DOI: 10.2478/jtes-2021-0022

sciendo

Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability,
vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 143–157, 2021

The False Self From the Pedagogical Perspective

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Abstract

The article continues a broader theme of long-term action research aimed at reorienting education towards sustainability. The study uses a broader, more holistic research perspective, which takes into account the quality of the current relationship between nature and humanity, which is related to the formation of relations in the Anthropocene age and their consequences. The effects of the era put the pressure on the development of individuals' self-processes, promoting unsustainability in education and other areas, and posing serious challenges to the use of the social communication and technology intensive environment.

The case study is devoted to the examination of the phenomenon of the *false self*. For the study of the false self, we have used an acceptable approach to action research when it can be used *as a research strategy and as a research method*. Therefore, we have used the experience of the researchers and the special emphasis from the historical experience of the false self theory as a broader *strategic* structure for recognizing the phenomenon under study. We have used the structure of youth experience, where action research serves as a *method* to identify the life experience of young people. This way, the study attempts to combine the two application opportunities of the action research. These are two types of experience gained in different ways, with different structures and where it is possible to combine these structures by integrating or synthesizing them in a way that allows identifying the prospective development of these relationships, leading to a more natural path to more sustainable development.

The case study is designed in such a way as to create a broader insight into the nature of the false self based on the research experience of the authors and their views on the choice of pedagogical solutions that can change the relationship between humanity and nature and improve the viability of both parties. A historically significant explanation of the *phenomenological hermeneutic* phenomenon of the false self is used, as well as an explanation of the respective method of *immersing into the phenomenon* proposed by Goethe. The issue of ontological succession is critical in the implementation of educational

programs of the Anthropocene age, as the question of the ecological evolutionary basis of the human species is reduced. The current wicked problems of the Anthropocene age are based on the foundation that does not take into account the universal experience of humanity inherent in non-contextual and undifferentiated identities, the importance of which is sometimes underestimated by users of both critical and integral thinking theory.

The discussion section and conclusions suggest using the life experience, restoring ontological succession and studying the non-conceptual perception in contemporary conditions. Proposals are made to seek approaches to transforming Anthropocene thinking and to reduce the problems of the age in education and social behavior in order to revive the issue of the choice and implementation of living approach models in the educational practice through the natural development of human abilities.

Key words: Anthropocene age, viability of nature and humanity, false self, immersion in the phenomenon, ontological succession, education *through* nature

Introduction

The article introduces to a case study carried out as part of *wider action research* initiated at the beginning of this century *to explore the reorientation of education in general and teacher education in particular towards sustainability in today's world*. The action research seeks to establish a broader, more holistic methodological foundation. In the long-term study, a trajectory has emerged through successive changes of participants and their diverse backgrounds, which enabled study participants to identify the changes to be achieved through action research. Since the beginning of the research, the development of the theoretical foundation of the action research through case studies has been promoted from year to year. The experience gained has increased participants' confidence in action research in the field of education and their belief in the relevance of this approach to the reorientation of teacher and higher education, as education has become more and more unsustainable as well as unequal on a global scale. In wider action research, the reorientation of education towards sustainability has involved a deeper understanding and deeper exploration of the differences between the concepts of *sustainable development, the phenomenon of sustainability and education for sustainable development (ESD)*. These concepts have become fundamental and around them the participants of the action research have determined their research perspectives and developed reference systems appropriate to the research.

The *perspective of the case study that is considered in the article is based on the specific relations between nature and humanity* in the Anthropocene age, which have developed historically and become the dominant relationship in this century, which determines the quality of the current relationship of the Earth as an open evolutionary system, which is recognizable as *unsustainable*. Unfortunately, in the 21st century, the emergence of unsustainable relations between nature and humanity has become too visible and can no longer be hidden behind *false* optimism that alleviates or diminishes the real situation. The intensification of the visible manifestations of the unsustainability phenomenon increasingly indicates a decline in the *viability* of the planetary system. This theme needs to be updated in educational research, and pedagogy has a special interest in searching for its essence. Therefore, in the study presented in the article, we

refer to the tangle of features characteristic of the Anthropocene, which we have identified and substantiated as important for the Anthropocene age and applicable in educational research for the study of wicked problems (Salīte et al., 2021). In this tangle, there is an essential character of Anthropocene, which is formed by the *interaction of the phenomena of egocentrism, anthropocentrism and egoism*. The interaction of these processes and their consequences, which are in a sense the products of human activity, determine the quality of the relationship between nature and humanity, and thus the *viability* of both parties involved in the interaction.

