

# MODERNIZED INEQUALITIES: THE APPROACH OF PHILOLOGICAL PEDAGOGY

## DISEGUAGLIANZE MODERNIZZATE: L'APPROCCIO DELLA PEDAGOGICA FILOLOGICA



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### ABSTRACT

The extension of economism and capitalistic dynamics to all spheres of human life on a global scale has led to disparities. Pedagogy must face the challenges of creating cohesive learning communities in societies that are struggling to fulfil cultural transmission, that are tightened within the anthropological minimum and the needs induced by globalization. A viable methodology is identified in *philological pedagogy*, in the effort of dismantling pseudo – realities and overcoming the framing effect

L'estensione dell'economicismo e delle dinamiche capitalistiche a tutte le sfere della vita umana su scala globale ha portato a delle disparità. La pedagogia deve affrontare le sfide della creazione di comunità di apprendimento coese in società che lottano per adempiere alla trasmissione culturale, strette tra il minimo antropologico e le esigenze indotte dalla globalizzazione. Una metodologia praticabile è individuata nella *pedagogia filologica*, nello sforzo di smantellare le pseudo-realtà e di superare l'effetto *framing*.

### KEYWORDS

Reciprocity, philology, identity, poverty, pedagogy  
Reciprocità, filologia, identità, povertà, pedagogia

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## Introduction

Words are not socially neutral: they indeed contribute to creating new narratives and give the perception of a consistent change in the economic and geopolitical scenarios, as well as in the globalized society and its value scale, while often misrepresenting reality.

Therefore, words are increasingly connected to specific ideologies, aimed to outspread desired modifications and transformations in our behavior and differently modulate the social structure: they are powerful, propulsive medium for spreading and generalizing specific points of view and interpretations of modern needs and globalization priorities.

The more these words are used and receive public consensus, the more they are considered *true* and so the representations they vehiculate are deemed *natural*, *normal* and *necessary*: a modern syllogism that we call *the three N logic* (Del Gottardo 2018). On the contrary, naturalization of history and social changes hides a potentially disruptive countersense because it turns into necessities phenomena that are not natural, that are perfectly explainable in their connections to economic and political necessities, in a world that is increasingly interconnected and engaged in equivalent politics and in the identical global context.

By using the same keywords in a large spectrum of environments, visions and ideologies related to them find their way through mass media, academia and the vast public, turning into undisputable evidence concepts that once widely spread, can no longer be questioned.

Consequently, people tend to use these words repeatedly as if they were *truths* that require them to *believe* in their meaning and adhere to their il-logical consequences: they become *simulacra*, words *passepartout* used to generate immediate praise among listeners, even if they might be *prenotions*, as Émile Durkheim (1983 [1895]:32) defines them: «false evidences that dominate the common minds». They sometimes contribute to disseminating the illusion of a change in politics but also lead to the popularization of new inducted needs in society.

Either way, they are neutral under no circumstances since believing in something, as Rist says (2013:56), is a *performative action*: you are asked to believe because you are asked to act in a certain way.

It is challenging, from a pedagogical perspective, to face these luring narratives and their inherent *bias*, so to equilibrate the adaptive dialogue and modifying

interaction among the diverse co-actors and overcome polarization and prenotion boundaries.

Reconquering an individual and collective sense of reality is an urgent call for pedagogists, so to create an impartial dialoguing environment where to detect and enhance reciprocal commonalities, while also benefiting from differences, where to care for one another: inequalities seem to arise from a particular growing system of *carelessness*.

The envisaged pedagogical paradigm to counter group thinking, radicalization and opposite interactions within a community is to be identified, as Perucca (1997; 2007:259) said, in the *diaspora of pedagogical knowledge*, which means in exploring and benefiting from lessons learnt in domains that are not traditionally related to pedagogical sciences, so to catch up with the increasing complexity of modern societies:

«A kind of diaspora gives rise to pedagogical knowledge that goes even beyond the already extended scope of the educational sciences; not only psychology, sociology and anthropology, but also economics, politics, and ecology must confront the problem of personal and social development, and not in merely empirical-descriptive terms, but in a prospective and thus, inevitably, also deontological dimension.»

