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Fachbereich Erziehungswissenschaft und Psychologie der Freien Universität Berlin

Department of Education and Psychology

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"Qualification of Children's Rights Experts in Academia-

a Qualitative Impact Assessment"

Dissertation to attain the Academic Degree of

Dr. phil

Presented by

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Abbreviations

International Conventions, Declarations and Organisations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
EHCA	European Higher Education Area
EU	European Union
ILO	International Labour Organization
SCS	Save the Children Sweden
UNCRC, CRC, the Convention	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, (1989/1990)
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Networks, Study Programmes and Universities

ENMCR	European Network of Masters in Children's Rights
CREAN	Children's Rights European Academic Network
MACR	M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights
EMCR	European Master in Children's Rights/ European Master in Childhood Studies and Children's Rights
DPPCR	Diploma Public Policy and Children's Rights (at University of Cairo, Egypt)
FUB	Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

PBL	Problem Based Learning
CoP	Community of Practice

ABSTRACT

The study "Qualification of Children's Rights Experts in Academia: A Qualitative Impact Assessment" is an empirical qualitative research of an international academic study programme on children's human rights, which analyses its theoretical foundations, methodological concepts and impacts on participants and, more generally, on society. The focus is on the *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights* (MACR) at Freie Universität Berlin for the period from 2007 to 2017.

The analysis is based on a combination of qualitative research analysis methods including content analysis, value coding, as well as case studies of graduates' biographies. This methodological approach provides a comprehensive picture of graduates' opinions of the impact children's rights education in academia has on them. Through semi-structured guideline interviews and essays, narrations of MACR graduates and alumni have been gathered. An online survey with alumni from other member universities of the *Children's Rights European Academic Network* (CREAN) amplifies the research through data from similar programmes in other European countries.

The results are the following: The interdisciplinarity of the field and the international student body require new teaching and learning methods of which Problem-Based Learning has proven to be successful and effective. The competencies students achieve in the MACR are principally twofold: intangible and tangible. Theoretical, reflexive knowledge based on respect, critical thinking, increased levels of tolerance, changes in attitude, and modified belief and value systems are informed by a critical understanding of the international children's human rights system and concepts of childhood(s) as well as children's competencies and agency discussed in several social sciences. Students acquire tangible practical competencies and know-how for professional activities in the field of children's rights. The invitation to analyse society's and one's own often short-sighted and normative action based on a Eurocentric belief system is received earnestly and results in change in thought patterns and modified attitudes. Practical methods of working and living with children based on the acknowledgment of their agency and respect for their moral dignity are included in the daily surroundings of graduates. At times, however, graduates encounter limitations to the application of these competencies, of which power imbalance between children and adults resulting in adultist behaviour is the main difficulty to a consistent child rights-based approach. An increasing sense of belonging to the Child Rights Community of Practice, consisting of researchers, practitioners, the MACR students and graduates as new child rights experts and children themselves enables cooperation and allows for sharing a rich source of knowledge as a crucial contribution to induce social change.

First changes in approaches to children's rights have resulted, e.g. an understanding of children's rights beyond the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, away from a concentration on protection rights is emerging, voices demanding children's participation have become louder, direct work with children based on respect for their dignity as human beings is increasing, and several insufficiently researched areas are being investigated such as art or urban planning's impact on the realisation of children's rights or how stateless children (can) come by their human rights. The MACR via its graduates is part of these first transitions, proving the social benefit of children's rights education at university.

KURZBESCHREIBUNG (ABSTRACT)

Die Studie „Qualification of Children's Rights Experts in Academia: A Qualitative Impact Assessment" ist eine empirische, qualitative Forschungsstudie über einen internationalen Studiengang zu den Menschenrechten von Kindern, welche die theoretischen Grundlagen, die methodologischen Konzepte und Auswirkungen des Studiengangs auf die TeilnehmerInnen und, weiter gefasst, auf die Gesellschaft analysiert. Im Fokus steht der *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights* (MACR) an der Freien Universität Berlin im Zeitraum von 2007-2017.

Die Analyse basiert auf einer Kombination von qualitativen forschungsanalytischen Methoden, bestehend aus Inhaltsanalyse, Wertekodierung, und Fallbeispielen von Studierendenbiographien. Dieser methodologische Zugang bietet ein umfassendes Bild von Meinungen Graduierter darüber, welche Auswirkungen Kinderrechtestudien auf sie haben, privat und professionell. Mittels semistrukturierter Leitfadeninterviews und Essays wurden Narrationen von MACR Graduierten und Alumni zusammengetragen und ausgewertet. Eine online Umfrage mit Alumni auch von anderen Mitgliedsuniversitäten des *Children's Rights European Academic Network* (CREAN) bereichert die vorliegende Studie mit Daten von ähnlichen Studiengängen in anderen Ländern Europas.

Forschungsergebnisse der Studie sind: Aufgrund der Interdisziplinarität des Feldes und der internationalen Zusammensetzung der Studierendengruppen sind neue Lehr- und Lernmethoden erforderlich. Ein auf wahren Problemen basiertes Lehren und Lernen hat sich hier als erfolgreich und gewinnbringend erwiesen. Studierende erwerben im MACR Anwendungs- und Reflexionswissen. Das theoretische, nicht unmittelbar greifbare, Reflexionswissen, das auf Respekt und kritischem (Nach-) Denken gründet, eine steigende Toleranz, sowie Haltungsänderungen und modifizierte Glaubens- und Wertesysteme hervorbringt, knüpft an sozialwissenschaftliche Diskurse zu einem kritischen Verständnis des internationalen Menschenrechtssystems für Kinder an. Sozialwissenschaftliche Kindheitskonzepte, das Verständnis von Kindern als Akteure in ihrem eigenen Lebensumfeld und darüber hinaus, stehen hierbei im Mittelpunkt. Die Einladung, auf eurozentristischen Grundannahmen basierende gesellschaftliche und eigene Normen und kurzsichtige Handlungen kritisch zu hinterfragen wird ausdrücklich und ernsthaft wahrgenommen. Häufig mündet diese Reflektion in geänderten Denkmustern und veränderten Haltungen. Die Studierenden erwerben praktisches Anwendungswissen und Fachkenntnisse für die professionelle Kinderrechtearbeit. Arbeitsmethoden für das Leben und die Arbeit mit Kindern als Akteure, sowie Respekt für ihre moralische Würde, sind im Alltag der Graduierten integriert. Zuweilen stoßen AbsolventInnen an Grenzen in der Anwendung ihres Wissens; das Machtungleichgewicht zwischen Kindern und Erwachsenen und die resultierenden adultistischen Verhaltensmuster stellen die Hauptschwierigkeit für die Umsetzung eines konsequenten Kinderrechteansatzes dar. Als neue Kinderrechtsexperten erleben die Studierenden, AbsolventInnen und Alumni ein steigendes Zugehörigkeitsgefühl zur Kinderrechtecommunity, in der WissenschaftlerInnen, PraktikerInnen, sie selbst und auch Kinder kooperieren und wichtige (Er-) Kenntnisse austauschen. Dies trägt nicht unwesentlich dazu bei, einen sozialen Wandel herbeizuführen.

Erste Veränderungen von Ansätzen in der Kinderrechtearbeit finden bereits statt. Beispielsweise wächst ein Verständnis von Kinderrechten welches über die UN Konvention über die Rechte des Kindes hinausgeht und, wenn auch langsam, den Fokus auf die Schutzrechte der Kinder hin zu Partizipationsrechten verschiebt. Stimmen, die die Partizipation von Kindern einfordern, werden lauter, direkte Arbeit mit Kindern ist zunehmend respektvoll gegenüber ihrer Menschenwürde und einige bislang wenig studierte Kinderrechtethemen werden erforscht, beispielsweise welchen Beitrag künstlerische oder stadtplanerische Tätigkeiten zur Realisierung von Kinderrechten leisten oder wie Kinder ohne Staatsbürgerschaft zu ihren Rechten kommen (könn(t)en). Der MACR, mittels seiner Graduierten, ist Teil dieses ersten Wandels, welches die Bedeutung von Kinderrechtebildung und -forschung für einen sozialen Wandel unterstreicht.

Part I

"Children account for a considerable portion of mankind, of the population, of nationals, residents, citizens and constant companions. They were, they will be and they are"
Janusz Korczak (1957:366).

"Children's Rights are a matter of daily practice"[1].

Introduction

Over the past two decades, at higher education institutions, specialised advanced study programmes have been mushrooming. There is a common understanding that advanced academic training is necessary for career planning. It is understood as a form of qualification after having been working professionally for some time (Kim et al., 2006, Herget & Mader, 2010). With the introduction of shorter, separated study cycles at universities across Europe, the number of graduates from first study cycle Bachelor study programmes who enter the job market has increased. Needs and desires for additional advanced qualifications often crystalize in work situations in which problem solving is paramount yet difficult to achieve. This situation animates personalities to engage in master's studies at a later time in their career path rather than immediately after having completed their first study cycle. As such, universities are increasingly confronted with the necessity to offer advanced study programmes directed to lifelong learners. These must be compatible with the life world of the prospective participants, requiring them to be highly flexible. Hence, advanced master's programmes are increasingly organised in intensive face-face sessions that are combined with blended learning elements (Herget & Mader, 2010: 188). As advanced academic qualification is tailored to the needs of the participants, i.e. the reasons for studying are related to required competencies for work or future new orientation, the programmes are ideally selected by content not locations. Also, programme participants can actively contribute their own year-long working experiences to the group's learning process by sharing their knowledge gained in practice, thus enriching the learning experience for themselves and for their fellow students. Yet, this also places challenges to the teachers and lecturers of the courses, as they are confronted with a student body that has a much clearer understanding of what they expect and what the acquisition of their competencies shall entail. New didactic and teaching methods are needed that concentrate on a collaborative development of content and learning objectives between students and content "deliverers" (Ivanitskaya et al., 2002; Bodenhausen & Gawronski, 2013). Written assessment and oral feedback rather than strict grade marking by the lecturers, who increasingly are facilitators

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[1]Alumni, quote, 2014. Answer to the very broad question: "In your view, what contribution have academic children's rights programmes made to raise awareness on children's rights and realising children's rights for children in general?"

and moderators, becomes key to the learning process and acquisition of competencies. Yet this relatively new situation demands not only different forms of feedback on students' performance and knowledge acquisition. Diverse approaches to higher education facilitation by the lecturers and professors are equally indispensable for a valuable learning experience (Herget & Mader, 2010: 188).

The programme under investigation here, the international, interdisciplinary *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights* (MACR) at Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) /University of Applied Sciences, Potsdam[2], is a special advanced study programmes in several aspects. It not only brings together students with diverse professional experiences they frequently share within the learning process. It is also highly international with students coming from countries all over the world, several of which have globalised biographies owing to considerable time spent in countries and regions other than their native countries. The differing approaches to (university) education are enriching for the group yet can also complicate academic competence acquisition as implemented in Germany (and Western Europe) (see Sachverständigenrat, 2017 and chapter 9). Hence, one aim of this study is to draw a picture of the students' backgrounds and their biographies with respect to their participation in the MACR, their motivations to study and their expectations for the future after graduation as well as their current positions in life.

Children's rights in combination with childhood studies have only recently been introduced in self-contained academic study programmes. The MACR can be seen as one of the pioneers in this field. Even though there have been degrees that include children's rights aspects, full study programmes are scarce. Realising that in order to educate and qualify many people with the belief that only a "critical mass" (Bazán, 2004: field note[3]) of people with such a qualification can make a difference in the treatment of and interaction with children, a group of five researchers came together with the aim to establish a joint study programme in children's rights. In 2004, in order to have a common basis to work from, they founded the *European Network of Masters in Children's Rights* (ENMCR) with funding from Save the Children Sweden (SCS), which has grown to include universities from across Europe accounting for over 30 member institutions in 2016 (see chapter 3)[4]. Having successfully acquired a European Union grant for a curriculum development project, the ENMCR formed the basis for the seven founding universities from (North)-West (UK, Spain, Netherlands and Sweden) Central (Germany) and Central-East (Romania: 2) Europe to develop and establish a master's study programme in childhood studies and children's rights. An outcome of which was the establishment of the MACR at FUB (see chapter 5)[5]. These quasi

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[2] After 10 years of successful implementation of the M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights (MACR) at Freie Universität Berlin (FUB), the decision makers at the Faculty of Educational Science where it was based, decided to shut the programme down. In 2016, the MACR found a new host institution, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, where it is now successfully offered (for reasons, refer to chapter 3.1.3.)

[3] Juan Enrique Bazán was staff member at Save the Children, Sweden in Latin America and spoke of a "masa crítica" that needs to grow in order to have an effective impact on policies, practice and research in children's rights during the development process of the MACR.

[4] See the network's website for member institutions as of 2017: http://www.crean-network.org/ (accessed 13.12.2017)

[5] The development of the programme from the one-year European Master in Children's Rights (EMCR) to a 1.5-year "MA Childhood Studies and Children's Rights" is discussed in chapter 5.

external conditions and the context in which the programmes have been developed over the past ten to twelve years have contributed to an increased acceptance of the children's rights programmes and courses at the universities involved. For me, the uniqueness of the programme formed the main incentive to evaluate it, as there has not been any reliable data on what such a programme on tolerance, human rights, democracy can evoke for the individual and the community of stakeholders involved (see chapter 1).

In Germany, the MACR at FUB has been the only programme in children's rights until very recently[6]. Consequentially, students and graduates of childhood studies and children's rights frequently encounter astonishment when they tell people and friends that they are studying such a specialised subject. "I didn't know that you could study children's rights, what is that and why is there such a study programme" (field note) is a comment that many participants hear. As such, one of the research questions of this study is how childhood studies and children's rights are conceptualised in the MACR. Children's rights and childhood studies cannot be tackled by one discipline only, it requires interdisciplinary approaches to understand the different aspects of these complex issues:

- Legal approaches to enable court proceedings and legal enforcement of children's rights and placement within the human rights system with its specificities, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child[7], the only UN Convention conclusive of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights (e.g. Vučkovič-Šahovič, et al., 2012; Brems et al., 2017; Vandenhole, Wouter, 2017: 21, 24).
- Political and international relations approaches to understand the human rights system in which the children's rights (regime) is located (e.g. Pupavac, 2001; Holzscheiter, 2010)
- Anthropological aspects, including newer approaches to children' rights in emerging postcolonial studies in which mainly aspects of the Global South[8] and critical aspects

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[6] Since 2017/18, the University of Applied Sciences, Magdeburg has started offering a MA programme in Childhood Studies and Children's Rights (in German and with classes throughout week days).

[7] In continuance, either the Convention, CRC or UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. On its development and guiding principles (see chapter 2).

[8] "The 'Global South' is a term that has been emerging in transnational and postcolonial studies to refer to what may also be called the 'Third World' (i.e., Africa, Latin America, and the developing countries in Asia), 'developing countries', 'less developed countries' and 'less developed regions'. It can also include poorer "southern" regions of wealthy "northern" countries. The Global South is more than the extension of a "metaphor for underdeveloped countries." In general, it refers to these countries' "interconnected histories of colonialism, neo-imperialism, and differential economic and social change through which large inequalities in living standards, life expectancy, and access to resources are maintained." (Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_South. accessed: 13.12.2017) As most terms and categorisations, the "Global South" bears pitfalls, of which the first striking difficulty is that, albeit the common experience of colonisation, countries and regions that do not have much in common, such as India and Uganda, Myanmar and Bolivia, Guinea and Central African Republic or Nepal are categorised along the same line, regardless of their many differences. In my opinion, the most adequate definition of the "Global South" is placed in the context of postcolonial childhood studies (Liebel, 2017c). Liebel refers to the term from a postcolonial perspective, where the countries and regions of the Global North are the historical colonisers of the Global South and the regions in the Global South with their various differing constitutions are a continuation of colonisation until today (Liebel, 2017c: 15). Nonetheless, I feel an unease with such categorisations as to me it seems terms are changed, due to political correctness and the premise of non-discrimination, although all remain to have discriminatory connota-

of the legal and political approaches to children's rights are discussed (e.g. Montgomery, 2003 & 2015; Nieuwenhuys, 2008; Liebel, 2017c),

- Sociological approaches to understand the placement of childhood and children's rights within different societies and social contexts and to challenge the understanding of children and childhood carefully considering social constructions of children's rights and childhood (e.g. Gaitán, 2009 & 2014; Qvortrup, 2009; Hengst & Zeiher, 2005).

- Approaches of development psychologists, to understand their dominance and influence in child research until childhood was taken up as field of study also in the above-mentioned disciplines in the late 1980s and early 1990s- round about the ratification and coming into force of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) (see e.g. Velez, 2016).

The understanding of children's rights and childhood was re-conceptualised within the process of negotiating the modules for the MACR and in the following years. Not surprisingly, generally speaking, children's rights are equated with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, children's rights go beyond the Convention. This does not imply that such common juridical perception of children's rights is not valuable, it is the starting point and a necessity for legally contesting the human rights of children (see above, Vučkovič-Šahovič, 2003; Vandenhole, 2017). The development of the Convention is specific in several ways. Not only were the participants in the process of developing the Convention a very limited group of representatives of a specific area of the world (North West) with a certain prevailing understanding of childhood. Children themselves, for whom the Convention was developed, where not included (Liebel, 2007b; Holzscheiter, 2010; chapter 2).

The initiators of the MACR aim at raising awareness of the hitherto absence of perceiving and understanding children's rights as an issue that goes beyond the Convention. Hence, the objective of developing and offering an academic programme in the field has been to qualify personalities who acquire scientifically founded competencies to act towards a holistic understanding of children's rights. Having said this, another overarching research question of this study is what impact the MACR has on its graduates, professionally through the various competences achieved and also personally via changed attitudes (see chapter 10). The competencies conveyed in the MACR are ideally used in practical work, in which children can experience their rights as belonging to them and as a tool they can make use of themselves, for their own good. It is assumed that participating in the MACR has an impact on its students, both professionally and personally. The experience of studying an interdisciplinary programme in a highly international and interdisciplinary environment is challenging and rewarding at the same time (Hirschi & Volonakis, 2014; chapter 9). This investigation is not to be understood as a "traditional" evaluation of the programme

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tions. I prefer to use the factual terminology of making a differentiation between (relatively) wealthy countries (or regions) and poor countries (or regions). This definition, in my opinion can best do justice to the global situation, if we need to differentiate along these lines for better understanding of circumstances in the world. However, the inherent connection between the poor and rich regions/societies must still always be considered, no matter which term is used (see also: Braveboy-Wagner, 2003; Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2013).

as is often required by funders of projects, in this case the European Union[9]. Rather, it is an assessment of what such a programme can do for advocators of children and their rights within children's lived reality.

To inquire and investigate the impact of the MACR has on the students and subsequently on wider society, I employed composite methods concentrating on narrations of graduates by collecting data and material in interviews and written essays of former students, which I analysed by using content analysis methods, from which I deducted a theoretical basis for further incentives, ideas and necessities towards such study programmes in children's rights and human rights in general. The scheme of the present study is shown in the graphs below, each referring to parts of the research, depicting them in chronological order of discussion.

Figure 1- Part I of the Study, Step 1

CONTEXT

OTHER NETWORKS OF
CHILDREN'S RIGHTS STUDIES,
CHILDREN AS "NON" - AGENTS,
BOLOGNA REGULATIONS FOR
HIGHER EDUCATION
(CHAPTERS 3, 4 & 5)

BACKGROUND
INITIAL CONDITION

ENMCR/CREAN*
&
EMCR/MACR*

OUTCOME

NEED FOR CHANGE:
LACKING CR IN ACADEMIA
LIMITATIONS TO CRC
NEW THEORY UNITING
CHILDHOOD AND CR
(CHAPTERS 1,2 & 4)

MASTER'S ESTABLISHED,
STUDENTS' INTEREST
MOTIVATION, EXPECTATION
APPLICATION FOR MACR
(CHAPTERS 5 & 7)

STRATEGIES OF
CONDUCT

SCS, EU, FUB*:
FOUNDATION OF NETWORK
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
(CHAPTERS 3 & 5)

*ENMCR/CREAN: European Network of Masters in Children's Rights/ Children's Rights European Academic Network
* EMCR/MACR: European Master in (Childhood Studies and) Childrens' Rights/ M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights
*SCS/EU/FUB/: Save the Children, Sweden/ European Union/ Freie Universität Berlin

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[9] The emhasis of evaluations in the frame of projects funded by the EU or other organisations and institutions is placed on monitoring and assessment of planned activities as justification and legitimation of invested resources. It should also serve as a measurement of the output versus the planned or envisaged project activities claimed in the project proposals. In addition, most evaluations in this area concern the adequate management of finances and spending of funds.

Figure 1 on the previous page depicts the first section of the dissertation, describing the original, background, "objective" social and academic conditions prior to the establishment of master's study programmes in children's rights and childhood. In this context, the network of universities (ENMCR) developed a strategy to enable such an endeavour and received support from the European Union through funds for a curriculum development project (2004-2007). Interventions or constrictions as well as risks and limitations to this process have been the regulation on higher education set forth in the EU through the Bologna system (see chapter 1). Nonetheless, in 2006, the European Master in Children's Rights (now M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights) had been established and as an outcome the consortium of universities united in the network were set to enrol the first students.

Figure 2- Part II of the Study, Step 1.2.