In our opinion, this combination of Anthropocene *complex features and real products of human activity has a strong impact on* (1) the individual, (2) the development of unsustainability in education and other areas of human activity, and (3) on the purposes of the use of the communication and technology environment and the ability to convey in it the information about the attitudes and changes of individuals and social groups.

Thus, the intensification of each of these effects at the level of the individual, in the field of human activity or in the bubble, or in the use of the information environment can affect the quality of both nature and human viability.

Selection of a Case Study Idea and Formulation of a Research Goal

For the study, we have chosen *the idea of false self*, which has been floating for several years in discussions and summer school classes on the *phenomenon of unsustainability*. Interest in this phenomenon has also been exacerbated in recent years by over-reliance on misleading information, false news, the need to recognize the truth of media information, which is linked to the current human need for such knowledge, and the need to offer such knowledge in educational programs, social discussions and in all types of social activities (Dearden, 1981; Salkind, 2010; Jacoby, 2016; Brightman & Lewis, 2017; Yacek, 2018; Saetra, 2019; Ridley, 2020; Norden & Avery, 2021).

In the study on the recognition of the idea of false self, we have identified a need to determine participants' personal *perceptions of false self, which participants form on the basis of their personal life* experiences and identities. We have intended to assess how respondents of the study recognize this phenomenon in their own and others' attitudes and behaviors (Michikiyan et al., 2015).

Thus, the *goal* of the research and this article is to clarify the participants' current perception of the false self and the way in which participants of the action research recognize this complex phenomenon in the context of their experiences, attitudes and behaviors.

The structure of the article is formed by providing (1) the view of the authors of the article on the phenomenon of false self, the explanation of this phenomenon from the historical perspective and with regard to personal experience; (2) students' views of the false self from the perspective of their personal experiences and identities; (3) an overview of the nature of the false self for the realization of the belonging of the species, the autonomy of the individual, culture and social interaction, in which pedagogy seeks to preserve the viability of the relationship between nature and humanity.

Insight Into the Phenomenon of the False Self

In educational or participatory action research involving teachers and students, the authors of the article have experienced that recognizing the self and exploring its different types is a topical issue in pedagogy, and in participatory action research this issue emerges as a complex issue in which participants are keen to engage with their own *life experiences* gained by observing what is happening in society and education. In our pedagogical experience, we have been convinced that the participants are easily engaged in the topic of multiple selves in action research, because their *personal experiences* fit the context. Usually, the people of our time have enough experience of false self or various counterfeits in human relationships. *People experience it and are able to recognize different types of self* (Michikyan et al., 2015).

The best-known types of self are *the real*, *the ideal* and *the false self*, more often coming from psychological sources. The *ecological self* is known from deep ecology. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the false self and this interest manifests a crisis in the self issue. Through interest in multiple selves, new features emerge that expand the phenomenon of the self with characteristics that more often indicate the qualities of the false self in the today's world: anthropocentrism, ability of selfish positioning, the use of fighting, false, mimicry, phobia, hatred, envy and other approaches and techniques in order to disguise one's real self and survive (Clark & Szerszynski, 2020). The crisis of the self phenomenon seems to be in its infancy, as the Anthropocene age has flourished and brought about the factors affecting the formation of the individual, cultural and social basis of people's attitudes and activities. Among the various changes, changes at the level of individuals, education and communication due to the use of technology are becoming increasingly topical. Considering the current everyday situations, the question arises: Do the intermingling and hybridization of unsustainable Anthropocene problems create a boom time for the false self? The authors of the article have accumulated experience that demonstrates that nowadays the entities that suffer the most are individuals, education and communication that "inform" and "provide knowledge". This, in turn, decreases the proportion of perceptions and lived experiences that have evolved evolutionarily and ontologically.