In this essay we propose adopting a *philological* methodology, which collates sources and restores their authentical meaning by comparison, contextualization and analysis: explanation and understanding overcome emotional confrontation. This is the basis of *philological pedagogy*.

Etymologically, *philology* means in fact “love for word”: restoring awareness and care for the language and the words we use in our reasoning process seems to represent a positive and desired effort to equilibrate our functioning modes accordingly to a wider and clearer view on reality. The renovated care for words is a *curiosity* that fosters *reciprocity*, the final aim of philological pedagogy.

Moreover, learning how to analyze any theory or public speech under the lens of evidence-based sources and restoring the meaning of the keywords they use creates an open and receptive educational environment where adaptive negotiations can take place on a common, substantial ground.

Rebuilding a solid dimension of care starts by countering *carelessness of opinion*.

This way it is possible to overcome the *framing effect* and our precepts: through an in-depth analysis of the historical background of facts and theories, social transformations are solidly linked to their cause-effect processus or intended ideology; while referring to the diverse sources and testimonies with competence and awareness, we can highlight intentionality and proposed objectives. On this ground facts can be discussed and harmonized with diverging interpretations.

In this regard, as Goisis (2023: 75) suggested, a particularly relevant role will be played by the “doubt”: the capacity of doubting and questioning official, monolithic narratives, allows to explore new representations and getting a better understanding of different points of view and needs.

Also, doubting is salubrious, contrasts our illusion of knowing something and exposes IoED, Illusion of explanatory depth (Sloman, Fernbach 2011).

As Sclavi (2003) explained very well, the most important step to take is to create *possible worlds*, a neutral environment, where judgement is suspended: the *epoché* will generate a malleable and receptive situation, so that agreeing with someone or disagreeing is completely pointless, because the most important aim is to understand and explain *how* beliefs and ideas are created and grounded.

We then propose an imaginative parabola in a free-of-judgement space, where different words *simulacra* appear to be used in a polyhedric sample of source and can be discussed without prejudice; in this multifaceted dialogical environment among plural fonts (such as catholic, socialist, conservatory studies, etc.) and face to the evidence of data interpretation, we propose some examples of what we call *philological pedagogy* applied to the words *simulacra*.

Operationally, ideal interlocutors are invited to research on the keywords they intend to employ and contextualize them historically by working on sources and data, so to understand their original meaning and diverse implications, restoring their authentical scope; a good practice that can be suggested to them is trying to give an exhaustive explanation of what they intend to describe without using these *simulacra* but looking for personal definitions and independent explanations: this way they will have a clear view of what they actually know about them and what they are *really* saying when they carelessly employ these special, dense words.

By questioning, analyzing, and reconducting words to their initial meaning and subsequent implications and uses, we restore our *love* for them and begin to care for the *actions* they suggest and direct.

## 1. Words *simulacra*: new forms of dogmatic beliefs in public narratives.

In most recent dissertations on modernity and its erosive effects on traditional behaviors and beliefs, a particularly intricate conundrum is the *language* that globalization and modernity itself have created.

The new global cultural economy has generated its specific narrative in the most diverse fields, adopting some of the old-fashioned vocabulary and redefining its meaning but also introducing new terminologies or even grammar modifications to vehiculate new theories and speculations.

Words become idols, *simulacra* people believe in and worship because they meet an untold need, a need to believe in something:

«Thus, the same need to believe risks becoming an idol, an idol to which everything is sacrificed, and which no critical power has the strength to question anymore; as it is well known, despite appearances, our epoch has come to be characterized no longer by widespread disbelief but, on the contrary, precisely by the widespread readiness to believe in everything, even the most extraordinary hoaxes, even the most apocalyptic hoaxes [...] Dubious *gurus*, masters of petty wisdom and peddlers of unfounded certainties dispute the space generated by *mass media*, a space inhabited by *simulacra*, which is another way of calling idols.» (Goisis 2023: 24).

The need to believe is connected to an increasing disorientation, to an emerging need of “instructions”, as if life would come with a Hamlet-like leaflet: what to eat or not to eat, what to buy or not to buy, what cures and medications to take or not to take, etc.