CONTEXT
ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND, INT'L & INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY GROUPS (CHAPTERS 7& 9)

INITIAL CONDITION
MOTIVATION, EXPECTATION, ENROLMENT (CHAPTER 7)

SUBJECT
EMCR/MACR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

OUTCOME
DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCIES, GAINED THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICAL KNOW-HOW, CHILD RIGHTS "EXPERTS" (CHAPTER 10)

STRATEGIES OF CONDUCT
STUDENTS' EVALUATIONS (MACR), READING, RESEARCHING, WRITING, INTERNING, VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES (CHAPTER 8)

Figure 2 follows the same scheme and describes the second step taken in this study describing the established master's programmes and the participants' motivation as the original condition for further development. The academic and professional background and the international and interdisciplinary environment are the context in which this re-

search has taken place and the arguable consequences and outcomes are depicted (change in attitude, theoretical and practical competencies; see chapters 10-12).

Figure 3, relating to the last section of this study depicts the path of my interpretation of the manner by which the above described background of the MACR and the impact of personal change of students' and graduates' attitudes after having taken the master's impacts them personally in their various professional and personal contexts. The possible and real difficulties graduates encounter when (aiming at) applying the gained knowledge and competencies and the levels of success they experience are also reflected. Finally, I will discuss their abilities to contribute to social change concerning children and their rights.

Figure 3- Part II of the Study, Step 2

CONTEXT

SOCIETY: SOCIAL NORMS, SHORT-SIGHTED APPROACHES TO CR, IMPROVEMENT FROM 2006-2018

INITIAL CONDITION

SUBJECT

IMPACT OF THE MACR

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS "EXPERTS", THEORY-BASED CHANGE OF ATTITUDE AND BELIEF SYSTEM (CHAPTER 10)

OUTCOME AND CONSEQUENCES

APPLICATION OF THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE PRACTICAL COMPETENCIES RESPECT "THINKING HUMAN RIGHTS" --> SOCIAL CHANGE ?

STRATEGIES OF CONDUCT

MEMBERSHIP IN CR COMMUNITY COMMON ACTIVITIES KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE (CHAPTER 11)

The MACR, as other advanced study programmes, albeit very specific, aims at promoting students' reflection on their own and other participants' professional and private experiences. It aims at securing a continuous development of competencies which can be directly

experienced in the parallel professional day to day practice (most students work alongside studying the MACR and many in areas related to children and their rights). In addition, the significance of professional networks for problem solving strategies is illustrated (Herget & Mader, 2010; Orange, 2016). Such aspects are made visible in this study, although, as will be shown in the following chapter(s), an extensive evaluation of the MACR is not entirely possible due to its intangible nature as a programme on human rights, democracy, tolerance and respect.

Chapter 1- Frame of the Evaluation and Methodological Approaches

Evaluation has become a "trendy" term, an action that is used almost everywhere and for anything (see e.g. Ulrich & Wetzel 2003: 13). The goal of this research project has been an evaluation of the M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights. An evaluation that can be seen not as judgement or control but as a means for moulding and improving the programme and for legitimation that the following aims and objectives of the MACR have been reached:

- to widen the professional field of children's rights and
- to create new job positions to strengthen children's rights in practice;
- to continue developing critical interdisciplinary children's rights studies in academia and
- to evoke and promote a change of students' attitudes and beliefs that can trigger a more general social change.

The first question that comes to mind when hearing the word "evaluation" of project or programme activities is mostly output oriented- what was planned and what was achieved? "Evaluation is viewed as a tool to enhance the probability that the investment will pay off. This is similar to hiring a financial adviser to help them manage their money and achieve their financial goals" (Fetterman, 2005: 43). Fetterman continues: "they (the community) should also be building evaluative capacity in the areas of making judgments and interpretations, using the data to inform decision making, and making formative and summative assessments about their programmes. In some cases, this might involve making a determination of merit or worth of the programme. In most cases, their judgment focuses on programme improvement" (Fetterman, 2005: 48). This output-oriented question can often be answered quite easily. However, looking only at envisaged project outcomes and tangible outputs, the complexity of evaluative research cannot be grasped nor deciphered. In the first section of this study, I venture to go beneath the surface and describe procedures and on-going changes stemming from the perceived necessity to establish and offer a master's programme in children's rights and childhood studies.

Hence, an approximation to the question in the first section of the study would be: What is the theoretical background the master's is based on? In the second section of this study, subsequent to having elicited responses to the above question, I analyse the motivation and expectations the participants of the programme have for enrolment. I will assess what competencies graduates have developed, with reference to the competencies that have been envisaged by the programme directors and lecturers. As a final step, I will analyse the impact the programme has (had) on a selected sample of participants professionally and personally.

In this first chapter, I sketch out the development of evaluation models over the past decades, to frame the approach(es) taken in this study. The conception of the phenomenon (evaluand) under investigation here, as well as its evaluability are assessed and discussed. The stakeholders involved in this study are introduced, leading to an explanation of the methodological steps taken and a report on planning the research.

1.1. Brief Overview of Evaluation Methods and Models

The overview given in this subchapter does not pretend to be inclusive, it should serve as orientation to the methods applied within this study. The present research is not an evaluation research per se and does not have its main focus on theories of evaluation. Nonetheless many of the questions raised in this dissertation are based also on evaluation models and theories. Hence, this brief introduction to the main developments in evaluation. As early as in the 1940s, first approaches to evaluation were introduced by the "Father of Evaluation", Ralph W. Tyler, who started developing a theoretical framework for measuring educational outputs of students at high schools, by which standards that are defined in cooperation with experts and stakeholders in the field of the programme curricula would be judged (Lee, 2004: 139). Over the following decades, evaluation in educational and other contexts repeatedly changed its focus and incentives. These are briefly traced below.

Positivist and *post-positivist* approaches to evaluation are applied under the premise that only a neutral and objective scientific standard is appropriate for true research. This evaluation theory is based on quantitative research, aiming at generating numerical statistical and "objective" data (Mertens, 1998: 6-21 in Lee, 2004: 137; Guba & Lincoln 1989, Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Even though quantitative approaches inform first evaluative activities and development away from positivist approaches has been given way, it is still widespread among project evaluations and is being revived in particular in evaluating pupils' and students' educational success over the past decade in measuring competencies according to set criteria in school and university contexts[10], where e.g. the amount of funding acquired for research and teaching projects adds to the competitive position and for the supposed prestige, expressed in high evaluation scores. The requirement e.g. to accredit university programmes by external agencies is based on this positivist paradigm. These agencies control the study regulations and contents of study programmes regularly (and are paid well for it) which can often complicate researchers' and professors' possibility to offer true independent higher education[11].

Notwithstanding these post- or neo-positivist approaches, a more complex understanding of the value of evaluation has emerged and evaluation activities have shifted towards a more qualitative approach to gain information for the improvement and optimisation of the evaluand. The conception of curricula and their connection or disconnection with the lived reality of pupils has been ascribed more importance, both approaches however remain descriptive of the evaluand. To go beneath this surface and generate differentiated results on the *quality* of programmes, various complimentary evaluation methods are needed. This insight gave rise to applying a combination of *interpretative* and *constructivist* approaches to evaluation (Mertens, 1998). The qualitative and narrative data collected in this form of evaluation can give an explanation and an assessment of the quality of the pro-

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[10] In chapter 3.2. the difficulties of quantitively evaluating pupils' and schools' successes according to set criteria are briefly discussed

[11] At the moment, the MACR is undergoing the process of accreditation. Guidelines and forms to be filled in can be found here: http://ahpgs.de/english/

gramme under investigation in its specific context (Lee, 2004: 143, 151). Superseding these approaches, evaluative activities have increasingly placed emphasis on the *transformative* and *emancipatory* power of evaluations. As one aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of the programme on its participants, and how they have been empowered to work with and for children and their rights, I refer to the aspects of social justice as one guiding principle for empowerment evaluation (e.g. Christie, 2003: 11).

> *"The social justice principle is instructive on many levels. On a personal level, it influences how we treat people. Respect becomes paramount. The pride of an individual is fiercely protected, and the struggle he or she is engaged in is honored. The social justice principle also informs our decisions about how we select and use specific methodological tools. Data collection is geared toward gathering information that sheds light on whether the program is making a contribution to the larger social good, as per program mandates and agreements. In some cases, this simply means: Is the program accomplishing what it says it is doing? In other cases, the social justice principle focuses attention on issues of consequential validity, forcing us to question the impact or consequences of specific findings. Does the evaluation plan lead to invidious distinctions? Are the evaluation results likely to be misused and misinterpreted in ways that do not promote the social welfare or equity of the group? The principle of social justice places the image of a just society in the hands of a community of learners engaged in a participatory form of democracy" (Fetterman, 2005: 47).*

In order to assess the empowerment potential of the MACR, as a programme grounded in the moral concept of human dignity and social justice (see chapter 4.3.), and the potential of this study, I am guided by Fetterman's account of social justice principle in empowerment evaluation. I have decided to lend to this approach in spite of several critiques towards empowerment evaluation. The debates are mainly about the procedural prescriptions of the evaluand and evaluation process which change over time (Smith, N., 2010: 387), so as with the MACR that has, in some aspects, changed considerably during this research. [12] The core characteristics of the programme however have not been changed making it feasible to take an empowerment approach to uncover and describe the acquisition of several types of competencies (practical, tacit and reflexive knowledge).

1.2. Evaluation as Control or as Possibility?

Evaluators and evaluation itself, even though (at times) claimed to be participatory and a dialogue in which all sides aim towards the improvement and development of the phenomenon (evaluand), at times, the perception of evaluations is one of undesired control or judgement of the evaluated activity's success, instead of seeing it as assistance and chance for further development and progression. Danger lies in creating unease and resistance among the persons in charge of the programme and for programme participants who may feel inhibited by observations or negative assessment if criticism is voiced during an eval-

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[12] See Smith, M.F. (1989), Miller & Campbell (2006, 2007), Fetterman & Wandersman (2005), Smith, N. L. (2007) on these debates with respect to empowerment evaluation.

uative action such as focus group discussions or interviews. Often, evaluations are demanded mainly when financial frameworks change or new social discourses for justification of one's own doings are prevalent. Hence, evaluation is per se associated with a certain mistrust of the persons in charge of the evaluand, the subject under investigation. In addition, evaluation appears in an unequal power relationship: contractors of evaluation demand transparency of processes and programmes to assess them. The contractors themselves however often remain non-transparent with their overarching initiatives and regulations and are only marginally touched by the evaluation (Ulrich & Wetzel, 2003: 10). The purpose of evaluations however should not be and in most cases is not to judge activities and rebuke the responsible parties. Rather, evaluation should serve as a measurement to retrieve information concerning needed improvements for future activities or, if evaluation takes place during a project's or programme's implementation, to improve or change the next steps and stages of the activity to achieve the best possible results- not only for the project itself but for the project's or programme's participants and their environment.

1.3. Planning the Evaluation of the Evaluand

Hitherto, when I planned this research, one of the first questions was to define what form and method of evaluation I wanted to engage in, what type of evaluation is the most beneficial to the various stakeholders of the programme (see fig. 1.2. below) and which form and method can reveal the most useful information to understand and further develop academic qualification of child rights experts and give insight into graduates' values placed on the programme. The significance of the research for the funders of the programme and the host university is considered. The emphasis, however, is assigned to the impact the programme has on its students, the usefulness of highly qualified child rights experts for employers and the situation of children and their rights with whom the graduates work: directly or indirectly- frontline or from the desk (see also Evans, Myers & Ilfeld, 2000: 12).

In order to evaluate the quality and subjective value the programme has (had) for the participants and to find answers to the questions:

- "What impact and effect does the MACR have on its participants, how do they view the programme's content and its implementation, considering teaching and learning methods, structure and student group composition?"[13] and
- "Are competences, methodological and theoretical, used and if so, how and for what purpose?"

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[13] On impact assessment see e.g. Moñux et al., 2003.

I decided to follow a methodological scheme (fig. 4) introduced by Saldaña (2016). For cat-egorisation purposes, I refer to six potential outcomes to assess the programme's impact analysing and interpreting the research data I collected for this study.

These outcomes are intangible, making an objective answer impossible and as such, they can only serve as indicators.

Figure 4- Outcomes Assessing Programme Impact

Awareness, knowledge, competencies- What MACR graduates know

Attitudes and knowledge- What MACR graduates think and feel

Behaviour and participation-   What MACR graduates do

Discourse- What is being said and heard

Capacity, know-how and resources- What competencies MACR graduates have

Systems, policies and conditions- MACR graduates' contribution to lasting changes

Adapted from Saldaña, 2016: 143.

As with other research techniques, evaluation research cannot claim to generate general-ised findings, as it is per se dependent on certain normative rules and moral concepts that require comparative criteria in order to give valuable information on the specific practice applied. Who defines these criteria and what moral concept they are based on is arguable in any evaluation undertaken. Generally, in educational contexts, evaluation is informed by politics and sadly so, by industry and corporations, and the value of education is meas-ured according to the performance of students and the number of degree graduates. Not-withstanding, the aims pursued by educational programmes in higher education institu-tions and the subsequent evaluation criteria are highly flexible and dependent on different ideals and worldviews of the direct stakeholders in the implementation of the programme: both student participants and teachers, lecturers and tutors as well as the MACR coordina-tion team. The funding body (European Commission) as well as the operating formal insti-tution (FUB) as indirect stakeholders are not included in the systematic analysis of this study.

As such, an explanation of my own understanding of the evaluated subject or project- the evaluand- is indispensable. In the frame of this dissertation it is the understanding of the theoretical basis of childhood and children's rights qualification and research and its rele-vance in practice. This includes a reflection of its specific normative ideals and the underly-

ing world view as defined by the members of the Child Rights European Academic Network (CREAN) in the network's mission statement and the subsequently developed and passed statutes (see chapter 3.1.3.).

1.4. Evaluability

"Evaluability is a judgement about the feasibility of measuring achievements of a programme and/or its parts-- its final goals and/or intermediate objectives, i.e. is the programme properly structured? Are performance indicators defined? Will they measure what is intended? Are sources available and sufficient to provide the necessary information?" (Smith, 1989). As mentioned above, evaluation can only be meaningful in the context of its implementation.

When evaluating any programme or project there must be a plausible answer to the question whether the evaluand is at all evaluable and, assuming the answer is affirmative, the levels on which this evaluation can take place need a definition. Evaluability is described as "the form in which a programme is evaluable" (Rutman, 1980; Smith, 1989). This evaluability can also be ascribed to parts of the evaluand only and yet consider the evaluation of the programme's or project's usefulness for impact assessment.

Considering the literature on evaluation practices, there is no exact one-fits-all method or evaluation model that can serve to assess programmes. This leads to the first step in any evaluation: the definition of the specific aspects and criteria by which a programme is evaluable and what methods and instruments are needed to delineate it, in this study, this is an evaluation of the impact the MACR has (in the broadest sense) using qualitative research methods (interviews and written essays of programme graduates). After having defined these criteria, the choice of methods by which the project or programme can be evaluated require reference to its various components and a decision on the aspects that are of interest to the stakeholders of the evaluand (Rodríguez, 2000).

In search of evaluability, two questions beg answering: "What information is necessary for evaluation?" Followed by: "Is the information readily available or does it have to be collected and how?" and in the event that it has to be gathered the question is: "Is it accessible and where and from whom can it be collected?" Further, clear aims of the evaluation are needed and the application and use of the results should be known before engaging in the process (Smith, 1989; Wholey, 1994). These questions are relevant for this research, as they describe and explain through diligent analysis what has happened during the development process of the MACR (see chapter 4). Often, results of an evaluation assessment process serve as a justification or legitimation of the evaluand for stakeholders involved (mainly funding and operational bodies). The data is reported and archived, not much more. Seldom are they used to re-conceptualise the evaluand and ameliorate it. Keeping this in mind, evaluability assessment has been re-conceptualised in the past ten years after having disappeared from evaluation models for two decades (Trevisan & Walser, 2014). Now it is used as a tool to assess the evaluability of an evaluand as primary consideration for evaluation itself (ibd.; chapter 2). Nonetheless, one of the outcomes of this study demonstrates exactly this- the aim of qualifying motivated personalities who in their professions are sensitised for children's rights and aim at contributing to social change in the spirit of social

justice. In addition, this study claims to be a qualitative and formative endeavour, moving beyond this baseline of legitimation. Even though several stakeholders are mainly interested in legitimising the programme, others are much more interested in the evaluation procedure and what qualification students reach during the master's and how they use these competencies personally and professionally.

1.5.   Stakeholders

As mentioned before, while conducting this research, the objective has been to involve the stakeholders in the process of development, establishment and implementation of the MACR[14]. As a first step, after having defined what the study is to evaluate and assess, the stakeholders involved in the evaluand need identification (OECD, 2006: 17). Several institutions and personalities have been involved in the process of developing the programme and in its implementation: The European Commission and Save the Children, Sweden as funding bodies, the higher education institutions and researchers involved in the curriculum development process, the coordinator of the development programme and coordination team of the MACR and most importantly the participants themselves.

In the table below (table 1), the various stakeholders who have played a role in the MACR are identified in column 1. In the following three columns, the stakeholders' roles, expectations and involvement in the programme/project are distinguished.

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[14] At first, I aimed at evaluating the different children's rights programmes that evolved from the EU funded project: European Network of Masters in Children's Rights, Curriculum Development (2004-2007), during which the MACR was established (see below and chapter 3 and 4). Soon, I realised that there would be too many limitations to draw an overall picture, mainly due to accessibility to partner institutions and graduates of other courses. This led me to an evaluation mainly of the M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights at Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, which has been re-located to the University of Applied Sciences, Potsdam starting in the academic year 2016/17.

Table 1- Stakeholders in the Study

Stakeholder	Role in (MACR) programme/project	Stakeholder's possible expectation regarding the evaluation	Stakeholder's involvement in /role in/ contribution to the evaluation
European Union Commission	Funder for development; overall policy on children's rights	Success and sustainability of ENMCR/MACR; Implementation: outcome vs. objectives Contribution to implementation of Bologna process	Recipient and possible (co-) funding body for publishing the thesis)
FU Berlin / Faculty of Educational Sciences	Host institution of the MACR	Efficiency of the programme (quantitative) - graduate numbers - increase of internationality	Implementation process, organisation, accountancy administration etc.
MACR Team	Course directors, organisers- coordination	Improvement/optimisation of MACR Insight in impact of MACR on students/graduates	Organisation of jour fixes, teachers and advisory committee meetings, Presentation of results of individual course evaluations, mentoring
Advisory Committee	Advises on issues of course optimisation, conceptualisation of the programme	Basis to continue improving and making the programme more effective and useful	Advise in any questions raised (e.g. in the online survey; interview guideline); field notes of discussions/meetings
Course Leaders/ Teachers	Implementation of classes	Improvement of classes; expectations vs. outcomes; feasibility of teaching methods	Co-defining and developing evaluation design and research question(s)-
Students/ Graduates	Programme participants	Improvement of programme- according to expectations and needs, their voices heard and considered- self-reflective work	Co-defining research questions; Developing and answering questions

Stakeholder	Role in MACR programme/project	Stakeholder's possible expectation regarding the evaluation	Stakeholder's involvement in/role in/ contribution to the evaluation
Research Partners	(Former) programme participants	Knowledge of other graduates' opinions and professional outcome	Main informants
Prospective Students	Future programme participants	Knowledge/insight into qualification to be achieved in the MACR and how competences can be employed	Informants during development process
Employers	Use of qualification obtained through EMCR	Interest in where else EMCR graduates work-adjusting the programme to their needs	Voicing their ideas and expectations
Rebecca Budde Author and Researcher	Co-founder ENMCR/ member of Steering Committee CREAN/ Coordinator of MACR and research-er of this dissertation	To give an account of the process and value of such a programme	Researcher

Own depiction.

Monitoring and evaluation activities have become almost mandatory in the implementation of projects and programmes and serve as justification and legitimation and, as often claimed, the assurance of the activity's quality. Funding for projects is therefore often tied to the inclusion of such evaluative activities.

Funding bodies, in this case the European Commission as grant provider for the curriculum development project (ENMCR-CD-project, 2004-2007[15]) to the FUB and a consortium of seven West and Central Eastern European universities, have an interest in the implementation of the project and its planned vs. actual outcomes, a reasonably functioning management and administration of funds. Although sustainability of projects has become an important factor for measuring their success and worth, the EU has not shown real interest in the MACR. Considering that the CD project ran ten years ago, at this point the European Commission could be interested in reading how the project further developed and perhaps could be won to fund e.g. the publication of this dissertation. In addition, I assume that the EU is interested in whether the programme has a truly European nature

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[15] www.enmcr.net (accessed 13.7.2016)

and whether it has contributed to better communication between EU member states and to the integration of European higher education in general. How does it fit into the European higher education agenda since the Bologna Declaration on Higher Education in Europe (1999) and the frame for higher education set out in the EU Lisbon Treaty (2007)?[16]. The interest of the FUB in this evaluation is, in my opinion, mainly of quantitative nature. The number of graduates is important as justification for the programme's existence and the number of students is important for the self-sustenance and financial security of the programme[17]. Between 2004 and 2007, as the grant holder during the development phase, the FUB's interest also lay in the implementation and correct and diligent management of the project[18]. As the FUB is striving to raise its internationality[19], an interest in the MACR's evaluation could be whether the programme has contributed to this aim and how. Also, there should be an interest in the possible impact the MACR has had on the FUB's profile and reputation. I claim that the answer to most of these issues is negative in the subjective opinion of the power holders at the FUB, on lower levels the appreciation of the programme might be different. The reasons for this estimation are that the MACR is a too small and specialised programme at the FUB which is the largest university in Berlin to fall into weight. The main reason for this estimation however is how the programme was shut down after ten years of (successful) implementation.

