "A teacher is first of all an educator and only then a teacher of a specific discipline".

In congruence with the course objectives, the following topics of study were chosen:

a.   The relationship between social-political processes and education, and the role of the teacher. According to the aforementioned approach, the central role of the teacher is to ensure that the classroom is a safe and equal space for all pupils, while taking into account the power dynamics between groups and individuals in society and in the classroom. Such a classroom constitutes a cushion for learning in general, and exhibits that racism is not predetermined, and that a non-oppressive society in which members stand in solidarity with one another is possible.

37 T. Ariav, *The New Frameworks for Teacher Education in Israel: Rationale, Conceptual Perspectives and Implementation.* Webinar offered December 10, 2008 by the MOFET Institute.

b.   Expressions and manifestations of racism in the classroom. Different definitions of racism were taught: the legal definition in Israel, the definition according to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the dictionary definition, and the sociological definition. Particular emphasis was put on defining the term 'racialization' which is "the distinction between groups based on their race, or on the basis of cultural terms corresponding to race, such as: gender, nationality, place of residence, or last name"[38]. The learning of the terms was integrated with practical material taken from the accumulated experiences of the students and a number of discussions were held in which case studies brought by students were analysed.

c.   Dealing with expressions of racism in the classroom. The principles of Wexler's Behavioural Didactics [39] were learned. The case studies brought by the students were processed into simulation activities in which students could experience various teacher responses. Particular emphasis was put on the experience of mapping classroom power dynamics and using it to analyse racist expression.

d.   Teaching materials which are exclusive or biased, with an emphasis on mathematics and English, as case studies. Evaluation of study materials that represent a heterogeneous society, yet the studies usually represent the hegemonic group. In the case of unrepresented groups present in the classroom, the teacher will bring additional materials, change names and terms in the existing materials, and supplement that which requires supplementation. For example: If there is an Ethiopian pupil in the classroom, math problems using names, will be changed to include Ethiopian names as well.

The approach for all of the topics integrated theoretical knowledge, emotional processing, and practical tools for coping in the classroom. A significant part of the course focused on the development of lesson plans, and eventually, on the practical experience of implementing the lesson

38   Y. Shenhav, *What is racism?*, In *A Lesson for Life: anti-racism education from kindergarten to high school*, edited by Rivlin, N., Tel-Aviv, Israel: The association for civil rights in Israel, 2015 *(In Hebrew)*.

39   M. Wexler, *Dealing with racist behaviors and statements inside the classroom*. In *A Lesson for Life: anti-racism education from kindergarten to high school*, edited by Rivlin, N., Tel-Aviv, Israel: The association for civil rights in Israel, 2015 *(In Hebrew)*.

plans in the classroom. The lesson plans and the practical experiences were intended for the integration of the principles of dealing with racism in a content class (math, literature, etc.), and likewise in social lessons aimed at issues related to racism.

Throughout the semester a number of actions were taken to evaluate the learning process. A mid-semester evaluation discussion was held, at the end of which an evaluation questionnaire was passed out to learn about the specific units of the course. The final assignment was to write three lesson plans related to racism and to teach them in the fieldwork placements. The students summarized their fieldwork experiences in a reflection assignment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FINAL ASSIGNMENT AND QUOTES FROM WITHIN THE REFLECTION ESSAYS AND EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES

The final assignment was divided into several parts. The first part required students to write about the social situation in a specific classroom, including a socio-metric mapping of the class – a mapping of the relationships between pupils, and a description of different groups: which pupils are leaders, which suffer from social exclusion or bullying, as well as other social and learning factors. The intended use of this mapping was to analyze the power dynamics between groups in the classroom and to evaluate whether they are related to racism.

The second part of the assignment involved preparing three lesson plans that reflect dealing with racism specifically in the chosen class. These lesson plans could be a part of the curriculum for a certain discipline, or they could stand on their own as a social lesson. Lastly, students were asked to implement their lesson plans in the chosen classroom.

The final assignments were very varied and touched upon a variety of subjects that were discussed throughout the semester. One of the students chose a third grade class dealing with the phenomenon of bullying. Most of the bullying was carried out by two girls who were also unusual in their outward appearance. The lesson plans were prepared for the English curriculum and touched upon bullying and the acceptance of those with differences, while attempting to arouse

solidarity amongst the pupils in the classroom.

Another student analysed a class in which several pupils who were not born in Israel were being excluded by the other pupils from many social activities. The lesson plans were written for the Geography curriculum and presented cultural differences between countries, the class discussion was intended to empower the pupils with knowledge about different cultures.

The evaluation questionnaire passed out to students at the end of the course, found that students were highly satisfied. Students were pleased with the theoretical deepening on the subject and from the exposure to new and interesting teaching methods. They especially noted the learning from the analysis they did of events that presented the problem of racism in schools as part of a norm. They noted the need for educational tools in such situations, and most were happy to continue for another semester and to deepen their practical knowledge. In the semester following the course, students continued their fieldwork in the schools where they got to experience the implementation of the approaches and tools in their daily work, after which they wrote their reflections. In this way the complex connection between theory and the field was realized. Many students noted the difficulty in implementing things that theoretically and hypothetically seem right and appropriate. The reflections revealed the difficulty of teaching lessons in which the discussion is the central component and as such requires moderation skills in order to bridge between the emotional and social processes in the classroom, and the educational goals.

CONCLUSIONS

This article considers the significance of the subject of racism in teacher trainings. Generally, it should be emphasized that a broad perspective on the role of the teacher, considering the educational role beyond the imparting of disciplinary knowledge, is important to the future of education in general and not only in the context of dealing with racism. In order to endow this view, the sociological and social aspects need to be emphasized in teacher trainings. The issue of racism especially presents a problem present in schools in all sectors of

Israeli society, and as such we think that the situation necessitates such a course to be required for students in all teacher training programs.

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