New beliefs are combined with *needs* that are inducted by the global market, which creates new disparities; this tight alliance between economic, politics and new forms of existentialistic research are translated into a dichotomic narrative that, while displaying forerunner keywords and iconic images/symbols to the public, also insists on *individualization* of needs (Zuboff S. 2019).

Language implied in this two-faced narrative is frequently manipulated and it ends up creating dogmas; it is not possible to doubt these *myths* or *dogmas* have a veridical base, it is allowed just a dichotomic action: either you *believe* they are right and true so you are *in favor* of their thesis, or you are in *disagreement* and fierce opposition is expected:

«The narratives of modernity express themselves with ever-increasing and now global speed in this limbo between old and new, and in a constricting language that never problematizes the premises, consenting to match the faithistic adherence to the words *simulacra* (Rist, 2013) and the conditionalities they induce; true idols, they closely recall Bacon's εἰδωλα (lt. *idola*), particularly the *idola fori*, and which here are induced by the geopolitical and market equilibria.» (Del Gottardo, Nicolai 2024:89)

Not surprisingly, it is not the rhetorical aspects that are more manipulated by cultural flows but, indulging in the wide-ranging trend of (hyper) simplification, single words and simple propositions are becoming brands to be easily used by mass media to lure the public. Language becomes a way to *impose* changes to a society, brandishing the sword of the too often counterfactual world. Some images, some iconic words become *idols of new religions*:

«The term/concept of idol refers to the image, which, in our time, appears more incisive than words, because of its flashing immediacy that makes it capable of direct insight and effectiveness. But words, too, possess a certain aptitude for directing, guiding and even manipulating the consciousness of people and associated groups, leading in the desired and programmed directions; let's just think of advertising messages or political slogans which, hammered incessantly, set off on certain paths of behavior the public to which they are addressed (the slogan has been defined: "a splinter of ideology," that is, an entire ideological universe condensed into a powerfully expressive phrase).» (Goisis 2023: 48)

What are these words referring to? These words-*simulacra* then are nothing but *beliefs*: «they do not define dogmatic truths to which each person would adhere out of intimate conviction but are expressed in the form of simple propositions that are widely held to be true: people believe in them because they are believed by all» (Rist 2013: 28).

Since people use these words *simulacra* and these beliefs continuously, in every conversation, we get used to them to the point we do not think it is necessary to explain them or the sense in which they are used (Durkheim É. (1983 [1895]:37).

It will be surprising for many people to know that these words *simulacra* might include apparently innocent and all-around words such as *development, growth and inclusion*.

Gilbert Rist has well documented in his book *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith* (2013) how words invented *new imagined worlds* and related faiths, covering up old disparities and justifying them with new concepts.

These words can be explained *philologically*, in their historical genesis and evolution as well as tools of an ideological and political plan; Rist (2013: 37) reviews some paradigmatic examples, which will we try to briefly summarize: he demonstrates with an extremely accurate and vast documental apparatus how “development” is a belief and a set of social practices that somehow exists through the actions and institutions it legitimizes: quoting Pörksen (1989) he defines it as a catchword, and more precisely a *plastik Wort*:

«the characteristic of a *plastic word* is that of initially pertaining to the common language, with a clear and precise meaning (the development of an equation) and afterwards having been used by the scientists’ language (Charles Darwin’s development of species) ending up to be adopted now by technocrats in such an extensive sense that it does not mean anything anymore, if not just what the individual interlocutor who employs it wants it to mean».

The main peculiarity of this type of words is to be metaphors that do not evoke any image, they are context-autonomous, they lack any historical dimensions. Some examples are: *basic need, care, center, communication, consumption, contact, decision, development, education, energy, exchange, factor, function, future, growth, identity, information, living standard, management, model, modernization, partner, planning, problem, process, production, progress, project, raw material, relationship, resource, role, service, sexuality, solution, strategy, structure, substance, system, trend, value, welfare, work*.

Also, the word *inclusion* can be considered a plastic word: from its initial use in the set theory, it trespassed into biology and came back to common language; its meaning has become malleable, and its use has been notoriously transposed in modern official narratives in completely different spheres.