At present, it is easy to recognize that most modern decisions and choices are based on Anthropocene-specific solutions, which are based on the rupture of the ontological succession or even the reduction of this dimension of human activity in solving life issues. In these circumstances, it is natural that the issue of the false self has become topical. The authors of the article based their acquaintance with this phenomenon on pedagogy and anthropology, which was offered by Dewey as a model of evolutionary experience in the early 20th century and which Brereton recalled in the early 21st century stating that without evolutionary experience neither pedagogy nor anthropology could develop (Dewey, 1981; Brereton, 2009). In the present study of the false self, Dewey's and Brereton's perspective has been supplemented by Goethe's view of science and false self, which he developed on the basis of phenomenology and hermeneutics and considered this phenomenon to be *natural, based on the experience* in which the recognition and awareness of one's self were formed as a natural prototype, not a counterfeit (Blackie, 1883).

This way we have developed a more holistic research framework and combined a natural evolutionary perspective, in which different shades of self are formed through

experience, which is supplemented by phenomenological research integral to human interpretation that transforms into a natural evolutionary prototype, in which an individual recognizes self by a personally significant correspondence: "it is mine" or "it is not mine".

Goethe (Seamon & Zajonc, 1998) convincingly used the false self. This subject attracted his attention, and in his life experience he found more and more new nuances that complemented his view of the nature of this phenomenon. Goethe saw the illusions created by an individual or society and false self or *false feelings about oneself* (Sanborn, 1886). He reacted negatively to the *blindness of illusions surrounding our senses*, rejected *false self-systems* (Bishop, 2020; Goethe et al., 1882) that protect and hide people's true self and spirit, based on *false prototypes* that are *artificially taught and imitate something that already is imitation* (Goethe, 1893) and that it is *bad that we are so disturbed in life by unpleasant inclinations and we cannot know that they are unpleasant until we get rid of them* (Seamon & Zajonc, 1998). The *phenomenon of the false self* offered by Goethe obscures and covers with deception and illusions *our instinctive self and natural form of existence* (Goethe, 1893).

Goethe's statements that limit the use of a person's life experience are taken from Goethe's various works as well as studies that analyze his views on the manifestations of the human false self in human life.

Did Goethe look for an evasion of the false self, or did he look at it with appreciation? It is clear from his statement that he became acquainted with the phenomenon as deeply as possible and even admitted that it had been encountered through experience (Seamon & Zajonc, 1998). The formation of one's view of the false self during one's lifetime and the recognition of the nature of this phenomenon gave Goethe one of the examples that led to the development of his method, which could contribute to the study of *natural phenomena*.

In the current context, when humanity has strayed from the deceptive paths of unsustainable development, the Goethe method can, in our opinion, refresh our view of the problems posed by the Anthropocene and recall the forgotten that the connection with the environment and human development through nature is an ontological historical experience. Through the development of perceptual abilities, human consciousness has acquired a basis for development, and it is necessary to remember this natural experience, which has given the human species a basis for the development of humanity phenomena and related abilities. It may therefore be necessary to consider whether we can move to knowledge in which depth is explored through the increase of technological sensitivity, but the development of human sensitivity and sensibility lags behind and in real life it is limited by alienation from the natural environment with norms and limitations that are only trying to save humanity from diminishing their human capacity.

Goethe's search for the natural and the experiential events provides a basis for highlighting his *method*, which he developed in the science about the phenomenon and immersion in it. Now his method can be called Goethe's method of *immersion in the phenomenon*. He offered everyone to expand and deepen their experience of the phenomenon until the *element of the phenomenon* is reached, leading to the experience of external sensitivity (Seamon & Zajonc, 1998). Goethe proposed his theory of color, which combined the relationship between the quality of color and their mutual relationships, so that one could perceive the whole of the phenomenon without going beyond

what can be experienced. Goethe found this relationship by *immersing into the phenomenon*, not deviating from it. His theory was based on the foundations of phenomenology and hermeneutics. Therefore, in his view, the organization of the phenomenon is real and can be experienced. What is hidden in the sensory experience is perceived by an *intuitive experience* that can become *intuitive knowledge* that can be gained through contemplation of visual aspects.

Goethe offered entering the phenomenon, or indwelling. It is the use of sensitivity and sensibility through the intuitive experience or knowledge gained by contemplating the visible aspect (visualizing).

Nowadays, immersion is used in pedagogy and is more often referred to as identification or indwelling (meaning) and especially used in environmental pedagogy from the perspective of deep ecological approaches. However, it is necessary to note here that not everywhere and not everyone acknowledges the deepest efforts of pedagogy. In education, they are often replaced by pedagogical technology approaches and learning technologies to achieve knowledge and awareness indicators, which are understood as a basis for comparing learning outcomes.