The European Network of Masters in Children's Rights -ENMCR (now the Child Rights European Academic Network-CREAN) can be understood as the umbrella under which the MACR is being offered. The network's foundation with the assistance of the Non-Governmental Organisation Save the Children, Sweden was the starting point for the programme's development[20]. For the member institutions, the partnership with the ENMCR/CREAN has brought obstacles (payment of membership fees) yet also advantages by creating a wider acceptance for children's rights as an academic field of study. For the students at the various universities it opens the possibility of studying part of the programme they are enrolled in at another ENMCR member university. Teachers also give classes and lectures and are invited to other network member's institutions as guest lecturers and specific activities such as conferences, short intensive courses and common teach-

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[16] The objective of the Bologna process has been to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and establish degree programmes that are comparable between countries. For an overview of the Bologna objectives and main focus; the introduction of the three cycle system (bachelor/master/doctorate), a strengthened quality assurance and an easier mutual recognition of qualifications and the reasoning, see: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/bologna-process_en (accessed 13.12.2017)

[17] The MACR is exclusively financed through tuition fees, which have had to be adjusted several times since the programme's inception: (2007-2009: 2.800€; 2009-2016: 4.350€; since 2016: 5.965€).

[18] The FU acted as grant holder in further EU projects during the following years, in which more M.A. programmes in children's rights were developed at "third country" higher education institutions: Children's Rights Erasmus Development: Moldova and Serbia (CREDMOS, 2008-2010); Diploma in Public Policy and Children's Rights (DPPCR, 2010-2013) (both funded through Tempus) and Children's Rights Erasmus Academic Network (CREAN, 2011-2014)

[19] On the internationalisation of the FU: http://www.fu-berlin.de/international/profile/divisions/liaison-offices/index.html (accessed 6.5.2017)

[20] Save the Children, Sweden continued supporting the ENMCR over the following ten years. Without this financial backing, the network would not have been able to raise its profile and become a firm entity within the (academic) child rights community.

ing materials are cooperatively conceptualised, developed and implemented. Other issues that may be of interest to CREAN members are:

- *What projects are students of the MACR working on?*
- *What kind of research is done in the frame of the MACR or resulting from the MACR?*[21]
- *How has the MACR contributed to the profile of the network as part of the children's rights (academic) community?*
- *What insights of this evaluation, e.g. on teaching methods, composition of student bodies can be transferred to other member universities?*

The MACR team, composed of the directors, coordinators and organisers of the programme is the first access point for students in all (technical and formal) questions they may have. Information on how their studies are going for them, the difficulties and doubts, their satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction they may feel while studying the master's are first voiced here. Additionally, the team is in charge of the study schedule, organises regular feedback meetings with the students (jour fixes), engage in their mentoring as well as regular meetings with teachers and the advisory committee to the MACR, to reflect and discuss the delivery of the programme and give impulses for re-conceptualisation of the curriculum. Information deducted from these field observations form part of the data retrieved for this research. The MACR team's interest in this project is an in-depth evaluation and discussion of the programme's impact on graduates in terms of their competencies and their professional and personal lives.

- *Can this evaluation contribute to improving the structure, organisation and content of the programme and its implementation?*
- *Can future students benefit from the findings of this research if considered in the coordination and direction of the MACR?*

The advisory committee to the MACR was founded in 2011, out of the perceived need to to bring the programme forth by involving outstanding child rights players, whether from organisations or other higher education institutions. Approximately 50% of the advisory committee members are individuals working in practice the other members are individuals working in research or are retired from a child rights field of work or research[22]. Their interest in this study is whether their contribution to the programme's delivery has been implemented, whether students reach the competencies envisaged and having an account of the programme they are advising is a starting point to continue their valuable work. Some members of the committee have given me personal advice for this study. I assume that the teachers, the deliverers and facilitators of content in the MACR are interested in

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[21] A non-inclusive list of student research projects (MA theses) from 2009-2016 can be found in the annex (no.1).
[22]See:https://www.fh-potsdam.de/en/studieren/fachbereiche/sozial-und-bildungswissenschaften/studium/studiengaenge/master/ma-childhood-studies-and-childrens-rights/

the results discussed here to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching methods and the quality of conveying the specific competencies delivered in each module[23].
The main informants are the MACR students and graduates of which the great majority has become a member of the wider children's rights community (see chapter 11). In this study, they are the direct research partners, by giving interviews and writing brief essays and answering questions in an online survey (see chapter 6 on methods applied). The research partners themselves may have an interest in reading what the findings of our communications during the research process are. I assume that other graduates who are not involved directly in this study are interested in:

- *Knowing what other graduates are engaged in,*
- *how competencies and opinions on the programme vary and possibly*
- *use the research findings for a self-reflection on the MACR.*

Even though employers of MACR graduates could be very interested in the study, gathering direct information from current employers or from potential new ones would have gone beyond the scope of this research. I will shed some light on the expectations some organisations have towards the MACR through the voices of the research partners who have been hired by children's rights organisations. Nevertheless, students and those interested in studying the programme will find answers to questions on where graduates of the programme are working and what the meaning of the MACR can have for them.

1.6.   Methodological Steps

Applying naturalistic approaches of gathering information, which is given to decision-makers as the main form of evaluations, has been criticised (Guba & Lincoln (1989). Nonetheless, evaluation is still often understood and perceived as a control instrument by decision makers and funding bodies of programmes, even though there is an understanding that evaluation should first and foremost serve the programme implementers to reflect and ameliorate the evaluand at hand. Evaluation has shifted its focus towards a more positively understood activity, however many approaches to evaluation remain top-down, imposed by the management or funder of activities (or within new frames for higher education based on accreditation[24]).
One of the few documented evaluation processes of political education programmes in the spirit of emancipation and interpretation is described and discussed by Ulrich & Wetzel in their publication *Partizipative Evaluation,* (2003). Besides the participatory stances mentioned above, the method introduced by Ulrich & Wetzel serves as further orienta-

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[23] Evaluation of each course has taken place over the years, and feedback given to the teachers. As there has not been direct follow-up activities on the impact these standardised evaluations have, they are only partly included here.

[24] Over the past few years, there has been an increase in interest of applicants about the accreditation of the MACR. The meaning of such is neither clear nor informative of the quality of the programme. The process of accreditation is underway and there will not be any changes to the curriculum or learning methods after having been accredited, nor will the degree awarded upon successful completion be different.

tion for this study. Agreeing that the interdisciplinary field of children's rights is a specific area of teaching and learning for democratic rights and political education, it requires an inclusive description, measurable indicators recede into the background. As such, the present research is framed by a description of the phenomenon and its original condition, the context in which it occurs and strategies applied to generate the envisaged outcome. This evaluation is largely non-participatory. Although all stakeholders identified above have their part in this study, they have largely not been involved in the direct research.

In order to avoid such a top-down approach, I apply a variety of methods, such as, inter alia, participatory observation, structured questionnaires with closed and open questions and semi-structured guideline (expert) interviews to approximate qualitatively assured information (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Morrow, S.L., 2002). This variety of methods can only be applied in small-scale specialised programmes such as the MACR, where access to the relatively small number of participants is straightforward. The results can however have significance also for larger, more encompassing programmes.

The evaluative methods I apply are a combination of *internal, participatory, formative* (or process-oriented (Evans et al., 2000: 8) and *summative* evaluation, grounded in a constructivist approach, which is based on the understanding that no neutral, objective reality can ever exist. All beliefs are subjective or culturally constructed and apply only in specific historical and temporary contexts. In this research, I orient myself to a two step methods model introduced by Chambers et al. (1992) taking the individual steps of the evaluation depicted here[25]:

In the first section, I will review and analyse the development of CREAN and the MACR, considering various conditions for its success and describe the structure and content of the MACR. Further in Part I, I will employ a document analysis. The second step in the model is based on empirical social research to underline the document analysis. Part II of this study is dedicated to this second step.

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[25] Adapted from OECD, 2006: 29; Chambers et al., 1992; Rossi et al., 1999

Table 2- Two Step Methods Model

Part I- Document Analysis

Document Analysis (1)	Review of the development process of the ENMCR/CREAN
Document Analysis (2)	Review of the MACR's curriculum development process
Description	Content of the MACR
Design	Structure of the MACR

Part II- Qualitative Evaluation

Participation (1)	Observation of and communication with students and teachers during the programme's implementation
Participation (2)	Jour fixes with students, teacher and advisory committee meetings
Verbal and Written Data	Semi-structured (expert) guideline interviews and essays, online survey

1.8. Limitations

First off, I want to point to my double role as researcher of this study and as member of the MACR team. I have been involved in the ENMCR since its foundation and coordinated it for five years from 2004-2009. After having established the master's programme at FUB, I took on the coordination of the programme itself. Hitherto, I am very close to the field and know most students and graduates quite well, student numbers have been limited to 23-30 per year.

Being so close to the field of investigation can distort findings due to a higher possibility of subjectiveness in the analysis of the data (unconsciously moving away from the data and including knowledge from other encounters with students). I will discuss these challenges in more detail when presenting the methods I employed in this study (chapter 6.1.1.). Notwithstanding this limitation it is also a great asset, as the additional knowledge about the field of study allows for an encompassing view drawing also on the implicit, background information available to me.

Now I would like to point to general limitations of evaluative endeavours concerning educational programmes. Generally speaking, an evaluation of educational programmes in terms of their (general) impact on society, social structures or policy-making is hardly possible; therefore, this research here can only be an approximation. Nonetheless, it is possible to obtain qualitative data on the impact of such programmes on the participants, students as well as course leaders and teachers. On the other hand, also here, it is barely possible to

answer whether the participants in programmes can truly make a change in the field of human rights and children's rights, whether there is e.g. a greater sense of citizenship of children amongst civil society members or whether children understand and can make better sense of their rights. Also, it is questionable, if it is at all possible to answer the question whether the participants of such a programme have changed their long-term behaviour due to the programme. Such a question could confront educational processes with serious difficulties if researched properly – therefore, resistance and conflicts are often attributed to evaluations (see Ulrich & Wetzel 2003, Hirseland et al., 2004). Notwithstanding these limitations, I will give an insight into the subjective ascriptions students and graduates of the programme assign to their behaviour, actions, attitudes and passion towards children and their rights after having read the MACR.

Albeit such continuous general concern whether or not evaluation findings in general and more specifically in education processes are used, I assume and anticipate that the collected and analysed evaluative data and its results are indeed of interest and useful. Equally, I envisage it being of use to scholars and researchers in the field of children's rights studies as well as those who direct and teach university courses, to inform about what knowledge and competencies the participants achieve and how they are made use of. Naturally, as in any evaluative engagement in order to make it useful, the results require distribution and follow- up (see e.g. OECD, 2006: 32). Once made available to the stakeholders, this information shall serve, if needed, to subsequently adjust the programme to better reach the aim of qualifying persons who form part of a societal change with a focus on social justice and respect for children and the implementation of their rights.

Chapter 2- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

This chapter pretends to set the political background scene for the master's programme I am evaluating in this study, the M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the basic international human rights instrument by which children's rights can be legally claimed and which defines in its 54 Articles the special human rights of children, aged 0-18 years. As of 2018, 196 states parties have ratified the treaty, including all UN member states apart from the USA, and four Non-UN member states[26]. The Convention is the outcome of a lengthy process which took its beginning with the development of the two preceding international treaties of children's rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, also referred to as the Geneva Declaration (1924) and the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959)[27]. In 1978, Poland proposed the UN Human Rights Committee to pass the Convention on the Rights of the Child and submitted a project which was later amended twice. It was based on the philosophical and educational concept of Janusz Korczak and constituted a point of reference for the negotiations on the final text of the document[28].

Also, in 1979, the process of negotiating the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was coming to an end[29]. An analogy to children's rights can be drawn from CEDAW. Forty years ago, women (in European countries) were understood as the social group confined to dependence on men and their benevolence towards them, instead of ascribing to them, as a special and separate group, legal, positive rights in order to live a "good", fulfilled and self-directed life without discrimination[30]. Children's rights and the CRC are greatly informed by these and other marginalised

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[26] Even though the USA played a dominant role in the CRC's lengthy negotiation process and introduced articles of children's participation and decision in their own life world: Article 13 (freedom of expression), Article 14 (freedom of religion), Article 15 (freedom of association and assembly), and Article 16 (the right to privacy). (Price-Cohen, 2006), until now, they have not ratified the Convention (see e.g. Kerber-Ganse, 2009; Liebel, 2007b; Holzscheiter, 2010). Non-UN member states parties to the CRC: Cook Islands, Niue, the State of Palestine, and the Holy See

[27] The development of the Convention took many more years than expected. After its completion, however, the CRC, which was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by the UN General Assembly Resolution 44/25 on 20 November 1989 entered into force only 9 months later on 2 September 1990, in accordance with Article 49 after ratification by the required minimum 20 member states. To date, it is the most comprehensive treaty to have entered into force and the most rapidly ratified Convention (Holzscheiter, 2010:85; Liebel/Liesecke, 2007b:39).

[28] https://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/source/prems/PublicationKorczak_en.pdf p. 5. Janusz Korczak is remembered by many for the way his life ended but by some also for how he lived and what he said and wrote. UNESCO declared 1978-79 as the Year of Korczak to mark the centenary of his birth – this coincided with the United Nations (UN) Year of the Child. Some of his writings have been translated into other languages, there are Janusz Korczak societies in several countries and child rights activists often refer to his writings. No doubt he had an influence when the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was drafted in the 1980s. Still, his teaching deserves more attention. Korczak was one of those thinkers who was ahead of his time. Some of his ideas are still not fully understood and they are absolutely relevant to the work for children's rights today.

[29] Text of CEDAW and further information, see: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/ (accessed, 19.12.2017)

[30] For women living in European, North Western States, CEDAW is a true advancement. The promise of CEDAW to change the lived oppression women still experience around the globe and the aim of shifting away

social and political group's rights (disabled, migrant workers, indigenous) (Brems et al., 2017; Part II: 91-170). However, it is noteworthy to understand that

> *"Childhood is the last frontier in the articulation of rights for special groups. But unlike the women's suffrage campaign and the civil rights movement, children have not demanded human rights. For the most part, they have not struggled or risked their lives in war and civil disobedience. When they have, as in the Soweto uprising in South Africa and the National Movement of Street Boys and Girls in Brazil, the world took fleeting notice and moved on. It seems paradoxical that it was against this rather bland and largely disinterested background that the CRC has achieved such universal status" (Earles, 2011: 8)*

Without the CRC, the study programme(s) under investigation would not have been established. Albeit the initiators of the master's programmes do not place their focus explicitly and only on the Convention but look beyond the legal human rights instrument, it is part of the background in the development of the university course(s). Qvortrup (2009) refers to gender relations over time- females have only become a more powerful social group because some men found this important- without these male voices and male advocates the relationship between male and females would likely still be much less equal than nowadays, whereas this surely does not imply that gender relations are equal today. Such advocates, both female and male adults, are indispensable also for children and their rights.

I will discuss the guiding principles of the international children's rights treaties and focus on the best interest principle (Art.3) that has been elevated over the other three guiding principles of the Convention (right to non-discrimination- Art.2, right to life, Art.6 and participation rights, Art.12 and 13-15) by the Child Rights Committee in General Comment (GC) no.14 (2013). Even before the GC no.14 was released, the argument of the best interests of the child had been contested due to its use as justification for behaviour violating other human rights (of children, women, disabled people), which has been contested (Cantwell, 2011; Lansdown, 2001b).

I will briefly review the development process of the CRC to contextualise how the guiding principles entered the Convention. This will allow placing it in the broader discussion on (international) power relations (Holzscheiter, 2010). I will also briefly summarise the CRC's monitoring prescriptions and processes as defined in the second part of the Convention (Art. 42-54). As the master's programme I am investigating here is a result of a project funded by the European Commission and has had a focus both on children's rights in an international and a European context, I will also briefly trace the political efforts the EU has made concerning its role as a child rights actor in the past decade.

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from women's dependence on the benevolence of men and discrimination they face on a daily basis is pure scorn in the face of the lived reality of millions of females around the world.

2.1.   The Declarations of the Rights of the Child (1924/1959)

"In Geneva, the lawgivers have confused duties with rights. The tone of the declaration is not insistence but persuasion: an appeal to goodwill, a plea for kindness (Korczak, 1928/1959: 368[31])"

The first Declaration of the Rights of the Child ("The Geneva Declaration") (1924) was an outcome of an initiative by Eglantyne Jebb, founder of Save the Children fund and children's rights activist (Mullay, 2009). As Korczak describes it in his well-known essay "The Child's Rights to Respect" (1928), the wording of the Geneva Declaration by the League of Nations demonstrates the general attitude towards children in the early 20th century. The "object" status children (have) had, led to a sole focus on welfare rights, rights that are written in favour of children in contrast to agency rights of children, by which children become rights holders and owners of their rights (Archard 2015: 58-60 in Liebel, 2017b). Janusz Korczak's statement also demonstrates the Declaration's lack of power due to its non-binding character. It is solely an "appeal to goodwill, (a) plea for kindness" to children who are yet not competent and in need of protection only. Notwithstanding, the Geneva Declaration marked the first step towards an international treaty on children's rights and merits acknowledgement for its contribution to the establishment of the CRC, although decades later[32].

In 1959, the Geneva Declaration was re-declared by the United Nations (substituting the League of Nations) in which children were for the first time recognised as rights holders themselves. Both the 1924 and 1959 Declarations were not binding or directly enforceable, nor were children afforded rights to influence societal actions and decisions or to participate in any circumstances concerning their life world. Contrasting the hitherto welfare and protection approach, the CRC, for the first time afforded children participation rights as well.[33] Hence, the Convention has four guiding principles (reflected in Art.2- non-discrimination; Art.3- best interests of the child, Art.6- right to life and Art.12, 13-15 and 17-participation)[34] , which I introduce as next step.

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[31] Source: http://www.januszkorczak.ca/legacy/4_The%20Child%27s%20Right%20to%20Respect.pdf

[32] The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990), the first convention to acknowledge children's rights to participation (Art.12 and Art.13-17) came into force 70 years later.

[33] The newly introduced right to participation (Art. 12) is limited as it affords children the right to participate in all decisions affecting them, however in accordance with their evolving capacities, not per se. The concept of evolving capacities has been praised by scholars as a first step towards full participation of children as subjects of rights (see Lansdown, 2005; Liebel, 2015b) which is a fair argument. Thinking beyond this concept and developing it further has been a debate with reference to how evolving capacities are determined and who has what capacity at which age or stage in life.

[34] These principles were "established" by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the monitoring body of the Convention, when drawing up the guidelines for the state reports on the implementation of the Convention (Cantwell, 2010: 20).

2.1.1.   Art. 2: The right to non-discrimination – unspecific to children[35]

Ensuring the child's right not to be discriminated in anyway, irrespective also of her or his parent's or legal guardian's race, (skin)colour[36], sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status is sometimes contested as being not child-specific reasons for discrimination. The right to non-discrimination as formulated here is manifested in all UN Declarations and Conventions on Human Rights as paramount.[37] This lack of direct reference to children has evoked arguments that the CRC is not needed in view of the general human rights, which are also children's rights (see e.g. Bentley, 2005). However, child specific reasons for discrimination, e.g. discrimination due to age (ageism) and perceived immaturity often lead to condescending behaviour towards children (e.g. CRIN Discussion Paper on age-based discrimination, Liebel 2014). Percy-Smith & Thomas (2010) have found that children themselves, when asked, often name their age as one of the single most dominant factors for discrimination and sometimes also for exploitation and for being withheld from participating in actions concerning them. The issue of discrimination due to age has also been referred to as a form of adultism and is key to the MACR (see chapter 4.2.1).

2.1.2.   Art. 3: The best interests of the child as the "super right"[38]

Often, the principle of the best interests of the child is understood as the key right of children (e.g. Eichholz, member of the Advisory Committee to the MACR, field note, 2017), which is the basis for all other rights in the Convention. It is regularly applied to justify any action concerning children. As such it is prone to be arbitrarily interpreted and called upon in any situation, issue or problem, notwithstanding the General Comment No.14 in which the principle has been given a narrower frame for interpretation[39]. Still, even though "(...)

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[35] Art.2 (1). States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
Art.2 (2). States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.)

[36] Both the terms "race" and "colour" are written as such in the CRC- if it were drafted today, the words that would be used would likely be "ethnicity" and "skin-colour"- how terminology changes due to political correctness is another very interesting topic, however it would go beyond the scope of this study to discuss this in detail here. The notion of politically correct terms has been mentioned in this research also with reference to the "Global South" (Introduction).

[37] Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990) UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, 2006)

[38] Art. 3 (1) In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

[39] GC are additional prescriptions to the CRC. GC no.14, (a) and c)) explains: States parties shall explain how the right has been respected in the decision, that is, what has been considered to be in the child's best interests;

neither justified nor desirable (..) we feel compelled to consider best interests as expressing one of the fundamental values of the [UNCRC]" (Cantwell, 2010:25), even though the definition of the best interests is not clear and it is questionable who should define it. In many circumstances, adults can validly claim to know what the child's best interests are- children on the other hand may have their own definitions of their best interests (dependent on the context they live in amongst many other factors). These may be congruent with the adults' or not, ideally adults and children find a common agreed understanding of the child's best interests. In essence this means that adults must accept and respect children's competency to voice their opinion on their best interests and take it into due consideration, whenever taking decisions affecting them (Art. 12, CRC).