Some scholars also proposed to consider *diversity* as *plastic word*, since it is used as if there were a shared meaning, but basically it varies depending on the speaker’s standpoint. The more they are used, the more they become undoubtable: idols no one cares to explain.

It is impressive that all of us *carelessly* adopt many of these words as if they were crystal-clear evidence while we are instead called to investigate them and redefine their contours. A pedagogical approach to educational and societal challenges must primarily address this issue.

Having a deeper look into Rist's work, we learn that development, and underdevelopment in the sense they are commonly used now, are an *invention* that has a date of birth: 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1949, when Truman's speech made a turn point in U.S. foreign policy. This refers to the well-known *Truman's Point Four Program*: «Fourth, we must *embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas*», and «The old imperialism--exploitation for foreign profit--has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair-dealing» (<https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/public-papers/19/inaugural-address> ).

Here ends colonialism! Long live the development age!

But this change is not *semantic*, it implies the extension at a global level of the state-system; the notion of "development" acquires *scientificity* and becomes part of a modern religion based on the indestructible faith on an unlimited growth and production: «Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge».

Development becomes a metaphor which displays scientific language and naturalizes history and social dynamics: it assimilates society to a living organism and interpretes social changes in terms of growth in biological systems (Rist 2013:64-66). When it is *natural*, it is not questionable and there is no *alternative* to it. Changing the representation of reality generates the impression that the world has also changed. But is it really the case?

For example, we might now investigate if *development* has replaced former *idols* and *simulacra*; we can appreciate how the shift in global narrative after Truman's speech is recorded by many sources and relevant actors, among them for example by Eugenio Quaranta, a few decades afterwards:

«It is imperative that we remember how only a few years ago it was possible to mobilize peoples in the name of values such as colonialism, imperialism, slavery, homeland or for all kinds and sorts of warfare small or large, internal to states or external, while likewise we cannot fail to observe how it has been impossible for at

least forty years to use the same values and language and, perhaps, do the same things. Certainly, exploitation, imperialism and other forms of overpowering man over man continue to exist, but they no longer belong to the value scale of culture, nor do they integrate any spirituality or even less constitute its parameters of respectability.» (Quaranta *L'era dello sviluppo* (1986) quoted in Benci 2016:17).

Relevant literature reveals how *development* wiped out the previous world set up, based on *colonialism, civilization, race*: this is why it is a perfect example for pinpointing the pedagogical need to work on the words we adopt *with care*, not considering them simply *natural*. Here is the point where the *three N logic* comes into play:

«the idea of normality is assumed, overloaded and linked to the idea of naturality, which acts by evocations that add criticality to a concept that is already fragile. Current usage induces the belief that “natural” is beautiful, appreciable, convenient, healthy, pristine. How all this might make the idea of normality more acceptable (or richer) would be to be ascertained but so be it: if it is normal and natural, then it will also be right, convenient and appreciable. Simplification is achieved. [...] The path cannot yet be said to be completed. There is a third step: what is normal and is also natural cannot but be desirable. Indeed, it is even necessary, and every effort must be made to procure it. Here are the *three N: normal, natural, necessary* (Del Gottardo 2018:187).

## **2. *Identity*: a new interlocutory trick?**

«It is our language that objectifies, quantifies and generates a new reality, making it appear very simple and irreducibly itself.» (Nicolai 2025)

Plastic words, words *-simulacra*: “development” is just an example of how language uses its *demiurgic power* over reality and creates new *imagined worlds*, justifies existing trends and phenomena in contexts that *pertain to power*. This peculiar type of *power* relates to *politics* of values. In this sense, we propose to consider *political* also another largely used, malleable and finally ideological word: *identity*. Can we define it? It is such a complex goal that Remotti (2010:XII) calls it a *poisoned word*:

«Why and in what sense is identity a poisoned word? Simply because it promises what is not there; because it deludes us about what we are not; because it passes off as real what is instead a fiction or, at best, an aspiration. Let us say then that identity is a myth, a great myth of our time».