In education and research on social issues, the topic of the false self is broad enough. Its research has different perspectives from the content of social problems to the problems of social interaction. In such studies, we can identify piecemeal research findings or broader conclusions that more or less directly indicate efforts to explain human origin autonomously, independently of the formation of other life forms, and to highlight the leading role of social interaction.

Studies of various environmental impacts provide certainty on how they (such as the technology-intensive environment) form, transform and 'norm' the false self (Michikyan et al., 2015). It is known that the formation of multiple selves, which are blurring and mixing varieties of the self, through the combination and/or hiding of the true self and false self, is characterized by a dynamic interrelation with the environment (Markus & Wurf, 1987). However, it is also a feature of the false self that reflects the social needs that make it possible to successfully use social media and technology. In such studies, there is also a feature of the false self that many recognize as their "identity-for-others", which is constructed according to the intentions or expectations of the social environment and serves as a shield from the risk of aggression, anxiety and social exclusion (Winnicott, 1960; Laing, 1960; England, 2019).

There is also identity for oneself. Both variants of the false self are used to *survive* or *fit in*. Sometimes the false self is associated with wearing *"social masks"* when they are entrusted with demonstrating or asserting certain interests and contexts. It is also assumed that lower self-esteem plays an important role in the development of false-self behavior, which manifests itself in self-presentation or self-expression in order to gain recognition or obtain approval from others (Hewitt et al., 2003). People with a high need for recognition create a positive false-self image, i.e., by presenting themselves in a positive light and agreeing with others' value systems. Both in this case and in the above-mentioned, the false self depends to a large extent on the *immediate situational cues*.

The Anthropocene age does not only influence our self-conception and self-presentation, but it also actively promotes a dynamic interaction of the formation of a particular self. The true self, which people usually recognize by their true feelings and desires, is more often neglected by the Anthropocene.

The case study used a student survey designed so that to make the aim of this study fit broader action research and to provide insight into the issue of the false self in order to facilitate the reorientation of education towards sustainability through students' perception of the false self.

Students' Perception of the False Self from the Perspective of Their Current Experience

Developing the questionnaire, we clearly recognized that the unique basis of the content of the false self and its dynamic relationship with the self and its types were individually nuanced. Uniqueness is determined by an individual's *experience*, which in life should be seen as a *flow of lived experience throughout life*. In *this flow*, it is possible to identify *more general trends* that may become the basis for the *choice and use of pedagogical approaches to education in the context of the EU crisis*. The questionnaire was designed from the perspective of everyday life so that the respondents could recognize some feature of the false self phenomenon. Thus, as the initial goal of the study, we accepted the participants' current perceptions of the false self and the usual traits by which participants recognized this complex phenomenon in the context of their experiences, attitudes and behaviors.

The participants

The study sample included 51 students (34 males (67 %) and 17 females (33 %)) studying at a secondary vocational education institution in Latvia. The number of males at the educational institution exceeded the number of females because the study programs offered were mainly related to construction and metal working. The students were aged between 15 and 19 years old. Most of the students were 16 years old (n = 30), others were 15 (n = 10), 17 (n = 6), 18 (n = 3) and 19 years old (n = 1).

Data collection instrument

The students' false-self examples illustrating the false self and its relation to ideal and real self were studied using the questionnaire developed by the authors. The response format was a 5-point Likert scale (1 – completely agree and 5 – completely disagree). The questionnaire consisted of 13 statements allowing the authors to obtain information about different aspects of students' false-self:

- *Conforming to perceived expectations* (I often do something just not to disappoint others; I spend a lot of time ignoring personal goals to help others);
- *Discrepancy between the real self and the self-perceived by others / understanding of others' real self* (I want people who are close to me to know my true self, not the "public image"; People close to me would be shocked to find out what I really think and feel; I often idealize other people);
- *Understanding of one's real self* (I always have a clear understanding of what I do and why; I try to act according to my personal views, even if those around me criticize me);

- *Frequency of false-self representation* (I often pretend to like things, people etc. even if I hate them; I often agree or keep silent, although I would like to object; I often pretend; If I have an argument with someone close to me, I try to ignore it, not to resolve the conflict);
- *Reasons for false-self representation* (I find it difficult to accept my personal drawbacks; I can change if I get any benefit from it).

The study took place in September 2021 when the students filled the questionnaire online (Google forms) in the computer classroom. The study procedure was approved by administration of the educational institution. The participation in the study was voluntary and a maximum time limit was not set.