In order to demonstrate this principle, an example might be useful. A parent of a very intelligent and possibly insufficiently challenged child has decided that she should invest her intellect to learn a foreign language. A contract with the institution offering a course is signed, possibly with the agreement of the child, possibly without. After a few sessions, the child realises that she does not want to go to these lessons any longer, as all the children around her stay in day-care and have free time to play, which she would also like to have. The parent decides that the child must continue with the foreign language classes, even after weeks of tears and revolt. Pursuant to Art. 3 and Art.12 of the CRC, the mother together with the child must come to a conclusion and decision about continuing these classes or not, it is not up to the parent only to decide on the child's behalf because she is convinced that she is not offered enough intellectually (which may even be true: real situation, field note).

In essence, the best interests are valued and ensured by an absolute and throughout respectful and passionate interaction with all children and other human beings on a daily basis. However, in Article 3 (1), the best interests of the child are described as a state's obligation to enable adults, parents, guardians or institutions, such as schools and care facilities, to consider the child's best interests and does not mention the obligation to include the child's view on his or her best interests. Appropriate administrative measures and pre-set standards, determined by adults rather than children themselves, require reflection. On the other hand, there are those who take Art. 3 CRC as an excuse to regard the child's best interests in all instances as paramount (not only primary) consideration in all actions, even if this may conflict with rights of other groups or higher interests.

> *"Moreover, the continued and unwarranted plethora of references to best interests, seemingly required by the UNCRC, actually impedes awareness raising about the fact that children have human rights as opposed to "special" rights, and that these rights can and should be defended on the same basis as those of all other human beings, for whom best interests are simply not a human rights issue" (Cantwell, 2016: 24).*

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what criteria it is based on; and how the child's interests have been weighed against other considerations, be they broad issues of policy or individual cases.

Cantwell continues that in referring to the best interests of the child other guiding principles can be undermined.[40]

> "Advancing best interests might therefore be contested as an attempt, in part at least, to nullify limitations to the exercise of that human right as foreseen by the treaty"(...)"The point is not to deny that the proper determination of best interests has a role in the implementation of the UNCRC, but to ensure that it is called upon to play that role only when necessary, appropriate and feasible as a tool for advancing the human rights of children" (Cantwell, 2016: 24, 26).

2.1.3. Art. 6: The right to life, survival and development[41]

Art.6, which is the basis of the third guiding principle of the CRC is unique in its formulation. Other core human rights treaties protect the right to life only, not to survival and development. "The reference to survival was intended to emphasize the positive obligations incumbent on states parties to prolong children's lives. Survival is closely related to a healthy development of children, and thereby introduces obligations of fulfilment (Nowak, 2005: 12-14 and 36-37). The development of children is to be understood holistically and is closely related to the concept of human development as advocated in the 1980s by the WHO and UNICEF (Nowak, 2005: 7 and 14)" (Vandenhole, 2015: 32). At the same time, Art. 6 is also limited, as it obliges states to provide the child's rights to survival and development in accordance with their possibilities, which again, are prone to near random interpretation.[42]

2.1.4. Art. 12,13-15: The right to participation with limitation

> "The participatory dimension of the CRC is the dimension that transforms the identity of the child targeted by the Convention from a mute beneficiary to a social agent" (Holzscheiter, 2010: 86)

The acknowledgement of children's agency and viewing and understanding them as complete human beings in the here and now, as subjects and no longer only dependent on adults, is reflected in the CRC's participation articles (Art. 12, 13-15[43]).

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[40] He describes this by giving an example: A boy is rejected at a school because of having been raised by same sex parents and may be bullied because of this. The rejection is justified as he should be protected against it (Cantwell, 2016: 25)
[41] Art.6 (1) States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life. Art.6 (2) States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.
[42] The right to life has also been widely discussed with reference to life before birth. When does the right to life begin, at conception or when the child is born? These very controversial debates cannot be discussed here (refer to Myburgh, 2008; Olatokun & Ahmad, 2014; Flood, 2007 for further information)
[43] Article 12 (1) States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
Article 13 (1). The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
Article 14(1). States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Albeit the CRC is progressive and ascribes to children a right to participate in decisions affecting them, the drafters felt a necessity to formulate a restriction on this participation directly in the first paragraph of Art.12: " ...the views of the child being given due weight (only) in accordance with the age and maturity of the child" (own brackets). What is maturity? Who is mature (at which age)? This indefinite restriction of the right to be heard relates directly to Art.2. on non-discrimination which, as discussed above, is limited by excluding the right not to be discriminated because of age. The limitation of the right to be heard would be nullified by including age as discrimination ground, this could be a reason why it was not included in Art.2. [44] Notwithstanding these limitations of Articles 12-15 of the Convention, the right to participation in all decisions affecting children demonstrates the development of an understanding of a socially accepted, transmitted normative belief that children belong to their parents (and society) and not to themselves, are dependants and are inherently "incompetent" i.e. need to be formed and filled with knowledge (adults are assumed to have). The participation articles reflect the new understanding of children as competent and respectable beings, which is also an outcome of the beginning change of social structures in general, after the 1960s and 1970s liberation movements (children, women, sexual liberations, African American). Participation rights of children are key to the curriculum of the MACR and the self-understanding of the ENMCR/CREAN (see following chapters 3 and 4). The difficulties of individual participation rights and the omission of collective rights will be discussed in the following section.

2.2. Stakeholders in the CRC's Development Process

As with most UN treaties, and the CRC specifically, the underlying concept is based on Western, Eurocentric understandings, beliefs and values concerning children (this concept of children and childhood will be introduced in chapter 4).
An open-ended working group drafted the CRC. Its members were mainly from North Western and North Eastern countries; the states' representatives however changed almost on a yearly basis (Price-Cohen, 2006: 186)[45]. Representatives of the Global South were hardly present, due to the high costs of travelling to Geneva. Representatives of Muslim societies came to the working group only several years later (Holzscheiter, 2010: 198).[46] One noteworthy contribution of a Senegalese representative who participated in one of the late working group meetings proposed the inclusion of children's right to be prepared to live an individual and *communal* life, introducing a concept of the child, which goes beyond the Western, liberal philosophy of the individual fighting for and relying on her-

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Article 15(1). States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

[44] Another reason for its omission may be that Art 2 was copied from other human rights treaties: see UNDHR, CEDAW.

[45] Likely, a contribution to the long duration of the drafting process.

[46] A group of non-governmental organisations, inter alia Save the Children, Sweden, Amnesty International, International Commission of Jurists, International Social Service, Baha'i International, World Jewish Congress and a number of intergovernmental bodies participated in the process as observers

self, rather than placing emphasis on the community as well, a lived reality of man and womankind in a significant number of countries and societies (Holzscheiter, 2010: 198). The proposal was dismissed on the grounds of it having been introduced too late in the drafting process, not only because of doubts by the other working group members to include such a different, and unfamiliar paradigm of childhood, but also because the Commissioner on Human Rights pressured the group to conclude the process to present the Convention in the year of the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Child (1979) which was also the 30th anniversary of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959) (Holzscheiter, 2010: 202; Price-Cohen, 2006). Children themselves as the beneficiaries of the Convention were not included in its drafting, which puzzled some observers (Freemann & Veermann, 1992: 5, Liebel, 2007b & 2013: 121). Later, they were invited to "children's summits", when discussing further development or other issues concerning the CRC and other international conventions relevant to children's rights (such as ILO Conventions). Such children's summits are still organised as "side events" parallel to the "real" summits of adults.[47]

As such, the Convention of 1989 has the tangy smack of children having been given the gift of a Convention, a catalogue of rights from adults, without having full ownership of this benevolent present (Cordero Arce, 2015: 296). Having been given or granted rights is not equivalent to knowing them nor having access to them. The challenge of how to enable children to understand their rights as their own, which they can utilize for their protection, provision and participation not only on a top-down theoretical basis is elaborated within the MACR. The ability to find solutions for this challenging dilemma is one of the competencies research partners in this study mention as key knowledge gained from the programme.

2.3. Monitoring of the CRC

In order to ensure and control the protection and fulfilment of the rights of the child, part II of the CRC prescribes engaging in awareness-raising activities on the Convention's content and monitoring mechanisms to control its implementation (Articles 42-54). According to Article 43, a Committee was established, to which states parties to the Convention must submit regular state reports on the progress of the Convention's implementation in their country.[48] The committee reviews these reports, which are generally complemented by reports of non-governmental bodies (so called shadow reports) in which issues not dealt with in the state reports are taken up. On the basis of these reports, the Committee releases "Concluding Observations" and formulates "Recommendations" for the respective state

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[47] The most recent case of such an exclusion of children was the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, Buenos Aires, 14-16 November 2017. Organised by the campaign "It's Time to Talk", children were allowed to present their views in such a side event on 15 November 2017. More on the conference: http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/BuenosAiresConference/lang--en/index.htm and on the campaign "It's Time to Talk": http://www.time-to-talk.info/en/about/campaign/

[48] The first state report being due two years after ratification of the Convention and thereinafter every 5 years (see e.g. Liebel, 2007b:45).

party on next steps to take to ensure the Convention's full implementation. [49] This is mentioned here, as it is part of the general knowledge on the CRC conveyed in the MACR, and one of the most important and valued practical competencies to be acquired in the MACR. Also, future potential employers describe this practical competency as a key skill they expect from graduates of a child rights master's programme (see chapter 5.1.1.2).

In spite of children's rights having moved further to the centre of attention of politics and social actors over the past years, the understanding of children's rights and their implication for children themselves still needs founded and reliable research. By setting up monitoring mechanisms for the CRC in many countries (also in Germany since 2015), emphasis is put on measuring the compliance of institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations with their adherence to the rights formulated in the CRC. This is a big step towards the realisation of the written, positive rights of the child- equally, the possibility for children to experience their rights and claim their rights by setting up complaint mechanisms as demanded by the Committee on the Rights of the Child is significant and timely.

2.4. Ratification of the CRC and EU Actions for Children's Rights

As mentioned above, the Convention is the most rapidly ratified UN Convention; the reasons for this can be summised, an in-depth investigation on the factors could be valuable. The enormous acceptance of the CRC can be explained from various perspectives, whereas most of them are simple suggestions that yet require scientific proof. States in the Global North, in ratifying the Convention, were likely not aware of the implications, as it was perceived as an instrument to help the poor children in the developing countries. The child rights violations within the own country were largely suppressed as the belief has been that in Europe children's rights are already fulfilled. In view of power structures in the majority of countries in the Global South, they likely ratified the CRC quickly as not to lose face by denying children their rights, or possibly because they believed that children would not be able to claim and exercise their rights anyway and therefore did not see any harm in ratifying the CRC. Liebel suggests that poorer countries may have signed and ratified the Convention in the belief or hope of receiving more funding for (social) measures (Liebel, 2007b: 44). Another argument is the beginning of the "new age", when the Bretton Woods organisations started pressuring states to drastically cut social spending for children. These cuts required legitimisation from the population and resulted in a sudden interest in children by claiming their adherence to the neo-liberal approach and ratifying the Convention (Nieuwenhuys, 2008: 8). Several states placed reservations on some articles of the Conven-

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[49] Originally, the Committee was made up of ten representatives of member states which were elected after nomination during meetings of states parties convened by the Secretary-General at the UN headquarters (Art. 43, 5). At those meetings, for which two thirds of States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting. Due to the rapid ratification of the UNCRC by a large number of states parties, the committee was enlarged to 18 representatives in order to cope with the rising number of reports.

tion, giving national law primacy over the rights enshrined in the CRC. In those states in which the CRC has been ratified without reservations, its implementation as foreseen in the 54 articles, remains unfinished. Furthermore, the question arises whether the full implementation of the CRC (as written, which is inherently subject to interpretation) would make children understand their rights as something that is being enforced and that they themselves can make use of.

With the intent to place this study also in a European political context, the most prominent EU actions concerning children's rights since the mid 2000's need mentioning, at the time the activities of this research commenced. There was only limited and marginal reflection of children's rights in national politics and policies at the beginning of the programme's development. The European Commission had only just embarked on its "child rights journey" (Iusmen & Stalford, 2015) by releasing the Commission Communication "Towards a Strategy on Children's Rights"[50] in 2006. As an academic field of study, children's rights were unique and treated only, if at all, as a minor subject. I believe this circumstance was conducive to the European Commission awarding the project consortium the grant to develop the MACR. The political will to place children's rights on the agenda had just been awakened; as a consequence of the Commission Communication, the EU developed its "Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child" (2017) [51] and subsequently proclaimed its "EU Agenda on the Rights of the Child" in 2011, with the objective to implement eleven specific actions to promote the rights of children.[52] At the Nice European Council on 7 December, 2000, with the solemn proclamation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which became legally binding in 2009, children were given the status of independent rights-holders, releasing them from their status of being only part of the family or parents (Art. 24). The constitutions of the EU member states dedicate children's rights only in fragments, understanding them in large parts as objects of state provision. Nonetheless, all EU member states that have acceded the Union after 1990 (10)[53] explicitly mention children's rights in their constitutions. A further eight of the 28 EU member states mention children's rights in their constitutions.[54] None of the constitutions, however, affords children as extensive rights as written in the CRC, in particular participation rights. Unsurprisingly, the show case country Finland's constitution is the most inclusive of children's rights with a clear commitment to the participation rights of children. Of the newer EU member states the most progressive is the Polish constitution, which affords comprehensive protection rights and, pursuant to Art. 12, CRC, also participation rights as an issue of concern to them[55]. West European states were late to include children's rights in their

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[50] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:r12555 (accessed 9.1.2018)
[51] https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/16031_07_en.pdf (downloaded 9.1.2018). In 2017, The EU External Action Service published new "Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child" (2017): https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_guidelines_rights_of_child_0.pdf .To analyse and discuss the implications and connotations inherent to these guidelines is beyond the scope of this research.
[52] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0060 (accessed 9.1.2018)
[53] https://www.bundestag.de/blob/422370/b78f0dea207d83b17d4723359d9affa9/wd-3-049-14-pdf-data.pdf (accessed 9.1.2018)
[54] see: https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries_de (accessed 6.1.2018)
[55] Albeit not confirmed, this may be a legacy of Janusz Korczak's pioneer work in children's rights and the consequence of Poland having been the initiator of the CRC by submitting a first draft to the UN (see above)

constitutions, with Germany as one state that has still not included them in its constitution, whereas over the past year progress is being made increasing the possibility that the federal government will carry out its mandate as demanded in the CRC.[56]

A debated topic in the MACR is whether the CRC should only be taken at face value and how to understand the efforts of the EU to mainstream children's rights and what it contributes to make children's rights a reality and how taking a step beyond the written rights can enlarge one's view on the meaning of the rights of children. The students are encouraged to reflect on their perception of legal instruments as a means to widen their horizons with the goal to reach a more holistic understanding of children's rights, which ideally reflects children's own understanding of their rights.

> *"I hope that other courses continue to challenge the blanket approach to child rights - and that eventually key policy makers, international organisations, particularly UNICEF and other UN bodies, and NGOs understand that child rights are not just what is in the UNCRC but are much more nuanced" (answer to online survey).*

How children's rights can be defined in theory as a basis for practice and research will be discussed in chapter 4. First, however, I will trace the history and spirit of the network of universities that was formed to bring forth children's rights studies.

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[56] https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/kinderrechte-ins-grundgesetz--die-zeit-ist-reif/115530 German Federal Ministry for Senior Citizens, Families and Youth's demand for making children's rights constitutional (accessed 9.1.2018)

Chapter 3- European Network of Masters in Children's Rights/ Children's Rights European Academic Network

"The members of the European Network of Masters in Children's Rights are connected by the common belief that childhood is a social, historically changeable phenomenon and that children are social subjects who are to be respected as such, with own views, interests, competences and the right to comprehensive participation" [57].

Children's rights and childhood studies master's programmes are scarce and existing programmes are still widely unknown. Over the past ten years however, the number of university-based study programmes and courses has increased across Europe and globally. This is (also) an outcome of an initiative of several academics who, in order to give children's rights more weight in higher education and obtain more leeway to further academic treatment of children's rights, created the *European Network of Masters in Children's Rights* (ENMCR) in 2004. In this chapter I will discuss the aims, describe the activities and highlight the achievements of the network and give an estimation of its importance for the children's rights programmes offered at the network's member universities with a focus on the *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights* (MACR) offered at the network's former coordinating institution, the Freie Universität Berlin. [58]

3.1. Predecessors

3.1.1. Erasmus Network in Children's Rights (1994-2002)

In 1994, the *Erasmus Network in Children's Rights* was established. During its existence (1994-2002), the network and its members offered short intensive courses in specific chil-

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[57] Mission statement in ENMCR statutes: http://www.enmcr.net/site/assets/files/1387/enmcr_statute.pdf (accessed 25.8.2014)

[58] The coordination of the ENMCR was located at FUB from its inception in 2004 until 2015-16. After having implemented an EU funded network project "Children's Rights Erasmus Academic Network" (CREAN) with several members of the ENMCR and other universities (http://www.crean-network.org/index.php/membership/members) who are working in the field, it became necessary to re-think the network's structure and membership. The coordinators aimed at making membership in the original network ENMCR attractive to the universities that had been cooperating in the framework of the CREAN project, as their contribution to the network had proved to be fruitful and mutually beneficial. Therefore, at the final meeting of the CREAN project in 2014, a decision was made by the General Assembly (GA) to give the existing network ENMCR a new name to better reflect the activities of the members (as not all offer complete master's programmes). The new name of the network stems from the network project CREAN, substituting the "Erasmus" for "European" (*Children's Rights European Academic Network*). At the same time, the GA decided to move the coordination office from the FUB to the University of Geneva, to the newly founded Centre for Children's Rights Studies. I will speak of the ENMCR when it clearly refers to activities before CREAN (2004-2012), otherwise I will use CREAN (from 2012) as the name of the network (see also: http://www.crean-network.org/index.php/about-crean/history (accessed 19.12.2017)

dren's rights topics with a focus on legal aspects. They also established Erasmus bilateral agreements for exchange.[59] The partners involved in this network included children's rights topics in their respective work, a full study programme however was not established. Even though this network of children's rights scholars is not a direct predecessor to the ENMCR, I mention it as it was the first endeavour of academics to create a network in children's rights. The network was dissolved in 2002 due to discontinuance of funding, yet several scholars are still cooperating, of which some are also members of ENMCR/CREAN.[60]

3.1.2. Red Latinoamericana de Maestrías en Derechos y Políticas Sociales de Infancia y Adolescencia (RMI)- Latin American Network of Master Study Programmes in Children's Rights (established 2003)

One year later (2003), three Latin American universities[61] established the *Red Latinoamericana de Maestrías en Derechos y Políticas Sociales de Infancia y Adolescencia* (RMI). The aim has been to educate and form a new quality of professionals who are dedicated to the development and empowerment of children through participation in newly developed joint master's programmes at the member universities (Bazán & Unda, 2009).

The initial impulse to create such a network and establish higher education programmes in children's rights came from Peru, where children (in marginalised situations, such as children living on the street and working children) themselves had approached social workers and staff members of NGOs. The children claimed that most "professional" adults they come into contact with[62] do not grasp what their circumstances are and neither understood nor experienced their lived reality. The children accused some adults of not reflecting on their "help" activities that are frequently informed by professionals in higher positions in the respective "helping" organisations and *their* (the children's) opinion on what the "best interests of the child" (Art. 3, CRC) are. The fundamental question about who defines the best interests of the child- adults for children, adults with children, children themselves- is often not considered in the actually well-meant activities.[63] As a

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[59] The European Union, as part of its strategy to reach the goal of enhanced cooperation between European Universities has been funding so-called Erasmus exchange agreements. The bilateral agreements allow for student, staff or teacher exchange between the two signing institutions. As part of universities' internationalisation efforts, agreements are established, and students are encouraged to study a semester abroad. As will be shown in later chapters, some students of the M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights have made use of this opportunity.

[60] The FUB was not a member of this network

[61] Universidad Mayor de San Simón, Cochabamba, Bolivia; Universidad del Externado de Bogota, Bogota, Colombia; Universidad Politécnica Salesiana de Quito, Quito, Ecuador. Today, in 2017, there are nine member universities in the RMI:; Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima, Peru; Universidad Nacional del Centro del Peru, Huancayo, Peru; Universidad Centro Americana de Nicaragua, Managua, Nicaragua; Universidad de Chile, Santiago, Chile; Universidad de Colombia del Paraguay, Asunción, Paraguay; Universidad Rafael Landivar de Guatemala, Guatemala City, Guatemala

[62] This includes any adult who has a relation to the children, e.g. professionals working directly with them, i.e. other social workers, or professionals in state institutions, legal workers etc.

[63] See also chapter 2.2.2. on the CRC and the best interests of the child as "super right".

consequence, these activities can lead to a change in children's lived reality. Yet this change is not necessarily a positive one (according to the children concerned). Due to the well-intentioned measures, marginalised children experience e.g. criminalisation if they are working or living on the street. By law, child labour is prohibited (ILO Convention 138 and 182 and national legal regulations), which reflects the moral understanding that a childhood should be spent in school not on the street. Frequently, this results in police raids against children who live in the streets and working children as their way of life is not legally permitted and should not be seen in order not to create a sense of discomfort for other (mostly wealthier) members of society, simply by showing poverty openly (Ennew, 2002; Invernizzi, 2017).