In other words, a *simulacrum*! While referring to Remotti's studies, it is not possible to propose in this article his arguments and sources: nevertheless, we can recall how *identity* is recorded in political speeches in a constant change of polarity, while its meaning is rebuilt depending on the speakers' standpoint. While *identity* seems to be a milestone in the conservative and rightwing reaction to globalization, on the contrary it is almost considered a *reactionary hydra's fever* by leftists and progressive parties:

«If, then, the law of progress is that which must inexorably lead from suffocating "closed societies" to the marvelous "open society" - which obliges, in other words, all existing civilizations [...] to gradually renounce all those "arbitrary" limitations which formed the basis of their contingent identity, and to dissolve triumphantly into the *posthistorical* unit - in Fukuyama's sense of the term - of a standardized global society (the driving force of which can obviously only be the coordinated development of free trade, "human rights" and *mainstream* culture) - we then understand what makes the modern Left philosophically coherent» (Michéa 2014:28).

For its main enemy seems to be incarnated in any *identitarian* aspiration, the Left wants

«to battle all symptoms of *identity fever* (in other words, all signs of a collective life rooted in a particular culture) and to endlessly celebrate the transgression of all moral and cultural limits bequeathed by previous generations [...] To the contemporary left-wing intellectual, it necessarily goes without saying that respect for the past, the defense of particularism and the promotion of a sense of identity are nothing but the three equally monstrous heads of the same reactionary hydra» (Michéa 2014:28-29).

Following the *belief* that modernity and progress are good and inevitable, all that is left behind, that does not *move*, that does not *grow*, is considered backwards and not desirable or, in certain circumstances, a footprint of nationalism and deplorable conservatism:

«Narratives and the interpersonal relationship undergo a double twist: on the one hand, the divestment of any identity approach, branded as ideological perversion by neoliberal and globalist narratives that are inspired by an ultra-territorial *Pauline universalism* (Michéa, 2014); on the other hand, the progressive dismantling of the historical, dynamic element in the process of reception, remodeling and transmission of the cultural element» (Del Gottardo, Nicolai 2024: 98).

From a pedagogical perspective, it is important to underline how naturalizing the progressive dismantling of the historical and dynamic element in a cultural transmission (receiving, remodeling, transmitting cultural data) generates disorientation and unease (Mantovani 1998).

We see how in these examples *identity* is connected to *culture* and collective sense of belonging: it refers somehow to shared meanings that allow us to appreciate debts and changes in the cultural transmission: it refers to one's root, place, and cultural debt (Cavinato 2024:53). Identifying what differs, what is not homogeneous, does not come without risks:

«The category of identity, if reiterated unilaterally, can give rise to some emphatic development, not very fruitful on the educational level: identity can become, then, the alibi for appealing to some dangerous purity, to an exclusivist, and arrogant, clinging to the "I" and "mine"» (Goisis 2023: 115).

We must recognize there is no unilateral, achronic meaning: identity is not just a statement, it is a context-dependent reciprocal request:

«If you don't respect my past, then why should I respect yours? If you do not respect my culture, then why should I respect yours? If you do not respect my forebears, then why should I respect yours? And if you do not like what my society has produced, then why should I agree to you having a place in it? This way lies an awful amount of pain. It also concludes inevitably in conflict, solvable only by force. It is an option much to be avoided» (Murray 2022:270).

Evoking identity might make *diversity* pop up, might lead to conflicts between the two opposites and inequalities in between; that's where pedagogy can suggest a *third way*:

«The category of diversity, if reiterated unilaterally, can- in turn- legitimize a centrifugal dispersion, equally sterile on the educational level: after all, the etymon “di-vertere” suggests a crossroads, with no conclusive possibility of convergence, a divarication of interhuman relations in an inexorable manner; for this reason, at times, I prefer to insist on the concept of difference that refers, however, to an arrangement of articulated unity, to a unitary background within which differences themselves are carved out. At this point, there is a need to recover what enables a genuine culture of service and dialogue; at the foundation, a third category, to be expanded into the fabric of “living”: reciprocity» (Goisis 2023: 115-116).

*Philological pedagogy* precisely aims to reconstruct through the *care for words* the history of cultural transmissions and their dynamics, discovering and reading relevant sources and analyzing them in their context- related occurrences: it reconnects the present social and educational challenges to their diachronic and synchronic genesis. The *dimension of care* opens the door to joint understanding and reciprocity: an exchange and help with mutual benefit. Reciprocity can fuel positive interactions, eroding impulsivity and mediating among identities, lightening inequalities.