Results

Descriptive statistical analysis of the results was performed using SPSS software version 26. The mean and standard deviation (SD) were calculated for each of the statements of the questionnaire. To find the inter-correlation between different statements, the Pearson correlation analysis was performed.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	SD
Conforming to perceived expectations		
I often do something just not to disappoint others	3.20	1.020
I spend a lot of time ignoring personal goals to help others	2.92	1.066
Discrepancy between the real self and the self-perceived by others / understanding of others' real self		
I want people who are close to me to know my true self, not the "public image"	2.47	1.461
People close to me would be shocked to find out what I really think and feel	3.26	1.383
I often idealize other people	3.16	1.131
Understanding of one's real self		
I always have a clear understanding of what I do and why	2.61	1.201
I try to act according to my personal views, even if those around me criticize me	2.63	1.232
Frequency of false-self representation		
I often pretend to like things, people etc. even if I hate them	3.25	1.383
I often agree or keep silent, although I would like to object	2.92	1.214
If I have an argument with someone close to me, I try to ignore it, not to resolve the conflict	3.55	1.361
I often pretend	3.41	1.134
Reasons for false-self representation		
I can change if I get any benefit from it	2.90	1.389
I find it difficult to accept my personal drawbacks	3.04	1.264

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis for separate statements of the questionnaire are shown in Table 1. The response format was a 5-point Likert scale (1 – completely agree and 5 – completely disagree). As can be seen, the study participants tend to disagree that they do something in order not to disappoint others, but admit that they quite often ignore personal goals to help others. This may indicate that students do not want to please someone, but still, they are willing to sacrifice their time and energy and also reduce their chances of success in some area because they want to help others. Refusal to please someone can be explained by the tendency of adolescents and young people to be independent, which leads to denying the views of adults. Helping others may also involve helping friends, because friendship is as important to young people as belonging to a group or a team.

The participants of the study are willing that people who are close to them, i.e., friends, parents, relatives, etc., would know their real self, even though they tend to deny the claim that their true self is very different from the public self or their image in the eyes of close people. There is a tendency to deny the fact of idealizing other people, at the same time denying the positive qualities and authority of adults, such as senior teachers.

The answers to the questions also reveal that young people know themselves quite well, are aware of what they are doing and why, and are ready to defend their views in discussions with people who do not support their opinion. Young people admit that they often do not express their thoughts, despite the fact that they would like to object; however, if there is a conflict, they actively try to resolve it. Most young people also do not agree that they would have difficulty accepting their shortcomings and would be willing to change if there were any benefit to it.

The *correlation analysis* revealed a link between several statements in Table 2. Students who claim that they often agree or remain silent, even though they would like to object, choose to take an active role in resolving the conflict in a conflict situation rather than ignoring it and act according to their own views, even if others criticize them. This may indicate that students evaluate in which situations it is worth expressing their opinion and in which – it is more appropriate to keep their opinion to themselves.

Students who have difficulty accepting their own personal shortcomings are more likely to choose to succumb to pressure from others and choose not to act according to their own views when faced with criticism. Being not confident may indirectly indicate low self-esteem. There is a positive correlation between the statement "I always have a clear understanding of what I do and why" and attempts to act following one's own views despite criticism from others.

Students, who usually take an active role in resolving conflicts with people close to them, are willing to change if they can benefit from it, tend to help others, often ignoring their goals and hiding their true thoughts and feelings from people close to them. This may indicate that it is important for these students to have a good relationship with others, so they try to resolve all conflicts as much as possible, to change if it is good for others, as well as to hide their thoughts and feelings. Hiding one's true thoughts and feelings positively correlates with the tendency to pretend.

Table 2

The Correlation Analysis of Statements

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. I often do something just not to disappoint others													
2. I am willing that people who are close to me would know my true self, not the public image													
3. I often pretend that I like some things, people, etc. although in reality I cannot stand them													
4. I often agree or remain silent, although in reality I would like to object		.449**											
5. I always have a clear understanding of what I do and why													
6. I can change if I get any benefit from it													
7. I find it difficult to accept my personal shortcomings			.372**										
8. I spend a lot of time helping others through sacrificing personal goals													
9. I often idealize other people													
10. People close to me would be shocked to find out what I really think and feel								.360*					
11. If I have an argument with someone close to me, I try to ignore it, not to resolve the conflict		-.424**					.313*	.325*		.328*			
12. I try to act according to my personal views, even if those around me criticize me		.310*	-.319*		.507**								
13. I often pretend										.327*	.446**		