In conversations with the founders of both the RMI and the ENMCR it was frequently mentioned that voices of children who are living in marginalised, criminalised and excluded situations, e.g. working children, street children, child prostitutes, children heading households, "Children Out of Place" (Conolly & Ennew, 1996; Invernizzi et al., 2017)[64] were heard by the RMI founders and contributed to confirm the perceived need for qualification of professionals in decision-making positions (field notes on personal conversations with Juan Enrique Bazán, René Unda and Manfred Liebel during the founding process of ENMCR). The argumentation had been (and it prevails) that adults working directly with children are (more) aware of the many facets of their lives. In this position, they find differentiated and more adequate approaches to tackle and alleviate difficult situations children may be facing. A majority of adult-led organisations that grant funds for measures to improve the situation and well-being of children, are often too far removed from the children's reality to make constructive decisions on behalf of them (see testimonies of working children, Schibotto, 1990; Grillo & Schibotto, 1992; Terre des Hommes, 1995; Liebel, 1996).[65]

This situation led activists and researchers to realise the need to offer high-level qualification for leading professionals (lawyers, politicians, directors of NGOs and also social workers, teachers) in children's rights and childhood studies with the aim to improve the situation of children. The network of masters therefore

> *"..constitutes the regional and global centre of reference concerning three fields: a) higher academic qualification of professionals specialised in childhood and children, b) living school of thought and innovator of knowledge that is socially useful to the rights of children and social policies for the promotion and development of children; c) lending resources to professional technical services to the state and civil society, for children themselves and for international organisations" (Bazán & Unda, 2009: 431-432, own translation).*

A question already raised in 2009 that has still not been answered exhaustively is whether such master's programmes can be socially useful (in particular to children) (ibd.: 433). In chapter 1, I discussed the evaluability of the impact training workshops, master's courses, and further education can have on society, and concluded that, if at all, the impact can only be measured by the graduates or trained participants of the programmes and by the chil-

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[64] On the frame and use of the term 'Children Out of Place' see also chapter 5.2.3.2
[65] This phenomenon also exists within political decision-making structures for childhood policies.

dren and young people themselves, who can estimate the effect of the activities instigated and implemented by the highly qualified professionals who have ideally become conscious of the children's living situation.[66] From the RMI's inception it urged an interdisciplinary approach to children's rights. Disciplines, ranging from inter alia political science to education, social work, sociology, anthropology, law to e.g. urban planning are needed as the members of the network agreed that it is only possible to impart useful and meaningful, quality education by including as many disciplines as possible that in some way (can and should) concern children and their reality, well-being and rights.[67] Hitherto, children's rights are an interdisciplinary field of study, with relationships between several disciplinary approaches and interdependency of various disciplines that take differing approaches to children's rights (van Dam-Mieres et al., 2008; Vandenhole et al., 2015, see also chapter 4 and chapter 9).

3.2. The European Network of Masters in Children's Rights

Inspired and led by the same spirit of the RMI: giving children a voice that is heard and working towards them getting their rights, living their rights and understanding them as their own subjective rights, five (West) European universities founded the European Network of Masters in Children's Rights (ENMCR) in autumn 2004.[68] Two years later, in early 2006, two universities from Romania accessed the network.[69] The aim of the network has been to:

"exchange experiences, consult and advise each other, promote an exchange between teachers and students, enhance research on the implementation and further development of children's rights studies and influence children's policies on a national and European level to achieve a far-reaching and sustainable implementation of children's rights" (ENMCR statutes).[70]

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[66] The present study concentrates on the judgments and estimations of the programme participants. In a further study, children and young people themselves should be given space to voice their opinions on the effect they (can) experience due to the education of professionals in academic programmes in children's rights.

[67] Juan Enrique Bázan was the driving force behind setting up the network and connecting the members. At the time, he was the director of the Latin American Regional Programme of Save the Children Sweden and Canada and got funds from the organisation. From the beginning, he pressed to take an inclusive approach to children's rights yet to remain as a first nucleus of researchers/academics until the courses have proved to be useful. According to Bazán, only after the consolidation of the nucleus, new potential members should be invited to join the network.

[68] The leading professor for this initiative was Manfred Liebel, Professor of Sociology, who had worked intensively with children in marginalised situations in Nicaragua as a street worker in the 1980's. Manfred Liebel was the driving force in the process of establishing the ENMCR and was a member of the ENMCR directive committee and directed the MACR at FUB until 2015. The other four researchers were: Dr. Lourdes Gaitán, Universidad Complutense, Madrid and Asociación Grupo de Sociología de Infancia y la Adolescencia; Spain; Dr. Virginia Morrow, Institute of Education, University of London, since 2011 Young Lives, Oxford University, United Kingdom; Prof. Dr. Birgitta Qvarsell, Stockholms Universitet, Sweden; Dr. Olga Nieuwenhuys, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

[69] Universitatea Babes-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, Romania and Unversitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Iasi, Romania.

[70] www.enmcr.net (last access: 3.7.2015)

Civil society networks, had emerged already in the 1990s, directly after the CRC's ratification and argued for the implementation of the CRC in the Global North, too.

Following the efforts of civil society movements, who in the 1990' had demanded children's rights to be implemented also in the Global North, one aim of the ENMCR is to raise awareness on this necessity. The researchers study the development, content and implementation of children's rights from various disciplines. Here, as will be shown further below, the initiators of the ENMCR resorted to the debate on children's protagonism in the South and children's agency in the framework of the "New Sociology of Childhood Studies" in the North (see Liebel, 2001 and chapter 4.2.). This served as a starting point to glean knowledge on the social, cultural, philosophical and ethical implications of children's rights both internationally and within Europe, including the history, the problems and neuralgic points as well as contradictions in the interpretation and implementation of the CRC. Although the ENMCR owes its spirit largely to the RMI and in the MACR, by placing emphasis on the international implications of children's rights. This does not imply that European aspects and difficulties with the CRC and its implementation are not subject to debate in the MACR (albeit to a lesser extent[71]). Cooperation between European and Latin American universities and between European universities is a means for the common effort to train individuals who will work in decision-making positions from where they can direct and form the strategies and interventions and realise them as closely to the affected population as possible by taking into account their voices and opinions with a human rights attitude and thinking.[72/73]

Other members of the ENMCR place emphasis on further aspects of children's rights and tackle them from other disciplines taking a different approach. Scholars of legal studies for example focus on children's rights as positive legal rights within the international human rights legal system and place their focus mainly on the implementation of the CRC, within the framework of universalist approaches (Vučković-Sahović, 2000; Brems et al., 2017; Nowak, 2003). Furthermore, the network is committed to promoting research about childhood and children's rights for and with children themselves in order to contribute to the implementation and awareness-raising of the CRC and other, national laws and regulations for children and their rights. An exchange between scholars and (to a lesser extent) students of the network member universities has proven useful in compiling knowledge of specific national legal regulations and policies as well as social work, social pedagogy or other disciplinary approaches to children's rights in the respective countries and governmental systems. In order to improve and diversify classes, network

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[71] As I will show in chapter 10, this is a shortcoming within the MACR. Graduates do not feel sufficiently competent to argue and apply knowledge on European aspects and regulations, policies on children's rights, and it is one criteria the stakeholders had named as an important skill they would expect their staff to have after completing such a master's in children's rights.

[72] Not few of the MACR graduates have taken on positions in leading international human and children's rights organisations, aiming at influencing strategies and plans for intervention in countries of the South against much resistance from other staff members (see chapter 7).

[73] A lived human rights attitude is one outcome of the study programme. Research partners reveal this change in attitude in their statements (see chapter 10).

members also share e.g. teaching methods.[74] Each university has a specific focus and in regular encounters these perspectives are shared and discussed. This enriches the understanding of how children's rights can be studied interdisciplinarily. Additionally, the insights gained find their way into the classroom at the various universities.

The objectives of the ENMCR have been
- to assist and advise each other in the establishment of child rights programmes,
- to develop and exchange teaching materials and experiences,
- to enable an exchange of students and teachers between the courses and
- to organise events around specific children's rights themes (conferences, symposia, lecture series, summer schools, specialised workshops[75/76])
- to discuss and exchange research findings
- to cooperatively publish works on children's rights themes
- to enhance cooperative research on child rights themes
- to be influential in and contribute to children's and child rights policies on international, European, national, regional and local levels.

The network and its member institutions have been in contact with ministries and municipalities, not least due to dependence on public funds and have reached a fair appreciation of the courses they offer with the aim of achieving a far-reaching and sustainable implementation of children's rights.[77] To successfully implement the activities mentioned above and to recruit enough students for the (payable) study programmes, the network as backing and a rich source of knowledge and competence is of great value. Firstly, member institutions have a (further) far-reaching channel for dissemination of activities as the network can distribute information from member universities e.g. through the monthly electronic information service CRnews, the network's and the other members' websites, yet also by word of mouth recommendations. In addition, common activities can be conceptualised and realised, in which theory-building in children's rights takes place and debates are carried out on its relevance for practice (and research). Topics and disciplines

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[74] In the framework of the last large network project, a working group developed a platform for exchanging good practice examples of teaching children's rights (see also chapter 4 and 9)

[75] For example: Exploratory Workshop (2008): Children's participation in decision-making: Exploring theory, policy and practice across Europe; lecture series (2011; 2012; 2015); summer schools: Children's Citizenship and Participation Rights (CeCiP) (2007); Children's Right to Non-Discrimination (2013); Conference: e.g. Children's Participation in Research: Theory to Practice (2011).

[76] At FUB several of these side events were organised: symposium in memory of Janusz Korczak and his pioneer work on children's rights (2012), another in memory of Judith Ennew, a most important researcher of and activist for children's rights (2015); lecture series on Children and Justice (2010) and Making Children's Rights Real.

[77] At the inception of the MACR in Potsdam, the minister of social affairs made the opening speech; Potsdam is one of the nationwide communities to become a child friendly community (an initiative of the German Children's Help Association- Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk and UNICEF: http://www.kinderfreundliche-kommunen.de (accessed 20.12.2017). Since then, students and the MACR team have been approached inter alia to scientifically accompany a Child Rights Film Festival (Kinderrechte Filmfestival: http://kinderrechte-filmfestival.weebly.com (accessed 20.12.2017) or to conceptualise and implement workshops on children's rights for parents in marginalised areas of the city.

that are not covered by the staff of one member university can be introduced by scholars from another ENMCR university, who can be invited to the respective course as guest lecturers.[78] The network also asserts its effective role in convincing decision-makers at member universities who are not in favour of establishing children's rights as a field of study to re-consider their objections. Unfortunately, experience shows that this pretence has not been effected. Most member institutions cannot report that the ENMCR has significantly contributed to a continuance or establishment of child rights courses. At FUB, the many letters of support by ENMCR member universities demonstrating the internationality of the programme and the unique interdisciplinary character however did not effect a reversal in the decision taken to discontinue the programme at the institution. The (ostensible) reason for this decision was based on formal issues, arguing that there is no full-time professor at FUB to direct the programme. This was not incorrect at the moment, however several professorships had been filled over the previous five years, none of which was inclusive of intercultural education, childhood studies or children's rights. The underlying reasons however point to scientific work with a different interest, doing service to the above described Bologna process and measurable outcomes.

The necessity of competing vis à vis knowledge societies can be found in today's shift of education away from input to output-orientation, the starting point of which was the PISA shock in which the poor(er) performance of pupils in certain countries was clearly demonstrated. These educational performances, defined as cognitive knowledge acquisition, designed as hardly reflected reproduction of existing knowledge, are solely measured by the generated output of learning and gravely contribute to losing an understanding of education and learning as an end in itself for the development of (critically thinking and reflective) personalities (Reinders, 2016: 153). In Germany, a country with high self-esteem as well as high recognition for its knowledge and productive power, the inability to compete with other societies' school pupils set the educational agenda to attain achievement equal to other higher-ranking countries participating in the PISA study (Reinders, 2016: 152). Primary and secondary education is only the first step to generate more and earlier economically productive members of society and in particular consumers who have high market value. By way of implementing the Bologna system similar objectives are applied in higher education, with the shortening of study programmes, the demographic changes in European countries are sought to be counteracted, which results in the positive outcome of turning out younger professionals. The price to be paid, however, is a less informed, less critical and less democratic society. Today's rise and wide acceptance of right-wing parties may well be another consequence of this process. Empirical educational research, which has been pushed and funded with millions of Euros over the past 25 years, demonstrates the internalised societal shift, which (unfortunately) is seldom criticised.

The absence of these measurable outcomes was one of the reasons for closing down the MACR at the FUB as such a topic, which by its nature does not serve the new output-driven paradigm is undesired. By having established an increasing number of chairs in

[78] This is effected regularly through the above-mentioned Erasmus exchange agreements.

empirical educational research over the past 10-15 years, other forms of education have been rejected and eliminated. The leading empirical researcher, Harm Kuper, who was the Dean of the Faculty at the time of shutting down the MACR, argues that educational research and quality of education can only be objectively determined by applying specific predetermined indicators (Reinders 2016: 154, referring to Kuper, 2005). "The understanding of quality and evaluation have become, along with competence and examination, two further synonyms for optimising education, to which empirical education research has heavily contributed" (Reinders, 2006: 154; own translation)

Other ENMCR member universities did not argue along these lines when deciding to discontinue child rights programmes. They were more likely discontinued because of the declining number of students due to the European economic crisis starting in 2008-2009 and the consequential inability of students and families to afford studying, in particular in view of limited chances to find a job after graduation.

3.3. Children's Protagonism and Participation as Guiding Principles

Both the RMI and many ENMCR members' approach to children's rights has its roots inter alia in the discussion of participation, citizenship rights, children's agency embedded in the belief that children are (can and should be) protagonists in their lives and that they (can) take on a leading role in the design of their surroundings.

In Latin America, the notion of a general "protagonismo popular" arose in the 1970's. The concept argues that marginalised groups in society (originally landless farmers, minorities) are competent and are not only poor and unable to achieve a (fulfilled) living[79]/[80]/[81]. With reference to children (and their rights), their protagonism is based on the belief that children are competent subjects of rights, social agents and as such an integral part of society, (Cussiánovich, 2001a, 2001b; Liebel, 1994, 2001b; see also Gaitán, 2014; Da Silva Santos & Gomes, 2016). Protagonism of children was, as the protagonismo popular, first used in relation to marginalised or excluded children, who have been called "Children Out of Place" (Invernizzi et al., 2017; Ennew & Conolly, 1996) many of whom take on responsibility for their own lives and in numerous cases also for their family's well-being, which is, however, not seen publicly (Liebel, 2008a). Ascribing to children the capacity and competence to act as agents and take on a leading, protagonist role in their lives and their surroundings is one of the guiding principles the MACR aims at conveying to the students. Such a respectful and human rights attitude towards children, by which they are valued

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[79] Again, this expression has to be treated with caution, as there is no single understanding of what a fulfilled life entails. Here I mean a life filled with (enough) resources (material, cultural, social) to not be dependent on others.

[80] For an introduction of the Latin American protagonismo popular, see e.g. Vigil (1989)

[81] Today, revolutionary liberation movements mostly from Venezuela and Colombia cry for protagonismo popular in the face of political circumstances in their countries: http://www.eln-voces.com/index.php/editorial-index/1301-participacion-para-el-protagonismo-popular (accessed 20.12.2017); http://45-rpm.net/2016/10/17/a-fortalecer-la-movilizacion-y-el-protagonismo-popular/ (accessed 20.12.2017)

simply due to their being with their current competencies and demands is needed to make a contribution to ameliorating the children's situation.

A hypothesis of the founding members is that in listening to the children and following *their* argument of having no desire to be treated only in the way educated, professional adults see fit, a critical mass of qualified professionals is essential in order to have an actual impact on the situation of children and their rights and to assist in triggering (social) change. The increasing membership in CREAN demonstrates the potential force such academic endeavours have. After 12 years of offering the MACR at FUB with the backing of ENMCR/CREAN, approximately 300 students have graduated and those whom we are in contact with have made a difference in their work and surroundings, simply by having integrated the network's vision in their behaviour.

Naturally, even though all researchers united in the network have the same goal to advance children's rights (by research, policy recommendations, qualifying students etc.) not all follow the same approach and discussions at times are controversial- some of these negotiations between members will be taken up as I describe the development process of the master's programme after having given a discursive overview of theories on children's rights and childhood .

Chapter 4- Defining a Theory of Childhood and Children's Rights Studies

"...it is theories that guide the work that eventually produces (...) the kind of information from which significant social change will emerge as well as better theories. Theory is powerful and important" (Lee, 2004: 142).

Anselm Strauss (1987/1995) noted that theory provides a model or map of why the world is the way it is; theory is a simplification of the world and aimed at clarifying and explaining an aspect of it. For the present purpose, theory shall be understood as a guide to understand and work towards progress in specific areas of life, in this case, areas concerning childhood, children and their human rights. A theory for critical childhood and children's rights research and studies has been developing over the past years, much of it by scholars cooperating in the ENMCR/CREAN (see previous chapter 3). The network's founding members are guided by the belief that children's rights cannot and should not be studied or researched exclusively within the framework of the two disciplines that have traditionally occupied research on children's rights and childhood: law with a focus on normative rights and their implementation and theories based on children's development and evolving capacities.[82] Based on sociological approaches to childhood and children's rights mainly within the frame of sociological childhood studies, garnished with anthropological, educational, political theories, social work and legal theories, a new interdisciplinary approach to children's rights and childhood studies research has developed over the past two decades. The MACR programme is based on theories derived from sociological approaches to children and their rights, applying a considerably new understanding of childhood as a social construction within generational orders of society as well as children as agents of their own lives who can make a difference in their surroundings. Equally important as a guide through the MACR are rights philosophical aspects to children's human rights as the root for a child rights-based approach allowing for a bottom-up approach as opposed to the customary top-down approach to children's rights and enabling children to experience and live their rights.

In this chapter, I will
- present an overview and introduction of various concepts and theoretical approaches to children's human rights as subjective rights based on human dignity. Interdisciplinary approaches to the study of children and childhood will be highlighted, positioned

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[82] See e.g. Woodhead (2009): Child Development and the Development of Childhood. In: Qvortrup. J., Corsaro, W.A. and Honig, M. (eds.): *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. P. 46-61 and for a critical approach: Pelleg, Noam (2013): Reconceptualising the Child's Right to Development: Children and the Capability Approach. *International Journal of Children's Rights 21 (2013) 523–542*
See also Piaget (1969) as the pioneer and 'father' of child development studies, to whom many researchers refer to this day, e.g. H. Ginsburg, S. Opper: *Piaget's theory of intellectual development. An introduction.* Prentice-Hall.

within different schools of thought on childhood and children's rights studies (Hanson, 2012).

This is followed by

- an overview of the scientific and disciplinary evolution within childhood studies, beginning with developmental research approaches to children and childhood (Woodhead, 2009) based on children's evolving capacities (Lansdown, 2001b, 2005). This is succeeded by the "agency approach" to childhood (Vanobbergen, 2015; Esser et al., 2016, Stöcklin & Fattore, 2017) followed by a critical debate on childhood as a social construction in generational societal ordering (Qvortrup, 1993 & 2009; Gaitán, 2006a & 2014).

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Then, I will

- discuss rights philosophical aspects, beginning with a discussion on dignity as basis for human rights with reference to legal vs. moral rights (Sen, 2004; Radbruch, 1945/2006; Eichholz, 2008).

In the last part of the chapter, I will

- discuss (participatory) research approaches and methods of children's rights and childhood research (Ennew et al., 2009; Liebel, 2007b; Bessel & Waterson, 2017).

Both the understanding of children as citizens with agency, who merit respect and recognition as well as the principles of children's rights leading to the CRC had already been combined by Janusz Korczak (1878 or 1879-1942) in the early 20th century in his life and work with children. In conclusion to the chapter, I will thus give credit to his, the "great-grandfather of children's rights", work. The chapter concludes by combining the different approaches to come (at least close) to a theory of childhood studies and children's rights which can be defined as the theoretical basis of the MACR in Berlin/Potsdam and can inform the understanding of childhood and children's rights in other courses and programmes of network members.

4.1. Research Approaches to Children's Rights and Childhood

Children's rights and childhood studies have become a topic of interest for several academic disciplines over the past 25-30 years. Disciplinary approaches to the topics have varied and changed over time. Anthropologists and especially ethnographers, for example, have largely negated children's rights (understood as the CRC) in their research (André, 2015; Boyden, 1997; Burr, 2004; Montgomery, 2017); pedagogues, educators and social workers have been viewing children's rights through an educative lens, traditionally focussing on the access to education with a newer tendency also to research the content and quality thereof (Quennerstedt, 2015; Roth & Moisa, 2011; Johnson, 2010; Lundy, 2012); lawyers have focused on (universal) legal norms and their implementation (Bentley, 2005; Vucković-Sahovič, 2000 & 2012; Vandenhole, 2015). Whereas there has been a significant rise of theo-

retical law studies in which general understandings of children's rights as human rights are being discussed that are applicable not only in practical implementation of positive law, but have an implication also on attitudes and dealing with children's rights throughout several disciplines and various professions (Vandenhole, 2015). Not only law scholars tend to equate children's rights with the CRC, the above-mentioned disciplines have also largely focused on children's rights with reference to the Convention. This (limited) approach to the field has brought about the question whether such multidisciplinary[83] research should better be defined as children's *legal* studies rather than children's *rights* studies (Cordero Arce, 2015: 284). Acknowledging that the CRC (as any other legal instrument) is neither completely satisfactory nor all-inclusive and (can) provoke unease, there is an understanding that there is a need for critical and diligent analysis of children's rights to have a basis for resolving pitfalls and to discuss further development of the Convention.