The already evoked *diaspora of pedagogical knowledge* seems to represent a possible response to dispersion and disorientation, accompanying *diasporic identities*, as Appadurai (1990; 1996) states modern *identities* are led to be, coining the neologism of global *ethnoscapes*, flows of people across boundaries (Appadurai 1996:48-65); deterritorialization does not appear to solve in any way the risk of tensions: «Homeland is partly invented, existing only in the imagination of the deterritorialized groups, and it can sometimes become so fantastic and one-sided that it provides the fuel for ethnic conflicts» (Appadurai A. 1996:49).

Eradicated communities with meaningless words? That’s where language can rebuild the broken tie with the diachronic cultural processus and give new voice to dialogue, where pedagogy can graft intercultural dynamics and help address social issues. Among which, *poverty*.

### 3. Poverty: what is it?

Our intent to apply and describe the philological pedagogy approach does not lie only on a *pars destruens* or historical de/reconstruction of words and facts: it also aims at enhancing new conscious research.

Let's target another "dense" word: *poverty*. We invite people to reflect and try to define what poverty is. Each individual response to these questions will most likely highlight areas of shared meaning and, on the other hand, areas where knowledge can be better substantiated and improved.

It will not sound unfamiliar that we are currently *fighting against* poverty, under the motto "0 poverty": so, what are we opposing and how?

Indicating one terrible enemy might serve to gain consensus but can be a complicated issue to deal with. Poverty is a social construction, it exists because richness exists, and it is not a *natural* phenomenon that endemically affects only *some parts of the world* or *determined* peoples. It is generated by social and economic dynamics.

Since poverty is

«[...] a social construction, one should expect its definition to vary according to the position of the person who formulates it. [...] Of course, this does not mean we eulogize poverty as Rousseau did but simply avoid confusing the simplicity of certain ways of living with the 'modernized poverty' created by the extension of the market system» (Rist G. 2013:402).

Poverty has not made its first appearance among us in recent years, although public narratives seem to have discovered the *problem of poverty* and identified it as *the* enemy which is now on its last leg.

By saying that we must fight against a common enemy, that poverty is the *problem*, we get

«[...] the double advantage of initially throwing back the responsibility of the problem on the weak party and, afterwards, of cancelling from the "problem" those who claim the right to pose it in such a way. This discursive sleight of hand allows, through the elision of social relations, a new, apparently "objective" reality to exist, in this case, poverty"» (Rist G. 2013: 399-400).

Here we go again! Language and words can be tricky. Whether we agree with Rist's statement or not, he surely has a point in saying that the objectification of a

social problem elides responsibility and in stating that the market system has generated *modernized poverty*. This new description of the status of indigence is bound to the approach provided to face it: in the *development era* the approach to poverty is belligerent. McNamara of the World Bank linked "meeting basic needs" to structural adjustment programs in 1972, promoting globalization and aiming to reduce poverty by half by 2015 (2000 UN declaration). Older approaches focused on poor people within their community. In a global context, philanthropy, repression, or social utility are insufficient; the goal is to *get richer* to contribute and partake in the global economy. Defining poverty becomes quantifying and measuring it: it is a *multidimensional* condition that the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) breaks down in three dimensions and twelve indicators: <https://hdr.undp.org/content/2024-global-multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi#/indicies/MPI> ):