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Summarizing the obtained information, it can be concluded that the *false self is not manifested* in the self-presentation of young people. It is important for young people that those around them would know their real self, thoughts, feelings, likes or dislikes. However, in contact with important people, several students tend to sacrifice their goals in order to help others, hide their thoughts and feelings, resolve conflicts as much as possible. In general, young people tend to be actively involved in conflict resolution, as being in a conflict causes discomfort. It can be seen that young people are ready to take an active role in supporting their opinions, despite criticism from others.

The survey held in the computer classroom directly or indirectly revealed the participants' reactions to their personal views of the false self. From these reactions, it was possible to generalize some of the findings through pedagogical observation, which complemented the views gained from the anonymous survey. In fact, these views stemmed from the perspective of the teacher observing the reactions of the pedagogical situation, leading to some conclusions:

- young people are aware of mimicry in their own behavior, but the opinions of close people and relationships with them are important;
- young people hide their true self because they *do not feel safe in life situations*, so they play *theatre in life*, manipulate to get some benefit;
- young people are not sure whether their relatives know their true self because of a lack of openness in the family, alienation or indifference of some parents to the child's life;
- young people learn to position themselves; therefore, they do not reveal their opinion to have an opportunity 'to step back';
- there is also a protest against the norms established in the society, there is no consensus whether personal goals should be ignored in order to help others;
- young people do not always have a clear understanding of their actions and the reasons; their self is varying, oscillating, easily influenced, where many personal meanings and personal principles are not clear;
- young people acknowledge that the vast amount of information attach them to smart devices, but for the most part it is not useful because there is a lack of personal relevance to the information.

Analyzing the answers, it is necessary to take into account that the survey was conducted at an educational institution and, despite the fact that the answers were anonymous, several students were able to provide 'desirable' or false answers according to what they thought teachers and other adults expected of them. In order to gain a deeper understanding, it would be useful to carry out an in-depth study of individual students, for example, using the interview method or repeating the survey in another context, such as social networks, where young people feel safer and may have different answers.

Discussion and Conclusions

The perspective of the case study that is considered in the article is based on the specific relations between nature and humanity in the Anthropocene age, which have developed historically and become the dominant relationship in this century, which determines the quality of the current relationship of the Earth as an open evolutionary system, which is recognizable as unsustainable. Unsustainable of the relationship between nature and humanity determinate the viability of both parties now and in the future.

Among the various changes, changes at the level of individuals, education and communication due to the use of technology are becoming increasingly topical. The authors of the article have accumulated experience that demonstrates that nowadays the entities that suffer the most are individuals, education and communication that "inform" and "provide knowledge". This, in turn, decreases the proportion of perceptions and lived experiences that have evolved evolutionarily and ontologically.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the false self and this interest manifests a crisis in the *self issue*. The crisis of the self phenomenon seems to be in its infancy, as the Anthropocene age has flourished and brought about the factors affecting the formation of the individual, cultural and social basis of people's attitudes and activities.

The study has identified young people's perceptions of the false self, which they clarified on the basis of their practical life experiences and personal views. The results of the case study have revealed that the phenomenon of the false self is known to young people. It is used for protection and demonstrates recognizable patterns of mimicry and/or positioning of human behavior, when non-interference or withholding of information is used to avoid conflict. We have found two important *uncertainties* in young people's attitudes: *uncertainty about their true self and uncertainty about the attitudes of people close to them, i.e., young people are unsure whether people close to them know about the true self of young people*. In the study, these uncertainties seemed important from a pedagogical point of view.