Thus, it becomes apparent that there has been and still is a need for a new and differentiated theoretical approach to children's rights (and childhood) studies; it is up to academia to fill this void. The current situation begs to produce more inclusive knowledge and understanding of human rights and children's rights as human rights and to challenge its specific inherent tenets. This is realised by carefully analysing the Convention not only through a mono-disciplinary lens but including various disciplines to reach a holistic perspective as the basis for further development and thereby coming to a definition of an interdisciplinary children's rights theory. In their *Handbook of Children's Rights. Global and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, Ruck et al. (2017) offer a comprehensive compilation of different perspectives and approaches to children's rights, similarly, Vandenhole et al. (2015) with their *Routledge International Handbook of Children's Rights Studies* depict various disciplinary perspectives on children's rights, followed in a second part by a compilation of "selected themes at the intersection of the global and the local". Placing theories and tenets of specific disciplines in relation to each other to reach the interdisciplinary perspective children's rights studies (CREAN, 2014b), I will give the most prominent disciplinary approaches space here, not least because all scholars are trained in specific disciplines and continue to view childhood and children's rights, at least partially, from within their disciplinary lens. Before giving an account of the above-mentioned disciplinary perspectives on children's rights and childhood (chapters 4.1.2.-4.1.4.), I will present a typology of views of childhood and children's rights one of the members of the CREAN network has developed (Hanson[84], 2012), by which overarching approaches to children and their rights can be described and that can be applied to the disciplinary approaches I will consider afterwards.

4.1.1. Fourfold typology of understandings and views on children's rights

[83] As opposed to disciplinary research, which is based on only one discipline, multidisciplinary approaches to a theme juxtapose disciplinary perspectives with the end to extend knowledge beyond the single disciplines. Interdisciplinary, as another research approach is understood here as a close cooperation between different disciplines to reach a common, more holistic, understanding of the subject matter being investigated (see also chapter 9).

[84] Karl Hanson, professor of law at University of Geneva, Switzerland, member of the CREAN network and head of its steering committee at the time of writing this dissertation (2016-2017).

In his article, 'Four Schools of Thought in Children's Rights', Karl Hanson (2012), has set forth a typology of children's rights that is useful as an orientation and can assist to explain different approaches to childhood and children's rights. Even though these four schools of thought have been claimed to be mutually exclusive, opposing and manifest and as such have been criticised of hindering a holistic approach to the study of children's rights, they can serve as a useful tool for categorisation, which is indispensable to understand the meaning of any subject matter[85]. The different schools of thought and their characteristics are depicted below (table 3).

Table 3- Four Schools of Thought in Children's Rights

	Liberationism	**Emancipation**	**Welfarism**	**Paternalism**
Characteristic/ Understanding of Children, Childhood and Children's Rights	Children are equal to adults and deserve equal rights in all circumstances (also e.g. sexual rights)	Children are accepted as rights holders, also to participation, however they are different from adults (yet equal)	Children not only need protection they also merit provision rights	Children are first and foremost vulnerable and have the rights to be protected- not more

 Adapted from Hanson, 2012[86]

The liberationist approach to children and their rights is manifested in the acknowledgement and respect for children as equally competent subjects of rights in the present who are entitled to the same rights as adults (plus additional special rights tailored to children's dignity). Children's rights scholars, as will be shown later, seldom refer to this radical approach to children's rights, which was first introduced in the 1970's in the wake of women's liberationist movements and the civil rights movement of the African American people, claiming full rights for children as "the last minority", including sexual liberation, which was equally revolutionary and revolting (Farson, 1974). Rather, the argument for children's rights is grounded in the assumption that children are different from adults and need special rights. The opposite, paternalist approach is, according to Hanson, based on the belief that children are in need only of *one* special right, the right to be protected from the atrocities of the (adult) world. Children are not yet able to protect themselves, they (have to) depend -only- on loving and caring adults who take on the responsibility for their well-being (Archard, 2015).

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[85] It is commonly known and accepted that we as human beings need categorisations of our surroundings in order to grasp their entirety and context. Without categorisations we are prone to live and act in a constant 'blur'.

[86] In his revised edition of *Children. Rights and Childhood* (2015), David Archard included a new chapter: Liberation or caretaking? (pp.64-79) in which he develops the 'caretaker thesis', by which children are not (yet) in a stage in which they can enact self-determination but are (still) dependent on their caretakers- this thesis reflects both the strictly paternalist and more moderate welfare school of thought Hanson includes in his typology.

More than just a few students on the MACR start the programme having in mind the predominant paternalistic picture of childhood and children's rights. The essence of approaching children in a paternalist (or adultist[87]) manner is an understanding of children being "not yets", still "becomings", incapable of acting on their own behalf (Morrow & Pells, 2017: 120). [88] This does not suggest that children's rights scholars who cannot be categorised as (pure) paternalists contest that children, as one of the most vulnerable groups in society, need protection (Andresen et al., 2015). However, scholars who ascribe to children the competence of beings in the present afford children, as subjects of rights, also an array of provision and participation rights. Hanson, as depicted in table 3, situates emancipationist and welfarist approaches between paternalist and liberationist approaches, with emancipationists tending more towards liberation, and welfarists more towards paternalistic understandings of children's rights. Emancipationist approaches put greater emphasis on children as beings rather than becomings, by acknowledging children's equal competence unless otherwise proven. According to the typology, emancipationists aim to take into account both the particularities of childhood as a special stage in life as well as the principle of equality of all human beings, children included. Lastly, the welfare approach places more emphasis on children's need of protection, leaning towards paternalism, whereas children are granted a (limited) voice in decisions about measures of protection and (material) provision for their well-being.

This admittedly blanket scheme of approaches to children's rights based on different understandings of children and their childhood can be used to reflect one's own standpoint and it opens paths of challenging assumptions and beliefs and can trigger critical debate. This is recognised as a necessary ingredient for the continuous development of a children's rights theory, which is understood as a changing concept dependent on inter alia current social circumstances, new legal regulations and political efforts. I started here with this typology as one form of understanding childhood and children's rights; in the following subchapters on disciplinary approaches to childhood and children's rights forms of these schools of thought are dealt with.

4.1.2. Anthropological and ethnographic approaches to children's rights

In the past three decades, anthropological research of children's rights has only been done in the frame of other social sciences (Montgomery, 2017). Anthropologists who employ mainly ethnographic research methods have generally been critical and sceptical towards the study of children's rights (Boyden, 1997; Burr, 2004), mainly due to the CRC's claim to universal validity and applicability despite enormous cultural differences in defining

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[87] Even though possibly mistaken as the same perspective due to its top-down approach to children based on superiority, in the frame of his work on postcolonial childhoods, Liebel has differentiated between paternalist and adultist behaviour, where paternalistic approaches to children are conscious (mostly well-meant) acts of protection, whereas adultist behaviour occurs mostly unconsciously, due to established, long-standing social structures (Liebel, 2017b)

[88] Morrow & Pells (2017) refer here to Anthony Giddens' definition of agency, even though he did not make any reference to children. His definition of agency is the capability of the individual to "make a difference" in his/her surrounding.

childhood and its characteristics around the world. Theories of cultural relativism, arguing that the CRC disregards local settings, values and traditions has been the only unique approach to children's rights of anthropologists (Montgomery, 2017). The possibly most striking and obvious difficulty when reflecting the Convention lies in the individualist approach taken by it (as any international UN human rights treaty). Concentration on an individualist-, Western-, rights-based understanding of how societies function, emphasising autonomy, personal choice and equality was in the forefront (Helwig & Turiel, 2017: 134). This emphasis on rights-based societies vs. duty-based societies seem problematic. The focus on the community and collective of its people (Hofstede, 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), where social duties are fulfilled in a strictly hierarchic distinction of the members of society and group goals based on traditional values are excluded does not do justice to children and their lived reality around the world. The understanding of a community lies in the strength of the collective, not the single person (Holzscheiter, 2010: 83), which challenges the pretension of the universality of human and children's rights to say the least. That said, even though the human rights system is fashioned to ascribe human rights to all individuals based on their dignity, they can only become useful and a tool for protection from violation in relation to other individuals (Kerber-Ganse, 2009: 29). Discussing the relation between anthropologists and children's rights over the past decades, Géraldine André (2015: 118), with reference to Stephens (1995); Scheper-Hughes and Sargent (1998), argues that the focus on the individual child as the subject of rights- regardless of adult approval or not, is related to the liberal philosophy of the self-governing individual and is therefore not congruous with the lived experiences and surroundings or social orders in nearly all societies and communities of the Global South. The "export" of the Western childhood concept, the "hegemonic ideal" of a (singular) proper childhood has been widely contested (Holzscheiter, 2010: 89 with reference to Balagopalan, 2002: 20; Nieuwenhuys, 2008: 83). Several other scholars have emphasised these issues when criticising the CRC and its development process (Boyden, 1997; Burr, 2002; Harris-Short, 2001; Kjørholt, 2002). It can be assumed that sceptical anthropologists would argue for *children's rights from below*, a concept derived from sociology and law, understood as the rights of children with direct relation to children's lived reality (Liebel et al., 2012a, Freeman, 2009, chapter 4.3.3.). Children are undoubtedly the best connoisseurs of their lives, the concept of children's rights from below consequentially debates whether and how children themselves can fight and realise their written (codified) and unwritten (moral) rights (see chapter 4.3.2.). "There is a distinction between "having" rights and being allowed to exercise them. (…) A de-contextualised discourse does not take into account the living conditions, the social, economic and historical contexts in which children grow up, which can be very diverse, and which are the environments in which children's rights are to be realised" (Freeman, 2009: 387). It is essential to grasp and understand the different lived realities of children across the globe and, according to Veerman & Levine (2000), it is time to shift the discussion from the "Geneva Scene", the Western, Eurocentric level, to the grassroots level where children's rights can be realised within their own spaces and places. The misgivings of some scholars and practitioners about the (legal) children's rights approach has its roots in the manner by which these universal regulations came into being. Stakeholders who were included in the process of drafting the CRC represent different and diverse approaches and understandings of

childhood and children, however (nearly) all participating parties came from a North Western, European country. Children themselves were not included (see chapter 2.3).[89]

Many anthropologists see the meaning of the CRC limited to their understanding of what is a rightful treatment of children and most importantly a rightful understanding of their lives and their wishes (see e.g. Ennew, 2002; Ennew et al., 2005). Another issue in furthering children's rights is the danger of "economising" children's rights and setting up what Pupavac calls a "human rights regime" and subsequently a "children's rights regime" (Pupavac, 2001), in which personal or organisational profit-making with reference to children's rights move to the foreground.[90] Similarly, Mutua argues that in human rights discourse in general[91] the "major authors (...) seem to believe that all the most important human rights standards and norms have been set and that what remains of the [human rights] project is elaboration and implementation" (Mutua, 2002: 4). Lansdown (2001a) underlines this by claiming that the "...main critique ... regarding children's rights law concerns the philosophical thought that underlies current formal human rights discourses. The specificity of the CRC is that it brings an additional dimension to the status of children, in that it recognizes them as subjects who have rights, and not simply as beneficiaries of adult protection ..." (André, 2015: 118 with reference to Lansdown, 2001a). With this understanding of children as agents in their own lives as one of the main pillars of the Convention, anthropologists have only recently reconciled with children's rights. Scepticism and wariness as well as constant questioning of children's rights and their general use however remains to be paramount for anthropologists in the field.

4.1.3. Approaches to children's rights from the standpoint of education

In Germany, up to today, children's rights are not included as a mandatory subject in education nor in pedagogy. Although several voices pleaded for such an inclusion, including MACR teachers and graduates, the curricula of education studies at university have (until now) not been reformed accordingly. Nor have children's rights officially found their way

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[89] Several scholars (Liebel, Kerber-Ganse, Holzscheiter, Morrow, Ennew) have lamented this fact, as Fritzsche (member of the MACR advisory committee) however rightly argues, the setting in which the negotiations took place were not suitable for children and young people- they would have surely been bored. Hence, the first step would have been to create a space in which they could have contributed meaningfully to the process, which within the UN system is not foreseen and hardly implementable. Therefore, arguing that children should have been present in the working groups seems wishful thinking and somewhat removed from reality (field note, meeting of MACR advisory committee)

[90] Profit-making can be observed in fundraising campaigns of large Non-Governmental Organisations who generate funds to help children however most financial means are used to pay their own staff and further campaigns- it is easy to raise money by demonstrating the misery of others, in particular children (Liebel, 2017c, pp. 212-234).

[91] This includes the children's rights debate as children's special human rights within the overall UN human rights research, which has long been one of quantitative statistics on age groups; education and health mainly. Guiding questions have been: How many children (0-18) are enrolled in school? (Not how many attend, but how many are enrolled) or how high is the rate of a certain disease, such as tuberculosis? Judith Ennew's plea to collect disaggregated data, or to collect data which allows disaggregated analysis must be recalled here (personal conversation with Judith, see also Liebel & Budde, 2017), begging qualitative research, with children, or even with children themselves as researchers - with adult moderation/accompanying them (Ennew, 2010).

into current school curricula. Even though they are increasingly dealt with in special classes, working groups or workshops. It seems that awareness on children's rights has grown over the past 10 years and increasingly so over the past 5 years, making children's rights almost "trendy" and "hip" with the demand that any institution should have some kind of relation to them, be it a statute plan strategy or just a label on children's rights- it is good etiquette. How children's rights find a way into schools and how children experience their rights in these surroundings in which they spend most of their time on weekdays, is under-researched. There are researches on children's well-being which have some reference to children's well-being in schools, however this research does not particularly ask for pupils' perception of their rights nor how they experience them (being respected or not, in what area, in what area not, by whom and by whom not etc.: Quennerstedt, 2015)

A great deal of research concerning children's rights and education concentrates on access to education with a tendency to include aspects of quality in education and how content is delivered in school (ibid.: 201). Research in education has also been guided by a Western image of childhood, disregarding the many facets of other childhoods across the globe. Also, education is equated with schools, which in itself bears problems. The conception of education primarily as access to schools and primary, basic, elementary education can misdirect theorising this large and complex theme of high relevance to children's rights. School should be a setting in which rights are lived, as children and young people spend most of their time there- "For children and young people's education is life in all facets" (Quennerstedt, 2015: 201).

Education is largely understood as the key to everything (success, mobility, wealth, well-being etc.) and has been declared a human right for all (UDHR, (1948) Art.26), not explicitly for children (Johnson, 2010; McCowan, 2012). Even though based on a Western image and thereby focused on the individual, there is an agreement that education does not only serve the individual but also society (Lansdown, 2001b). In order to make the learning experience in educational settings (schools) a positive one, a distinction between the right to education and rights in education is needed (Lundy, 2012). Children and young people can experience school life as a space for happiness, joy and positive peer relations, for many children, however, school can be a daunting experience, due to discrimination and mistreatment by peers or teachers. Therefore "... learning to act in accordance with human rights requires knowledge about what human rights are (facts) and teaching that respects those rights (in practice)" (Quennerstedt, 2015: 203). And "while most teachers are eager to create a child-friendly environment, the traditions in education that form teachers' views of children are not always in line with a children's rights perspective. In many instances, authoritarian patterns and insufficient respect for children's human dignity and rights characterize the relations between children and teachers" (ibid.: 203). The use of suspension and exclusion of pupils is on the rise, which often leads to malevolent behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse and physical violence (Dávila & Naya, 2007; Bryson, 2010). Pleas for changing this system of punishment have yet not been heard (Hemphill & Schneider, 2013). In particular Children Out of Place, i.e. children in disadvantaged situations, such as, inter alia, children belonging to specific ethnic minority groups, low socio-economic background, having a refugee status or not having documents (Benhabib, 2004; Vandenhole et al., 2011) are victims of these disciplinary measures (Osler & Starkey, 2005). In several states, including Germany, alternative school forms have been introduced to counteract such discrimina-

tion, with more or less success. By introducing so-called inclusive schools, in which pupils of all talents and cultural, religious, ethnic backgrounds are expected to learn together, a step towards social justice is made, so the argument. There have been voices criticising this model, arguing that these newly founded inclusive schools are yet another form of segregation, as only the "difficult" or "different" children are sent to these schools (Bryson, 2010).

To sum up, approaches to childhood and children's rights from an educational perspective reveal that also here, Western images of the school pupils and educational systems (especially school as institutionalised system of education) are the common approach to research requiring re-consideration and a widening of horizons. To be seen positively is that research has also moved away from pure quantitative measure of children's school access and enrolment numbers that have disregarded the quality of education. The need for high quality education has been more closely defined in General Comment No. 1, CRC (2001) on "The Aims of Education" and has been slowly included in debates on children's right to education. A respectful environment, in which rights are lived in the classroom and on the school grounds is paramount to children's rights to education, which is, as I see it, far superior to the factual content taught in the institution. I am also of the opinion that the notion of equating education with school should make way for an understanding of education as a learning process which takes place in every circumstance at any given time.

4.1.4. Universalism- approaches to children's (legal) rights

"Most legal scholars approach children's rights on the basis of seeing outstanding children's rights issues mainly as a lack of implementation of the existing legal standards" (Vandenhole, 2015: 27). As such, Vandenhole, a prof of law in Antwerp and member of CREAN, recognises the need to shift away from a "simple" implementation of the standards set out in the CRC to come to a differentiated view on the legal, (claimable) universal standards[92]. Notwithstanding this progressive interpretation of children's right, the nature of these legal standards laid out in children's rights laws, treaties and conventions remain largely uncontested by most other legal scholars. The notion of what childhood entails is also widely unchallenged, leading to a view of childhood based on Western beliefs and values (see above). When discussing this study with Nevena Vučkovič Šahovič[93], professor of law and early member of the ENMCR/CREAN, she asked me to also include views of legal scholars who press for the implementation of the CRC and who do believe in universalism and universal value of norms (minimum standards), seeing that the academic programmes of CREAN members reflect a combination of all views and curricula. This is one of the great assets of the (multidisciplinary) network: to introduce all aspects of childhoods and rights of the child and to debate the application of universal standards in a variety of

[92] In a personal conversation after Prof. Dr. Wouter Vandenhole, UNICEF Chair in Children's Rights, Universiteit Antwerp, had visited the MACR in Potsdam for a guest lecture, he told me that this differentiated approach to children's rights has opened up to him with the membership in ENMCR/CREAN.
[93] Nevena Vučkovič Šahovič, at the time prof. at the Law Faculty, Union University Belgrade, Serbia and now visiting scholar at Oxford University, UK. Former member of the Child Rights Committee (2003-2009)

cultures (field note: discussion during CREAN summer school on "Children's Rights to Non-Discrimination).[94]

Nonetheless, it is uncontested that "there are bedrock considerations of human well-being and right treatment that extend across boundaries of a country and culture, and it is these that properly form the basis of some universal rights" (Bentley, 2005: 108). Minimum standards for children's *human* rights, that are universally applicable across countries and cultures do exist, however they are, according to Bentley, nonspecific to children. E.g. physical integrity, i.e. protection from harm, rape, murder and provision of access to clean drinking water and healthy nutrition apply just as much to adults as to children and are universal human rights in general (ibid.: 110). Following Bentley's challenging argumentation, there would seemingly be no need for child-specific human rights, which, however, is an agreed given amongst scholars of all disciplines dealing with children's rights. Nonetheless, it is fair enough to question in what way children's rights as set out in the CRC are derogable and seemingly arbitrary once children have reached a certain age. The question of how much self-determination and autonomy of children is permitted within the framework of the CRC in view of the universality of the rights enshrined remains to be answered. I follow Grover (2007) in her response to Bentley in which she rightly points to at least two articles in the Convention that explicitly refer to cultural characteristics of children which are to be protected and promoted (Art. 8, the right to identity including nationality and its protection as well as provision to re-attain identity in case of loss and Art. 30, manifesting the protection and promotion of indigenous cultures). Notwithstanding, "…it seems (…) that the greatest challenge to the universal right treatment of children is not at the level of their special rights as children, but rather is generated by insufficient care and attention being paid to their (general) human rights" (Bentley, 2005: 121).

Summing up this very brief and also perhaps one-sided insight into legal approaches to children's rights discussing mainly the notion of whether children's rights are universal, whether children's *human* rights are truly based on a universalism that applies across the globe and across countries and cultures I argue that a universalist approach, which is stuck in the "implementation gap" (Vandenhole, 2015; Tobin, 2013), is valuable as not to curtail children's rights. At the same time the challenge we face is how effective standard setting through legislation and litigation is for changing social realities, if this is the main aim of children's and human rights. In spite of all its shortcomings, the CRC and child law and legislation gives a certainty of rights which can (theoretically) be claimed and without which we would not have any formal or official framework in which the rights of children can (theoretically- and practically) be enforced.

