

# U-RISE

UHasselt Research on Innovative  
and Society-Engaged Education

## Hoe inclusief is je pedagogiek? Een analytisch kader voor neoliberale tijden

**SES**

School voor  
Educatieve Studies

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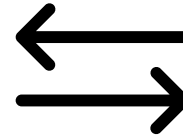
**UHASSELT**

# Studentgecentreerd onderwijs

- ❖ Participatie, interactie, noden, autonomie, praktische skills
- ❖ Voorgesteld als oplossing voor inclusief onderwijs
- ❖ Oorsprong: kritische pedagogiek, progressivisme (i.e. Dewey)

# Studentgecentreerd onderwijs en neoliberalisme

- ❖ Gelijkenis met neoliberale redenering
  - ❖ Kenniseconomie
  - ❖ Flexibiliteit
  - ❖ Concurrentie
  - ❖ Individualisme
  - ❖ Productiviteit en efficiëntie



Sociale rol van het onderwijs

- ❖ Uitsluitingsmechanismen
  - ❖ Deficit-thinking
  - ❖ Meritocratisch denken

Mikelatou and Arvanitis, 2017. Social Inclusion and active citizenship under the prism of neoliberalism.

Graham and Slee, 2008. An illusory interiority - interrogating the discourses of inclusion.

MacDonald-Vemic and Portelli, 2018. Performance power - the impact of neoliberalism on social justice educators

# Onderzoeksvragen

- ❖ Hoe gebeurt de interactie tussen studentgecentreerd onderwijs en neoliberalisme?
- ❖ Wat is het gevolg voor inclusie en diversiteit?



# Methodologie

- ❖ Kritische discours analyse van krantenartikelen in de periode 1970 - 2022
- ❖ Bourdieusiaanse methodologie (Grenfell and Lebaron, 2014)

# Methodologie

Table 1: Bourdieusian square table created for this research.

Concept	Discourse <sup>1</sup>		
	Education	Economy	Democratisation
Knowledge			
Learning			
Competences/Skills			
Lifelong learning			
Talent			
Society			
Diversity			
Culture			
Democratisation			
Collaboration			

# Resultaten - periodes

- ❖ Sociale en politieke context
- ❖ Periode 1981 – 1993: interactie met neoliberalisme
- ❖ Periode 1994 – 2004: neoliberale tijdperk, veerkracht en pedagogiek
- ❖ Periode 2005 – 2022: identiteit als civic universiteit

# Onderwijsvisie

The first principle is freedom of mind regarding all differing opinions, whether philosophical, political or social. (...) The second principle is based on the idea that the university is part of **society** and that the latter justifies its existence. (...) The third principle means a renewal of university education in this province. (...) Adapted methods must ensure that **every student actively participates** while learning. (...) The fourth principle is that Limburg University is **'open' to other cultures**. (D1, 3-4, 1973)



# Periode 1 – interactie met neoliberalisme

- ❖ Verschillende interpretaties - verwarring
- ❖ Machtsverschil (financiering, kwaliteitscontrole)
- ❖ Managerial discourse

## Maatschappij = industrie

Since not so long time ago, and the economic crisis has played a role in it, the idea that university research needs **to contribute more clearly to the solution of problems in society** started to gain more ground. (...) One of the tasks of academic institutions, if they want to take up social responsibility in the future, is certainly to organize themselves more consciously and to promote the transfer of their knowledge and science. (...) To achieve this, transfer mechanisms (...) must be provided to bring the demands and interests **from business to research and vice versa**. (LUC News, December 1981)

## Managerial discourse

Education is still seen as a collective good and therefore financed by the government. In Belgium, 20% of the budget goes to education (...). The question is not so much whether this is too much or too little, but: isn't the **educational efficiency** too low in relation to the used educational resources, in the light of the knowledge society? (...) The most important question is not so much how many teachers are necessary (...). The question is rather: which techniques and methods regarding education can be implemented so that the present **teachers become more productive**: this means gaining more **efficiency** from their professional competence, knowledge, dedication and effort? (LUC News, April 1987, 13)

**VERSCHILLENDE INTERPRETATIES → WINT WIE MEER MACHT HEEFT**

**→ HOMOLOGIE**

## Periode 2 – neoliberale tijdperk, veerkracht en pedagogiek

❖ Onderzoek privé-sector

❖ Ondernemerschap

‘the customer [university public] is mainly the business community’ (LUC News, October 1993, 11).