In our view, *these two uncertainties in the current situation can be seen as strategic* from an action research perspective, as both uncertainties need to be considered at the level of social relations and at the level of perceptions of environmental and human interactions. What is meant here is that the uncertainty about one's true self and the knowledge of one's loved ones about one's true self is a deeper phenomenon rooted in nonverbal, undifferentiated identities and other subtle phenomena that are sometimes exaggerated or underestimated in educational research. The reason may be an underestimation of the role and understanding of the types of interactions. At the level of social relations, the explanation of the process is expected to be verbal or conceptual, but in the perceptual case of the interaction between nature and humanity it will not be verbal. There is a possibility of other types of certainty formation that will be non-verbal, unconscious, non-conceptual, etc. In this study, we have identified the need to consider the distinction between *non-conceptual* and *conceptual* perceptions (Evans, 1982), which is not commonly used in educational issues. In our view, it is convenient for identifying different cases of perception in educational research, as it opens up the possibility of seeing mental states that do not have the concepts needed to clarify their content (Buttingsrud, 2016). This is the case of a passionate dance, in which the interactions between the environment and humanity allow for certainty formation, in which perceptual sensitivity and the experienced sensitivity give some perceptual effect that creates some perception of what is happening, which is a unit with meaning. In essence, it is a universal human experience to be deeply focused through the non-contextual aspect of oneself. The concept of non-conceptual content was introduced into analytical philosophy by Gareth Evans (Evans, 1982). Evans develops the idea that the information provided by perceptual systems is non-conceptual. This non-conceptual information is initially unconscious, but becomes conscious when it serves as an introduction to the system of thinking, concept application and reasoning. Therefore, states of perception with non-conceptual content are unconscious. Here, perhaps, philosophers of perception also

pave the way for a deeper understanding of the questions of the ecological self, and also for a deeper evolutionary understanding of the false self, where questions can be viewed independently of the conceptual abilities of thinkers (Ayers, 2002).

In this proposal of the philosophers of perception, there is an opportunity to perceive and feel in one way or another the deepest essence of one's self, which may even appear in the undifferentiated identity, but which is not yet at the conceptual, verbal level, which is still unconscious. Behavioral philosophers already use non-conceptual and conceptual behavior to explain human thinking (Ayers, 2002). From a philosophical perspective, perception studies also demonstrate the unique difference in the various abilities of perception that is experienced and without which it is not possible to implement a natural education explained by individual characteristics, in which this diversity is directed to the flourishing of human abilities (Schick, 2021).

New additions to the study of biophilia, ecophilia for educational purposes may be needed, as some current research has stalled in identifying perceptual feelings in an attempt to express them verbally and seeking this perception from higher shelves of verbal or contextual. The basis of ontological and evolutionary origin can open a deeper insight from both ecological and pedagogocal perspective into the inseparability of human from nature (environment). In these issues, this is often stated from the level of conceptual perception, but non-conceptual certainty may not have developed in these cases.

Goethe's view of the false self has developed throughout his life. Through the development of his lived experience, he saw the essence of the phenomenon as a whole, its manifestation, and the increase in its complex nature. Through recognition, he learned and found his approach to studying changing phenomena. Nowadays, it can be applied to wicked problems, which can be conceived using Goethe's method that involves delving into the phenomenon.

In our opinion, the problem of the false self has become critical during the Anthropocene age. It seems that its solution should also start from the depths, from perceptual experiences and through the formation of non-conceptual certainty in the experience. From a pedagogical perspective, it seems that non-contextual perception or the use of phenomena inherent in the sensitivity of undifferentiated identity can enhance a human long-known ability to accept *some known per se experience* in a non-conceptual way. It is possible that then the false self would naturally diminish. At the very least, it would be easier to recognize the verbal rationale for falseness, and people would learn from these in-depth experiences that are needed to create a more nuanced and unconceptual sense of the world.

In fact, addressing the two uncertainties in pedagogy mentioned above and identified in the study paves the way for understanding these uncertainties to reduce fluctuations of significant social and environmental relations through the deepening of the perspective of ontological experience and the use of non-conceptual experience, which is known in pedagogy, but the use of which will require significant changes in educational programs.

Goethe's search for the natural and the experiential events provides a basis for highlighting his *method*, which he developed in the science about the phenomenon and immersion in it. In the current context, when humanity has strayed from the deceptive paths of unsustainable development, the Goethe method can, in our opinion, refresh our view of the problems posed by the Anthropocene and recall the forgotten that the

connection with the environment and human development through nature is an ontological historical experience.

Through the development of perceptual abilities, human consciousness has acquired a basis for development, and it is necessary to remember this natural experience, which has given the human species a basis for the development of humanity phenomena and related abilities. It may therefore be necessary to consider whether we can move to knowledge in which depth is explored through the increase of technological sensitivity, but the development of human sensitivity and sensibility lags behind and in real life it is limited by alienation from the natural environment with norms and limitations that are only trying to save humanity from diminishing their human capacity.

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