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[94] Intensive Summer school in the frame of the CREAN project at Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal, 2014)

4.2. Childhood Studies

Understanding childhood as separate from adulthood has its beginning in the Middle Ages, so argues Ariès in his seminal work *Centuries of Childhood* (Ariès, 1962). His theory of childhood is a building stone for further (sociological) thoughts on what childhood is and can be seen to be (see e.g. Hungerland, 2008). Here I will not give an account of "the Ariès thesis" (Archard, 2015: 23), rather I will take it as a given, that childhood is worthy of studying in its own right, that this is acknowledged amongst social science scholars. If this were not the case, the study programme under investigation here would not exist, nor would several of the theoretical thoughts and approaches described below have any substance. Instead, I will begin this subchapter with an account of the paradigm which has dominated childhood research over many years in modern societies and how it has gradually shifted its focus in the past three decades.

The most influential research paradigm in modern societies in researching children and childhood has been the understanding that children develop into adults with reasoning and competencies in the course of their early years in life (Woodhead, 2009: 47).[95] In the late 1980s, and early 1990s, unease spread amongst theorists which led to questioning the individual, biological and cognitive development approach in children and childhood research. As answer to this discomfort, they started shifting focus and started placing more weight on socialisation rather than individual development processes as the main component of their research about children and the composition of societies. Children and young people were now researched according to the external influences they are subjected to. At the time, most socialisation scholars still did not take into consideration children's and young people's agency in designing their surroundings and living circumstances. Notwithstanding the emphasis on society and the external influencing factors on its members, socialisation theorists still concentrated on a research paradigm based on children's development to become members of society once they have reached adulthood. The difference was that they no longer argued only with the individual psychological development of the child based purely on biological and genetic factors.[96] Almost simultaneously, other sociologists (see e.g. Zeiher et al., 1996; Hengst & Zeiher, 2005) started challenging developmental and socialisation theories as both concentrated on children's futurity[97], giving children's research no clear space for the momentary, present situation and placement of children in society, let alone on their possibilities to influence

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[95] "Development" itself is a contested term. To revise existing and functioning structures in the Global South in the name of development much is done as development (e.g. industrial development) is understood as advancement and therefore a goal to be achieved. However, what the characteristics of this development are, is determined largely by a minority of people in the Global North. On development and discussion about its notion, positive and negative impact around the globe see e.g. Gordian Troeller's film series from the 1970s; Adick & Stuke, 1996; Liebel, 2017c.

[96] See e.g. Abels & König (2010) for an encompassing overview of socialisation theories on "how we become what we are": *Sozialisation: Soziologische Antworten auf die Frage, wie wir werden, was wir sind.* Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

[97] A term Adrian James used to describe the engrained and prevailing focus on the future in childhood research (James, 2010: 492)

their living situation, and emphasised the need to acknowledge children as subject beings (instead of objects to be researched).

Children's rights qualification and research must combine both the acquisition of knowledge on codified children's rights, firstly those in the CRC, yet also their transfer to national laws/legal regulations. Which codified rights are to be implemented by whom (politically) and with what resources requires manifestation in national law. Law is interpreted or viewed from various angles and disciplines. Political actors are the interpreters and executors of legal right. Not only they, also society, we, as humans interpret law. Emotions such as pity, feeling of injustice, can be the manifestation of the violation of "moral rights", yet who determines this violation? Not all of us humans will feel injustice in view of the same just? action. In fact, the law, stemming from moral, natural rights should determine what is just and what not[98] (on the different levels and forms of rights, and their origin as well as meanings, see below, 4.3. and in particular 4.3.2.).

In this second section of chapter 4, I will trace these varying sociological approaches to childhood and children's rights, ranging from traditional approaches stemming from a (moral) developmental perspective on children and adolescents (4.2.1.; Woodhead, 2009; Lansdown; 2005), followed by approaches to childhood with respect to children's agency (4.2.2.; Esser et al., 2015; Gaitán, 2014), challenging the quest of understanding children as a social construction (Qvortrup, 2009; Gaitán, 2006a; Hengst & Zeiher, 2005) within generational orders (Alanen, 2005; 4.2.3.).

4.2.1. Developmental approaches to children and childhood

Placed within Hanson's four schools of thought in children's rights, developmental psychology would be situated somewhere between welfare and paternalist approaches to children and childhood. Developmental psychology argues that children are in need of protection and are defined as beings who are only complete when they have reached adulthood and they have to live through and learn in their childhood to be able to reach competencies needed in adulthood, when they are developed. "A child is denied the right to self-determination in order that he should be able to exercise this very right in adulthood" (Archard, 2015: 75). Even though such approaches dominate childhood studies in the field of developmental psychology, there have been trends towards a more holistic view on children that have gained weight over the past decades giving way also to an understanding of

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[98] This principle is being led ad absurdum by the German Government and its draft for a new asylum law. The moral right behind the planned (and anticipated to be ratified and subsequently enforced) new asylum law signifies a breach of basic human rights on which the UN agreed after the NS regime. The dignity of man/woman is inviolable, preamble of the German Constitution (Bundesgesetzbuch). By declaring authoritarian governments (e.g. Maghreb) and States as safe third countries in order to have the legal legitimation to rob man/woman of their dignity, but possibly condone the right to life. The other principle (moral right) is the right to be with your family- in the case of children through CRC, Art. 10, 20. This is eroded by the new law permitting family reunification only after a minimum of two years of living in Germany.

children as agents, yet only in specific circumstances (Stainton-Rogers, R. & Stainton-Rogers, W., 1992; Burman, 1997; Woodhead 1999).

Despite all criticism of developmental approaches to childhood, it would be detrimental to a holistic understanding of childhood studies to completely discard the discipline within childhood studies as every child undergoes a process of growing and developing capacities. This approach has been favoured by some developmental scholars, who prefer using the term "evolving capacities" lent from the CRC, Art.5 (see e.g. Lansdown, 2005; Woodhead, 2009). The term implies that the adult responsible for the individual child has the right and the duty "...to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance ..." (CRC, Art. 5) and "...to provide direction to the child ... in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child" (CRC, Art. 14, freedom of thought, speech and religion). Having quoted these sections, it can be argued that the evolving capacities approach has entrenched itself in a developmental approach to children, as children are clearly confined to "the manner consistent with their evolving capacities" to be provided and guided towards adulthood. Notwithstanding the developmental component in the concept of evolving capacities, it provides and ascribes to children abilities such as understanding and communicating relevant information, thinking and choosing with some degree of independence and assessing the potential for benefit, risk and harm in specific activities. I.e. children are understood as beings with reason who have "....some value base from which to make a decision" (Lansdown, 2005: xi). Notwithstanding the differences between the pure developmental and the evolving capacities approaches, they are both based on a 1) paternalistic and welfare as well as on a 2) individualistic perspective on children. Paternalist, in adults' "knowing" what is important for a child's upbringing and by the arbitrariness of determining how developed the capacities of children are and individualist by focusing on single children. Yet, the notion of evolving capacities still seemed not sufficiently far- reaching to do justice to children and their abilities. In his article in Hanson & Nieuwenhuys volume: *Reconceptualizing Children's Rights in International Development- Living Rights Social Justice Translations,* Liebel (2013), suggests a transformation of the concept of evolving capacities to a concept of evolving "capabilities", in order to do justice to children's situation and to turn children's rights into living rights based on children's agency (see also below, 4.3.3.).

4.2.2. Children's agency

> *"If the sociology of childhood can uncover the power constellations between adults and children and questions its legitimacy, this can ultimately lead to children having the possibility to act on a par with adults" (Hungerland, 2008, p.89, own translation).*

The impetus for attributing agency and citizenship not only to adults but also to children can be traced back to the anti-authoritarian and liberation movements and student protests in the late 1960s. Sociologists took up these activities in their research concentrating on young people- their agency was subsumed under terms such as youth subcultures (or youth gangs- later and mainly in Latin America) and as such ascribed agency to them. Around this time, in Germany, in the 1970s, the first self-regulated and self-administered children's care places (Kinderläden) were created, where the maxim for dealing with chil-

dren has always been mutual respect between children and caretakers. It is legitimate to draw an analogy to the respect the students had demanded from their parents and the general adult(ist) society. Children's agency can be seen as a successor to the achievements and empowerment of the young generation, which now has trickled down to the youngest group in society. The young people who instigated and fought in the crisis on authority have in the meantime become parents and adults who (as we hope) are slowly acknowledging young children's agency as well.

In academia, several researchers embarked on the journey towards an agency-based (progressive) understanding of childhood in the late 1980s to mid 1990s with the rise of the "New Sociology of Chilhood". As an underlying assumption, scholars acknowledged that childhood(s) is a special, other stage in life than adulthood, that it is constantly changing and varies across regions and cultures. In order to explore and research the impact children's agency has, children and young people must be set aside from adults, yet not separated from them (James, 2010: 493-494). Children are subjects in their own right who have agency, which helps them shape their daily experiences. Children have agency already at a young age and merit equal attention and respect as well as recognition by older, adult citizens (Alderson, 2013). In essence, children are understood as citizens and agents who can provoke changes in society (as much as other citizens can or cannot). In sum, the scholars who research in the frame of the "New Sociology of Childhood" see children as worthy and completely developed not only in the future, but as beings in the present, whose opinions are not to be less valued than any other person's opinion who has already reached the age of 18, making him or her an adult by law (Corsaro, 1997; James & Prout, 1997; Qvortrup, 1993).

Hence, childhood sociologists have been aiming at changing the position of children in society working towards creating a space in which they have more freedom of expression and participation in the design of their society. Childhood sociologists call for re-thinking and re-conceptualising childhood and the study thereof- it is not about negating everything that came before, it is a wakeup call, to look behind the scenes and re-think certain norms and well-meant values (Gaitán, 2014: 127). In their seminal work *Theorizing Childhood,* James, Jenks & Prout (1998) argue for an agency-based approach to children and childhood (see Vanobbergen, 2015: 68). "Just like adults, the child is determined by his feelings and intelligence. The child is a serious being and therefore always deserves to be taken seriously" (Vanobbergen, 2015: 61). Even though one can agree with Vanobbergen that children are to be taken seriously, it is important not to lose sight of children's playfulness: the freedom from being too serious. When we speak of reviving the child within us, or keeping the child in us alive, we refer to independence of formal duties and the undiscerning or naïve behaviour only children are permitted to have. This does not imply that children cannot and do not live such independence, e.g. child-headed households in the Global South or e.g. in households in the Global North where parents may be drug abusers or for some other reasons unable to care for their children, or where children take

on responsibility for sick or handicapped relatives.[99] Not only must children be valued as any other member of society, children must have the option and space to take on a protagonist role in their own lived reality (see chapter 3 on children's protagonist role; also: e.g. Gaitán, 2014).

Understanding children as social actors who permanently form a fixed part of the social structure has become commonplace and has been widely accepted as paradigm and credo of sociological childhood research. Children's agency has, however, not been comprehensively re-thought since it was introduced and agreed on by a majority of child rights and childhood researchers nearly thirty years ago. Yet, recently, there have been voices challenging and rethinking this old and largely un-reformed concept. In their recent volume *Reconceptualizing Children's Agency and Childhood* (Esser et al., 2016), the editors have compiled debates of new concepts to understand children's agency as "the field of Childhood Studies is expected to elaborate new models of children's agency according to what we may call post-modern or post-structural approaches to it" (Bollig & Kelle, 2016). As the concept of agency has been "inadequately theorised" (Prout, 2000: 16), the authors in the volume shed light on the concept of agency which is informed mainly by Western belief and value systems and thought in adult terms of giving children a voice and not as the children themselves being actively involved particularly in research on their own terms (Esser et al., 2016: 8-9). In the same volume, two authors view children's agency as structure and demonstrate this by using the image of a river (children) and land (social surrounding) which shape each other. "Rather than static, spatial concepts about fixed edges between them (children-social surrounding), structure and agency can be seen as dynamic processes interacting across porous shifting boundaries and changing over time" (Alderson & Yoshida, 2016: 78). Changing the boundaries and "working towards more just societies is a central task for sociology, and childhood researchers (MA students and graduates, own comment) who are uniquely able to work with and for children and young people as agents towards this goal" (ibd.: 87). Another assumption of several childhood sociologists is that childhood should be understood as a social construction society has created. Based on generational orders as the framework for understanding such a construction the next sub-chapter will discuss whether this approach to childhood is appropriate to research about and with children.

4.2.3. Childhood- a solid social construction over generations

Scholars have taken to discussing childhood as a social and generational construct, manifest over time and space although children themselves move out of childhood- new children take their place (Qvortrup, 2009; Alanen, 2005). This understanding of childhood has been widely accepted. Equally accepted by most sociologists is the notion that childhood is a social construction varying from historical times over cultures and regions as well as the

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[99] The issue of children of immigrants and their role in sustaining the family by knowing the local culture and language has been given way to research- one MA thesis (2015) dealt with this topic concentrating on doctor's visits in Austria- an autobiographical piece, which gives good insight into the difficulties children in these positions encounter: *"Rollentausch. Wenn Kinder die Verantwortung für die Gesundheit ihrer Eltern übernehmen müssen" ("Role change. When children have to take on the responsibility for their parents' health").*

economic and material situation of societies and social groupings children grow up in. Qvortrup (2009) and Gaitán, (2006a, 2006b) point to specific traits of this approach to childhood studies:

- Taking a global rather than an individualistic approach (children in general, not the child in particular).
- Placing more interest in studying the typical conditions, normal and common of the majority of children rather than concentrating on the bad situations children find themselves in.
- Maintaining a critical view on common ideas of socialisation and evolutionary development.
- Using ordinary methods of research, abiding to ethical standards, which are particularly delicate when doing research with children.
- Children as social actors who require and merit having a voice in research (Gaitán, 2014: 117).

Hence, within this understanding, childhood research must be based on an understanding of children as members of a social category, as a structure in any society albeit its members renew themselves when one group reaches adult age and the next generation emerges.[100]

Based on Mannheim's theory of "The Problem of Generations" (Mannheim, 1958) childhood sociologists Alanen and Mayall have also stressed the importance of defining childhood in the frame of generations (Mayall, 2001; Alanen, 2005; see also: James & James, 2004; Bohman, 2002). Social distinctions are made by grouping and categorising members of society according to age.[101] Generations live in specific political and historical circumstances, which shape them and their behaviour. Historically, women and men did not reach the high age they reach nowadays. Children were born to parents of much younger ages, also because schooling time of young people was much shorter than nowadays. This can be observed not only historically, it also occurs in different state systems. As this study takes place mainly in Europe, the example used here is the different time periods of West and East German generations, which differ(ed) by about ten years during the aftermath of WWII, where it was commonplace in the GDR to have children in the early twenties, in the West, children were born on average in the late twenties or early thirties. What importance does the length of generations have on childhood as a form of generational order? If we understand childhood as structural form which changes its characteristic over time, yet remains existent at all times, it doesn't seem important for this paradigm to discuss different durations of single generations. Applying the paradigm however to reality, bringing theory to practice, it becomes relevant in that we strive to acquire an understanding for each actual generation. Communication patterns can serve as an example here. How does

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[100] Age is the one most visible difference from adults (but not from one another, all are young people) and trait inherent to all children, no matter where in the world, regardless of their culture or religion, sex, gender etc.

[101] Many child psychologists, educational advisors etc. claim that children start categorising their surrounding when they start differentiating themselves from others (understanding of themselves as "I am").

communication take place among societies' members, in particular the young ones, where we can speak of a generation facebook from about 2000-2015, which has already been substituted by other social media such as applications for mobile phones: Whatsapp, Snapchat, amongst others. In order to have a benchmark, generations are said to be about 15 years in length, whereas this can only be an approximate value, as in the case of e.g. environmental catastrophes, such as the Tsunami in South East Asia (2004) or the nuclear disasters in Chernobyl (1986) or Fukushima (2011); or incidents such as 9/11 (2001) and the invasion of Iraq (2003) and now the massive movement of refugees fleeing from the war on Syria will surely be markers to categorise generations. In every society, generations are cohorts of their own, the generation that at the moment is in its childhood can differ massively, not only between North and South but also between different countries and regions of the South or North. For example, post 9/11 generations in Europe vary significantly from post 9/11 generations in the USA, in their perception as well as reaction to the attacks. Not only catastrophes and wars, also and likely even more significant are social and political achievements, as for example, how the (legal) achievement of women's or black people's rights impact generations and can give insight into what political achievement can follow for the next generation(s).[102]

Childhood as a structural form, as Qvortrup (2009) claims, is a permanent parameter of society as childhood as well as adulthood endure as distinct social structural forms and constructions beyond individual childhoods. The importance of understanding childhood not as a linear preparatory phase, where children are seen to be on a voyage to full integration into society (ibd.: 22) is that thinking ".. in structural terms breaks with personal life plans; it asks you to think in terms not of child development but *development of childhood* (ibd: 23)." Taking this approach to childhood (a general approach, childhood which does change over time but can never become adulthood) children needn't be asked about their own childhood, it can be studied alongside the parameters in place for the generation under investigation. The concept of generations as a theoretical understanding of childhood as a social construct under constant change is valuable in that using generations as reference point helps overcome the difficulty of the binary distinction of childhood and adulthood. Furthermore, the abrupt switch from being a child (according to law, in most societies age 18) to being an adult becomes a rather fluent transition.

Political Philosopher James Bohman (2002) posits that intergenerational democracy must be developed as a means to encourage the older population to act as trustees for the younger generation. Yet to accomplish this objective, there is a need for a fundamental change in the public perception of and attitudes toward children. He defines capability failure as the lack of opportunity structures for children to exercise rights in a climate of subordination. This results in the unfairness of having a present generation disregarding future generations, as exemplified in the threats of global climate change.

But is childhood really (only) a social construct? Arguing from an idealistic and purely theoretical sociological (and anthropological) approach, as seen above, the answer would be

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[102] For references to other social groups as social constructs such as male and female (gender), see Qvortrup, 2009.

"yes". And both disciplines have convincing arguments for this claim. However, how do educationalists see childhood? And what about biologists? Pedagogues and social workers who work directly with children and young people on a daily basis and intimately know the reality of children may argue that they can and should be able to play an active role in their life and surrounding. However, they may also argue along the lines of childhood being a stage of development and a place in which learning for life takes place, as it is commonly agreed and scientifically proven that children learn a lot easier and quicker than adults (this does not signify that adults cannot learn; the recent paradigm of life-long learning is of extreme value). In line with biologists (and medical doctors) who argue based on children's physical constitution- their bodies are not yet completely developed, their brain is also not yet complete from birth- the sociologists James and Prout (1997) legitimately claim to defend the position of childhood not being only a social construction. Childhood must be seen both as a construct and a representation of reality which are interwoven and cannot be thought separately, as the whole theoretical picture and characteristic of social phenomena is never identical with reality but just a representation of it (Alderson, 2013; Liebel, 2017).

Having begun this chapter by giving an account of disciplinary approaches to childhood studies and children's rights studies followed by tracing the development of (sociological) childhood studies on which the MACR at FUB is largely based, I will now turn to the history of children's human rights, which informs the rights philosophical basis of the MACR.

4.3. Children's Rights

4.3.1. Dignity: The basis for children's human rights

Several children's rights chartered in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are equivalent to the human rights as declared in 1948 in the UDHR.[103] Both the CRC and UDHR are based on the understanding that any human being has an inherent dignity. Preambles to UN human rights treaties, conventions and declarations commence with the basic universal *'..recognition of the inherent DIGNITY and EQUAL AND INALIENABLE RIGHTS of all members of the human family (as) the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,...'* (preambles to the UDHR, 1948; CEDAW, 1972; CRC, 1989; CRPD, 2007[104], emphasis added). What is the inherent dignity of all members of the human family? Everybody has some kind of notion what dignity is, it is inherent to all men and women, transgender and intersexual persons (including children of all sexes) qua being human defining their being. Deprived of his or her dignity, a person is no longer recognised as

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[103] Right not to be discriminated, right to life, right to education etc.

[104] CEDAW: Convention to Eliminate all Discrimination Against Women 1979/1981; UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989/1990; CRPD: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2007- predecessor: Declaration: 1975), International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families is a United Nations multilateral treaty, opened for signature in 1990, came into force in 2003, after the threshold of 20 signatory states was reached.

human.[105] According to international and most national laws, no human being can be disentitled of his/her dignity, as dignity is a non-avoidable premise (Bielefeldt, 2008: 24). However,

> *"....it is easy to be suspicious of the idea that human dignity can do useful work in our thinking about the nature and basis of human rights. It might seem, for example, that human dignity is too abstract a value to be informative about the grounds of human rights or that it functions only as a kind of pointer to other values that carry the weight in explaining their importance and content. Or one might be tempted by a more thoroughgoing scepticism holding that the references to human dignity in the documents are only ornamental—as George Kateb puts it (without endorsing the view), that "human dignity adds nothing but a phrase to the theory of human rights"* (Beitz, 2013: 259-260).