❖ Levenslang leren x concurrentie -> ‘the rapid diffusion of available knowledge is crucial to remaining competitive’ (LUC News, February 1993, 3)

# Periode 2 – neoliberale tijdperk, veerkracht en pedagogiek

- ❖ Marketization discourse, onderwijsaanpak als marketingstrategie
- ❖ Verschillende betekenissen voor *capaciteiten* en *leren* – constructivisme, problem-based learning, interactie, dialoog, differentiatie, krachtige leeromgeving, democratisering, kritisch denken, bloksysteem

→ HET NEOLIBERAAL SPEL LEREN SPELEN → VEERKRACHT

- ❖ **Nieuwe concepten vanuit liberaal denken: cultuur, samenwerking, multiculturalisme, kennis**

The only way to close the gap between “knowledge owners” and “knowledge poor”, whatever the cause of their knowledge poverty, is the implementation of the best possible system of education and continued training. (LUC News, May 1987, 3)

→ KWETSBARE GEBIEDEN

## Periode 3 – identiteit als civic universiteit

- ❖ Meer participatie in Limburg
- ❖ Democratisering, vzw's, onderzoek naar sociale problemen, non-profit sector, (duurzaamheid, circulaire economie, klimaatverandering, discriminatie, genderongelijkheid, mensen rechten)
- ❖ Kennis – dialoog, mensen, welzijn, solidariteit
- ❖ Meer focus op humane wetenschappen

“knowledge is created in dialogue” (UHasselt Magazine, October 2017, 16)

“In today's university you don't just learn from books, you also learn from people” (UHasselt Magazine, April 2018, 29)

- ❖ **Deficit-thinking, cultuur en diversiteit met neoliberale betekenis (i.e. taalachterstand)**

**MINDER HOMOLOGIEËN → HOGERE MATE VAN INCLUSIE**

# Resultaten – analytisch kader

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Neoliberal meaning</b>	<b>Pedagogical meaning</b>	<b>Homology</b>	<b>Risk</b>
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# Analytisch kader

Concept	Neoliberal meaning	Pedagogical meaning	Homology	Risk
Knowledge	A commodity produced by universities that can be transferred and can help the industry create new products through innovation. It is the basis of the knowledge economy. Knowledge workers are necessary to manage this commodity.	It is constructed in the dialogue between people. It can be used to solve society's problems, for self-development and to form critical citizens.	The idea of knowledge as a kind of object that can "move" or be transmitted from person to person or from environment to environment.	If knowledge is not clearly defined as a not-commodity, it might influence teaching practices to treat knowledge as a kind of fixed object, separated from the subjectivity of the learner, which will prioritise the subjectivities from privileged groups (since they are implicit in knowledge traditions).
Learning	Learning is a way of transferring knowledge to people's minds in order to be productive in the knowledge economy. Learning can also mean observing successful institutions or people to learn their ways of doing things and not staying behind. Good learning requires good management for better efficiency with zero talent waste.	Learning is a way of transferring knowledge to people's minds, and it is better done through participatory methods, in which students can engage and share their voices. Differentiation must be done if we want everybody to succeed.	The same idea of knowledge as a commodity and the supposition of equality between participants (once participants lacking something receive remedy).	The disregard of structural mechanisms reproducing inequalities. People who receive "remedy" and still are not successful will be justified through their talent. Successful people will be explained through merit.
Competences/ skills	As knowledge is a commodity, competence is what is required for someone to be able to apply knowledge so that new products can be created. Nowadays, the management of companies is critical to stay competitive in the fast market change. Professionals need to communicate, network, work in teams, manage their time, and be motivated, flexible and curious. Like this, innovation is possible, and therefore, the creation of new products to stay competitive.	Competencies are necessary for a grounded understanding of knowledge, not based on pure memorisation. They help people understand the connection between what is being taught with their reality. To solve society's problems, people need to be able to apply knowledge.	Less focus on knowledge and "one-size-fits-all" concepts. The difference between skills and competencies is not clear.	Not questioning the knowledge given/produced and the unification of learning experiences in separation from knowledge content. It can be especially damaging for disadvantaged groups who must adapt to other ways of behaving, silencing their subjectivities.
Lifelong learning	The ability to rapidly adapt to the demands of the job market.	It is continuous learning during life, connected to a willingness to always change previous reasonings or mental schemes by including new ideas or information that improve it. It helps one to self-develop and to stay self-critical.	The idea of humans as incomplete beings.	Reinforcement of deficit-thinking as individuals always lack something and need to work on their pitfalls constantly.
Talent	The capital we can use to run the economy. It should not be wasted.	People from disadvantaged groups can show something useful, beautiful or skilful if the right opportunities are given.	Human beings are seen for their utility.	This homology is already a dangerous supposition that can contribute to justifying the exclusion of people who are not considered successful.
Society	The industry	Everybody from a community.	The industry (it is contained in the community).	Not choosing underprivileged groups explicitly is likely to favour the most privileged and powerful ones.
Diversity	The presence of people that are not like "us" need to be dealt with for the economy to function better in a highly competitive international market.	People of colour, women, LGBTQIA+, foreigners, people with a disability, etc.	Categorisation of all these groups in one single group: "the other".	Not being able to see that the dominant group is also a type of human, diverse, and with limitations like any other group. It can generate mysterious stereotypes about "the other" and consider the dominant group as complete beings and superior to those who always lack something.
Culture	The influence of how people live in other countries affects how business is done. With increasing globalisation, we need to learn to deal with these people.	How each person or group experiences the world, which can be different from "ours", with rituals and beliefs that should be respected.	The mysterious character of the "other".	The idea of the "mysterious other" can impede actual dialogue between different cultures and promote only tolerance.
Democratisation	No wasting of talent.	To include and empower disadvantaged groups inside the same system we have.	Not questioning the current social structure: why is the current situation so good that everybody needs to take part in it?	It poses limitations for the structural changes of social problems.