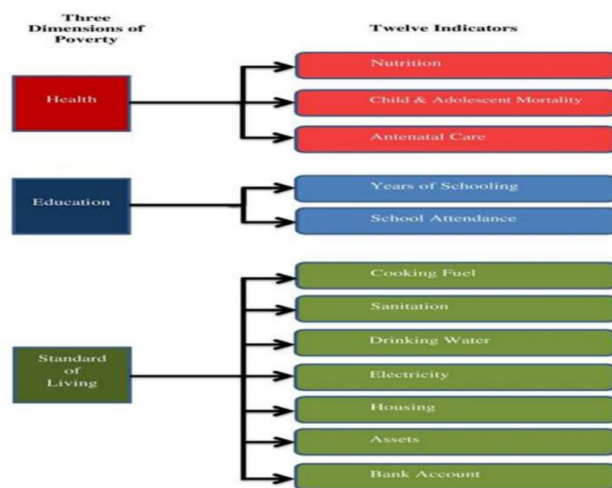


Fig. 1: MPI Indicators

It really appears to be a more complicated problem than *being poor* and it can be surprising that having a bank account and drinkable water are equally important to define the standard of living. The WB has also proposed new indicators that can measure Global Prosperity Gap and PPP (Purchasing Power Parities) (<https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/developmenttalk/prosperity-gap-proposed-new-indicator-monitor-shared-prosperity>); <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/opendata/september-2024-global-poverty->

[update-from-the-world-bank--revise](#) ); the WB has set a minimum threshold in American dollars to better quantify poverty:

«In 2022, the global poverty headcount ratio at the International Poverty Line (\$2.15 per person per day, 2017 PPP) has remained rounded to 9 percent, with a marginal upward revision in the total number of extreme poor from 712 to 713 million. By 2024 this number is expected to decline to about 692 million extreme poor in the world.»

The fight against poverty is a challenge rooted in contemporary concepts, although the struggle for survival is an enduring aspect of human history. Poverty, as we define it, is associated with the term 'basic need,' which serves as an economic fundamental but overlooks the fact that individuals are part of a society that imposes additional needs upon them. This perspective takes a naturalizing approach to social issues. Furthermore, the notion of basic need is a preconceived idea, as it attempts to quantify the minimum necessities required for individuals and communities to survive. Instead «There is no anthropological minimum: in all societies there is a part residually determined by the fundamental urgency of a surplus: the God's part, the part of sacrifice, of economic profit» (Rist 2013:297). What nourishes a community is not a survival aspiration but the exceedance; although we are used to considering this survival *minimum* a good ratio, it might be questionable:

«The fundamental needs approach is totally inoperative in living societies: on the contrary, it can be useful in the management of anti-societies or non-societies. Indeed, since time immemorial, prison (or boarding school) directors, captains of long-distance ships or Army generals during military campaigns have been concerned to calculate as best they could the 'rations' necessary for the survival of those in their charge».

That is a very suggestive consideration, and it can be a fruitful exercise trying to give a different explanation and definition of what poverty is, maybe tracing who is taking the *God's part* and how *society* is being modelled.

#### 4. Conclusion

Accepting a variety of perspectives is essential for effective negotiation and mutual adaptation. This approach may prevent sterile or conflictual discussions that are solely based on agreement or disagreement. Sclavi (2003) underlines how the fundamental goal is to *explain* how our beliefs and opinions are grounded, avoiding judgments: it is the *epoché* that allows us to imagine new possible worlds and be curious.

Imagination can be considered as a social practice (Appadurai 1996:31), and in our representations there will always be a subjective standpoint, since there is no such thing as objective experience: experiencing the world is always mediated by the sensorial organs and neural pathways predisposed to encode information, so every real event results in an internal representation. In other words, thought, as well as science, are ways of perceiving and making sense of what we see, so it is impossible for them to be objective.

Philological Pedagogy is based on the love and care for the words we use and listen to, since they vehiculate theorizations and have a performative influx on individuals and communities.

When we care about words, we become curious about their meaning and context-related implications, and curiosity, as well as doubting, are formidable equipment to address social and pedagogical issues.

As Stigler (2023) points out, this epoch is marked by the Economy of Carelessness and Deterritorialized Universalism: reestablishing cultural transmission and acquiring a collective sense of reality require a long, patient imaginative effort. Overcoming the framing effect is just one of the steps to take towards a desired reconciliation between facts and narratives:

«Cultural, ideological premises, representations of reality are the framework (framing effect) within which we inscribe a problem: forms of representation of reality, narratives and expectations depend on these premises. Analyzing beliefs, *simulacra* or poisoned words, investigating representations and thus functioning modes, serves to regain a sense of reality and apply to contexts a modifying interaction through active listening» (Del Gottardo, Nicolai 2022:57).

## Author contributions

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