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Democratisation	No wasting of talent.	To include and empower disadvantaged groups inside the same system we have.	Not questioning the current social structure: why is the current situation so good that everybody needs to take part in it?	It poses limitations for the structural changes of social problems.
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# Analytisch kader

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Collaboration	The need to gather resources and capital from different stakeholders to better protect the market and produce competitive products.	Emphasis on active participation, interaction and cooperation between students. It is visible in group projects, peer feedback, discussions, problem-solving activities.	Collaboration is always good by itself.	Not being able to see when collaborations might strengthen one of the sides more because of power inequality.

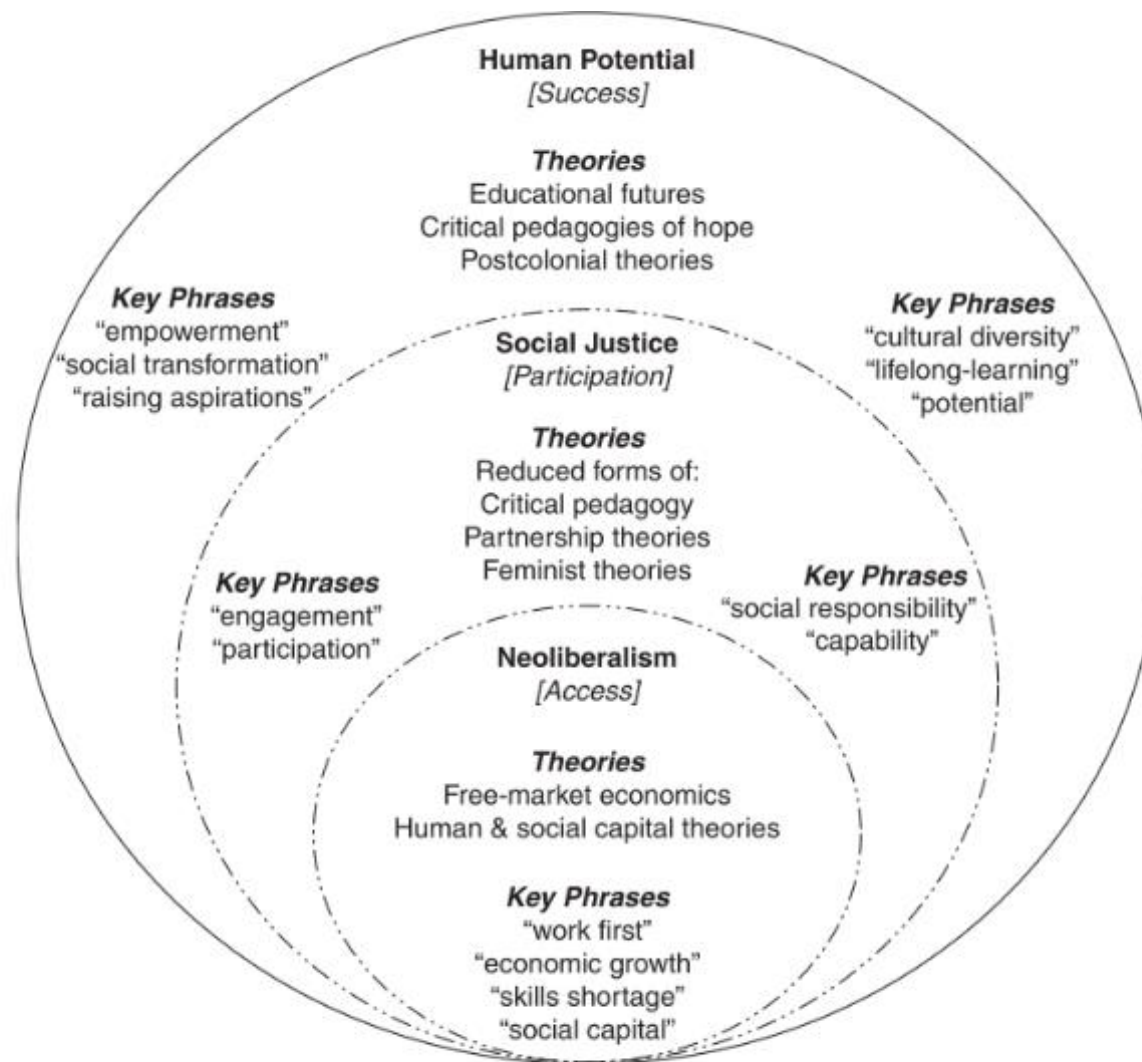


# Discussie en conclusie

- ❖ Nood voor dissonante pedagogiek
- ❖ Analytisch kader dat een manier van kijken biedt, geen algemene regels → mogelijkheid tot niet-ideale theorie (Rawls, 2001; Felder, 2021)
- ❖ Voor het beleid, onderzoekers, docenten en leerkrachten...

# Bedankt 😊

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**Figure 1.** Spectrum of ideologies underlying social inclusion theory and policy.  
Source: Dr. Jennifer M. Gidley © 2009.