The UDHR is based on an understanding of all men (and -theoretically- also women, children), having liberty and freedom rights protecting them against arbitrary state violations as a reaction to the atrocities and violations of human dignity during WWII. In a juridical sense, they are understood as largely negative rights.[106] The protection of any human's dignity is primarily protection against state violating respect for its citizens, through the constitution or other codified laws (such as child protection acts, family laws etc.); in consequence, it is a state's duty to desist everything that may infringe upon human dignity.[107] Accordingly, the right to human dignity has two facets: on the one hand, the state is obliged to respect the dignity of all humans at all times, and on the other, the state must take action to protect human dignity against violations from the state itself or any third party. In international legal agreements, human rights are formulated as obligations of States Parties to take protective measures to comply with, or, looking at the other side of the medal, to endorse citizens' rights, which can be claimed against States Parties who violate them. Jürgen Habermas (2010) claims that an awareness for the meaning of human dignity had already emerged from experiences of humiliation and degradation in the Post-Enlightenment years: "The appeal to human rights feeds off the outrage of the humiliated at the violation of their human dignity. . . . [C]hanging historical conditions have merely made us aware of something that was inscribed in human rights implicitly from the outset—the normative substance of the equal dignity of every human being that human rights only spell out" (Habermas, 2010: 466). Moving beyond the main premise of human rights as protection rights against arbitrary state actions, the paradigm of human rights is dignity based on freedom and equality: every single human being is born free and equal. Even though it can be argued that freedom and equality is defined here as inherent to the *individual*, it is not possible to live these rights on one's own, they can only be experienced within a community, in relation to others (Kerber-Ganse, 2009: 29). Human dignity is an expression of freedom,

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[105] In Germany, as an example, dignity has been solidly anchored in its constitution as the first norm which cannot under any circumstances be amended or changed.

[106] At the time, protection from state action was understood as the most important form of human rights protection, soon it became apparent however, that violations of human rights and undignified behaviour occurs in many instances within private and personal or working relations as well. Until now there aren't any legal instruments to claim human rights against private violations, however voices are becoming louder to introduce juridical protective measures also against such violations (Eichholz, 2008; Kerber-Ganse, 2009: 32)

[107] Source: https://www.grundrechteschutz.de/gg/menschenwurde-2-255) accessed 14.6.2017

responsibility and initiative of the individual, which is the foundation of democracy (Eichholz, 2008: 11). Human dignity cannot in itself be contested, however, even in democratic states acts of indignity towards men, women, children, any human happen every day and minute in many regions of the world.

Generally speaking and as depicted above, two generations of human rights are distinguished (Ross, 2007: 295, Kerber-Ganse, 2009:27, 35; Bielefeldt, 2007: 89):

1. Rights to liberty and freedom (negative rights the state has to take protective measures against);
2. Equality: Civil, cultural and economic rights (positive rights the state should provide for).

With reference to the French Liberté, Egalité and Fraternité, Karel Vasak (1982) introduced a third generation of human rights referring to solidarity, in which individuals can claim their personal rights upon society. Such rights are, however, not (yet) stipulated in any international declaration, covenant or convention (Vasak/Alston, 1982). The CRC is the first UN Convention to unite human rights to life, protection and non-discrimination stipulated in the UDHR and economic, social and cultural rights (International Covenant on Economic, Social Cultural and Rights, (ICESCR) 1966). International conventions that are not particularly related to indigenous peoples lack collective rights of social groups, hence not reflecting lived realties of several communities in which the collective community is valued higher than individual rights (see above).

Within the rights generations, three dimensions of human rights are distinguished:

1. Legal rights (positive, written),
2. Political rights (interpretation and implementation methods to realise human rights) and
3. Moral rights (natural and non-codified rights).

Human dignity as a guiding principle for human rights derives from natural or moral law, which is claimed to be the predecessor of positive or juridical law. The following section is dedicated to both moral and legal rights from a rights philosophical perspective as the basis for understanding the origin of children's rights.

4.3.2. Moral, natural rights and positive, codified law

In 1945, after the defeat of the German Nazis, Gustav Radbruch, was able to take up his rights philosophical work leading to the publication of his analysis of (human) rights condensed in *Five Minutes of Legal Philosophy* (1945), in which he outlines his views on dignity and the dilemma of natural vs. codified rights and the state of human rights after WWII.

odified law endorses legal certainty.[108] Even though „a law is valid because it is a law, and it is a law if, in the general run of cases, it has the power to prevail" (Radbruch, 1945/2006: 13), Radbruch points to the dangers of implementing laws that are made by those holding power as they can pass cruel, or criminal laws at their will turning people defenceless, albeit having the certainty of the law. Radbruch continues declaring that „law is what benefits the people" (ibd.: 13), phrased to counteract the cruelties and injustice done to the people by giving the people what benefits them rather than what harms them. However, also here, arbitrariness and cruelty can evolve and who decides on benefits and what is beneficial to the people can get blurred. Therefore Radbruch suggests reversing the phrase and declaring „....only what law is benefits the people" (ibd.: 13). Laws must be developed and written in a moral spirit of aiming at doing justice to all people, as „law is the will to justice". In Radbruch's definition, "justice means: To judge without regard to the person" (ibd.). Essentially, this refers to the principle of non-discrimination, which is, following human dignity, the basis of human rights.

In sum, Radbruch speaks of "three values of the law- public benefit, legal certainty, and justice- (which) are not always united harmoniously in laws", as solutions have to be found for legal regulations of situations in which the rights of an individual or one social group with specific or particular traits violate the rights of another person or group. When drafting the law, such cases need due consideration. Owing to human imperfection, the three values of the law—public benefit, legal certainty, and justice—are not always united harmoniously in laws, and the only recourse, then, is to weigh whether validity is to be granted even to bad, harmful, or unjust laws for the sake of legal certainty, or whether validity is to be withheld because of their injustice or social harmfulness. There are principles of law, therefore, that are weightier than any legal enactment, so that a law in conflict with them is devoid of validity. These principles are known as natural, moral law or the law of reason. As such, moral law cannot be claimed in court; it does not provide reliable certainty and safety as do codified laws (Radbruch, 2006:14). The importance however of moral law is made explicit e.g. in the case of children in street situations or working children, whose "unwritten" rights are violated on a daily basis (Ennew, 2002). It is critical to raise awareness on these unwritten, natural or moral rights (of children), inter alia to work in a dignified job, not to be harassed and criminalised for living in the streets but rather to be treated respectfully, not to be discriminated on the grounds of age, to be excluded from the right to vote amongst others. All these rights are being discussed mainly as unwritten rights, which need to find entrance to codification and are "laws in waiting" (Sen, 2004: 326). Advocating the inclusion of such unwritten rights in legal codes can serve as a first basis for their implementation- this does not imply that possible negative effects of codified laws do not need diligent consideration. To avoid any misunderstanding, having discussed the (yet) unwritten rights of children and giving them space here, does not contradict the necessity to fully implement the rights already codified in conventions and national legislation.

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[108] Even though I may be allowed to chew gum at home or in public in my country of origin, Germany, the law in Singapore prohibits chewing gum in public- this may seem awkward and senseless, however it is a legal culture and social code allowing for a certainty of knowing that if I do chew gum, I will be fined for it.

As mentioned above, human rights treaties are formulated in the spirit of protecting man from arbitrary state action, violation of human rights through non-states parties is mostly disregarded, notwithstanding the fact that many violations do take place in the private or working environment. Protection from such rights violations must be discussed and counteracted in juridical terms (see e.g. Eichholz, 2008). Consequently, not only states but also individuals have a personal and moral responsibility to act in accordance with a human rights attitude and respect for other people's dignity (Montero, 2017: 67). The moral duty we have as individuals is not determined by universally set criteria, the requirements of such duty are not explicitly described often rendering us not knowing how to act (Hope, 2013: 90). Therefore, it is paramount to create and establish systems to achieve a "human rights attitude" in as many people and states as possible as mutual respect of dignity is the building stone to live together peacefully and with respect.

For the purpose of the qualification of child rights experts in academia this implies that criteria can be conveyed to enable graduates to fulfil this duty as it can only be fulfilled and enacted according to their competencies (Sen, 2004: 356). As criteria are not set by the state or policies or other regulations, they are intangible and can only be measured according to subjective estimations. The question remains how graduates can integrate such a moral duty of appropriating a human rights attitude for their own personality and identity. In Part II of this research (chapters 7-11), I will demonstrate how graduates of the MACR view their own beliefs, values and attitudes after having read the programme.

In sum, "a theory of human rights cannot be sensibly confined within the juridical model in which it is frequently incarcerated (...) some recognized human rights are not ideally legislated, but are better promoted through other means, including public discussion, appraisal and advocacy" (Sen, 2004: 319). How human rights (for children) can be understood has been elaborated in the two related concepts *Children's Rights from Below* and *Children's Living Rights,* which I will turn to now.

4.3.3. Children's rights from below and children's living rights

Manfred Liebel, sociologist and former director of the MACR, emphasises the importance of understanding in "which ways children's rights can be understood as subjective or agency rights of children and whether they can be enforced by children themselves" (Liebel, 2012a: 3). Liebel argues that, according to the CRC, children are fully-fledged rights holders from birth and are to be respected as such- they are to be given opportunities and time to claim and realise their rights. In his book: *Children's Rights from Below- Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (2012a) he further develops his argumentation in favour of giving children as much responsibility for their lives as they are willing to take on and to strengthen their (power) position in society. This cannot be done in the same way across the globe in all signatory state parties to the CRC, respect for culture and sensitivity for contexts in which children find themselves have to be considered (ibd.). Liebel developed this concept with reference to activities of children who are organised in social movements in the Global South. Children who are organised in such movements share several characteristics, such as their position in society being one "Out of Place" (Ennew & Conolly, 1996; Invernizzi et al., 2017) and/or their common lived realities. They strive to *live* rights from below by understanding

children's rights in a personal context drawn from life and doing justice to the children as well as creating an atmosphere in which they can enjoy their rights. Children's rights from below as one approach to children's rights has been discussed by several scholars (of whom most are in some way connected to the ENMCR/CREAN: e.g. Liebel with Hanson, Saadi & Vandenhole, 2012a; Hanson & Nieuwenhuys, 2013; Liebel & Martinez, 2009. See also: e.g. Mutua, 2002; De Sousa-Santos & Rodríguez-Garavito, 2005).

The argument put forward is that children's rights cannot only be developed, dictated and conveyed by state authorities, politicians, economists and adults in general and granted according to their understanding of what children's rights should be (from above). Children must be empowered to claim their rights themselves and to design the body of rights in need of protection (by other children and other members of society) from below, bottom up, grass roots.[109] In order to be in a position to design and claim their rights, they have to be (1) drafted (2) known and (3) there have to be enough children and young people who have an interest in rights and who can point out to missing, still not codified rights in the waiting. Further research is needed to know whether human rights are relevant for specific actors in different local settings. Several researchers from various disciplines (anthropology, law, sociology, social work, political science), all of whom investigate not only the implementation of positive children's rights according to the CRC or national legislations, look beyond the formal implementation through state actors or organisations on behalf of governmental decrees to take a bottom-up approach, in which the persons affected voice their opinion and feeling about their rights and how suitable and beneficial they are and what significance they have for them. More recently, the concept of children's rights from below has been further conceptualised to engage in a theoretical concept of children's rights as rights lived by children in their reality.

Both the concept of children's rights from below and the notion of living rights are described in equal, or at least similar, terms as a form of making rights perceptible for children by ascribing to them sufficient agency to (co)-form these. Nonetheless, van Daalen et al. (2016) reveal a dichotomy between the two notions, claiming that by reasoning children's rights from below, on the one hand, as antagonistic to rights from above and on the other hand, as evolving (only) through social movements (of children) therefore contrast the human rights system, which is based on an individualist, rather than collective understanding of human beings. It is a difficulty that the CRC and other human rights conventions, declarations and laws formulate all articles and themes based only on the understanding which places an emphasis on an understanding of oneself vis-à-vis the world instead of in and with the earth and in fact the universe, one could say, as part of the whole. The notion of living rights, although corresponding with rights from below, as they are also based on children's agency and a bottom-up approach to human rights, has a different quality being a concept of rights as something "living" and constantly changing compared to codified rights and laws, which are very much static. Written codes can be changed, yet only in lengthy processes when the lived reality and livelihood changes for a majority of people, and governments agree to amend them. In this sense, children's living rights can be

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[109] This can be seen in a literal sense, as children are generally not as tall as adults.

codified rights if they reflect the reality and livelihood of children locally, globally and sensitive to cultures.

Referring to the theory of children's rights from below or children's living rights, K.P. Fritzsche (a member of the advisory committee to the MACR) remarks that in order to be able to claim such rights legally, they have to be determined by other, older people as children's advocates (field note, meeting advisory committee). These adults who assist children in claiming their rights and in fact inform them about their rights to create an enabling frame for them to stand up for their rights themselves are needed, i.e. the first step is always one taken by adults, which underlines the argument that the CRC, even though introducing and acknowledging the capability of children's judgement (according to their age and maturity) is inherently paternalistic. This is not a contradiction to what is argued and strived for in the MACR. Even though children may not (yet) have the power to change their lives independent of adults and to take action against rights violations without adult assistance, a critical mass of child rights experts and advocates are to be qualified in the master's in order to fight injustice against children *with* them and not only *for* them. Fritzsche continues with a reflection concerning the criticism on the absence of children in the development process of the CRC. He calls for contextualisation as the lamenting parties imply that there had been a setting where children could actually have participated. If one imagines children attending sessions of the CRC's drafting process Working Group and them raising their voices with wishes to be included in the Convention as e.g. on an individual basis: "I have the right to more pocket money" (as a right from below), or on a global level: "I have the right to peace on earth", it becomes evident that such are claims which cannot find entrance to a (global and universal) legal text (see also Holzscheiter, 2010: 211). As in any event or instance in which children are included in decision-making processes, be they drafting legislative texts, as in this example, yet also in their participation, e.g. in conferences on children and children's topics, finding appropriate ways to include them in a meaningful way is crucial (Miljeteig, 1990: 153, Ennew, Hastawedi & Plateau, 2007).

> "*Rights are based on the capacity of their holders with the view that they are based on their interests.(...) children, understood as rights holders (..) (them being capable of enacting their rights and claiming them) may not be accepted as such by many a man and woman as children are (still) seen mostly as incapable (compared to adults). One social group here ascribes another social group not being capable of voicing and claiming its own interests, these (the rights of children) are only valid if rectified by an adult*" (Cordero Arce, 2015: 286).

This judgement of one social group by another is a breach of respect for the groups discriminated against and their individual members and exacts reflection in terms of dignified activities. In an adult-children relationship this is widely accepted not only by adult society but also by children- it is a given fact that adults decide for children (up to a certain age) and there are only very few attempts at reflecting upon this discriminatory behaviour and starting to counteract it (see Flasher, 1978; Ritz, 2008; Liebel, 2014).

Theories of participation in general and participatory research with children can lead to an understanding of children's views on such forms of discrimination and exclusion from social activities. The next section is dedicated to these two issues.

4.4. Research and Participation

Research by children is 'systematic curiosity' (Ennew, 2011; Liebel, 2008b). This systematic curiosity requires methods and theoretical foundation.

4.4.1. The use and the benefits of researching children's rights

In the wake of the new social sciences in childhood and the increasing interest in children's rights as a topic of scientific inquiry, research concerning childhood, children and their rights has shifted. Today, many scholars who engage in research in this field place children at the centre of their research, not only as objects of research about whom specific themes are to be investigated. This adult-centred, top-down approach to children and their rights has been increasingly challenged as has the image and understanding of children in general, as exemplified above. Today, we can distinguish three basic approaches to children's rights that are being used at the moment: research about children, research with children and children-led research (mostly in cooperation with adults- see: Alderson & Morrow, 2004; Alderson, 2008; Liebel, 2008b). In order to substantiate this new approach of valuing and acknowledging children as researchers of their own lives, (ethical) methods have to be developed and abided by (Morrow & Richards, 1996; Bessel & Waterson, 2017). As in all research, ethical standards must be respected. Research with children, however, requires an even more conscious application of such standards. Morrow has discussed what ethical research with children implies in several works (e.g. Morrow & Richards, 1996), how children are "properly researched" has also been discussed by Ennew & Abebe (eds), 2010 in their 10 manual box set in which they give a step by step guidance to *The Right to be Properly Researched: How to Do Rights-based Scientific Research with Children*. With reference to the CRC, in another publication, Ennew challenges the idea whether research has improved the human rights of children, or whether the information needs of the CRC have improved data about children (Ennew, 2011). She concludes that (unfortunately) "It cannot be argued either that academic research has affected CRC reporting, or vice versa" (Ennew, 2011: 154).

How can research then have an impact on the human rights of children? By agreeing that the first step for improvement is consciousness, studying the MACR can make a difference, although it is of utmost importance not to remain at the level of collecting disaggregated data and analysing it- it must lead to actions to ameliorate dire situations and to create incentives to continue with successful and reliable as well as activities already tested (not only objectively or for the children, i.e. without having consulted them or reached their consent for the doings). Having reached this consensus, an awareness of the adult position and the method practised to achieve this consensus must be reflected. As children are much more gullible than adults (generally speaking), it may prove easier to convince them of the necessity and good results expected of certain research approaches and actions. This leads back to doing research with children, as by this, children's subjective needs can be detected, (hopefully) acted upon and met (Mason & Hood, 2010). Instead of comparing bad situations or situations that do not meet the CRC, it would be better to promote good practices in countries struggling for methods to meet the obligation of liv-

ing the CRC. So, if research has not affected the human rights of children, it can develop or move to a type of research that can have an impact- research and findings have to be communicated, not only with the child rights community but also beyond. Students and graduates of the MACR can be multipliers. But: Professors and researchers also need to be more publicly present, because citizens believe in science and research and respect professors who have researched certain phenomena and offer reliable information more than (recent) graduates holding (only) an M.A. degree.[110] This could have an effect on the meta-level to enforce political action in favour of children's rights. On a personal (work) or private micro-level, the impact the MACR has can be seen much more easily (see Part II).

4.4.2. Participation

Taking to Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969), what participation implies concerning children, has been discussed since the early 1990s, first most prominently by Roger Hart (1992). He introduced a model to measure the extent and meaning of what is generalised as being children's participation. He uses a ladder as a symbol: The lowest rungs signifying manipulation of children by adults as the lowest degree of participation, followed by decorative and tokenistic participation of children being informed and assigned to certain participatory activities, at the next highest level children are consulted, then adult-initiated activities which are shared with children are followed by children-initiated and directed actions to the highest rung on the ladder when, according to him, true and complete participation is reached. Hart describes this as child-initiated activities that are merely shared with adults. (Hart, 1992, cited e.g. in Lewars, 2010: 273; Tisdall, 2010: 318).

Figure 5- Hart's Ladder of Paticipation

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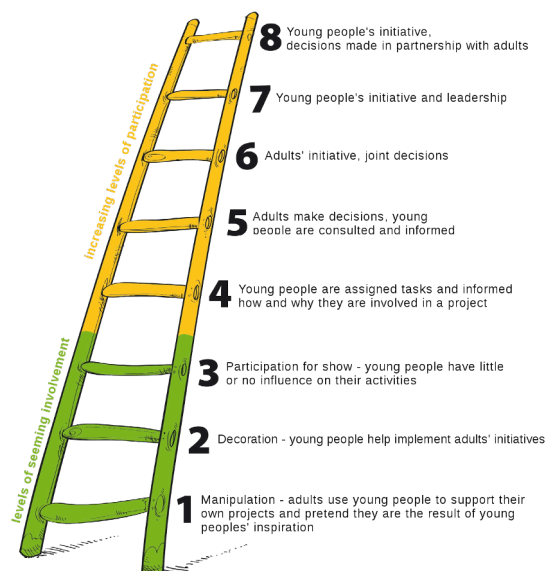
[110] The value of academic degrees is over-estimated in my opinion, unfortunately today it is indispensable to have achieved a certain level of academic qualification to be respected and acknowledged.

This attempt to grasp participation as giving children a space in society in which they can contribute meaningfully to decision-making has proved to be valuable to demonstrate first steps for mutually beneficial and successful participation to both adults (and children). Explicating children's involvement in areas concerning decisions made *for* them in a straightforward scheme by which levels of participation can be understood easily, can however be seen only as a first step towards change in the position of children in society from mere dependents to active social agents. The highest rung on Hart's ladder stands for "true" participation of children or the highest degree of participation, declared as participation initiated by children themselves who have agency.

Newer approaches to children's participation, theoretical and practical, see meaningful participation as dialogical interaction between children and adults vs. adults' monological speaking and hearing. Only when participation is understood as recognition of children's agency over which both adults and children struggle is it possible to speak of authentic participation. Unknowing as we as adult society are when it comes to imagining life with authentic participation of all human beings in the dialogical sense described, "...we must commit to a deeper consciousness of just what it is we seek through their (the children's) participation and be prepared to recognize and act on it when we invite them into participatory space" (Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010b: 344). Essentially this means taking children's views seriously and developing trust on how children see and experience the world.

Skills to live and interact dialogically with children require learning. A common understanding is that how we behave is a product of our past experiences and we are therefore in a better position to enter into dialogue if we have experienced recognition (of our views and opinions and they were taken seriously and considered) compared to someone who has grown up in a very monological and perhaps (over) protective environment. The understanding of learning by experiencing is necessary to develop a sense for the formation of intersubjectivity (Fitzgerald & Graham, 2010) between adults and children, but also in peer-to-peer relations and adults amongst each other. A dialogical approach does not naturally substitute or eradicate power relations and inequalities in relationships, but it can lift children to a different level in negotiation processes, similar to power struggles between individuals of the same social group and inside groups as a whole.

Participation of children in schools, e.g. in students' and school councils have potential to introduce children to democratic governance structures. Arguing that governance as the opportunity of a group, a collective to govern a certain social area, student's participation in such structures can contribute to the "ability to enact governance" in school, the place they spend the majority of their time during childhood (at least in the North) (Tisdall, 2010). This type of political participation takes place in the immediate surroundings, larger (governance) structures call for another type of political engagement. Whether and how such political decision- making can be realised is a question of thinking beyond clear and non-compromising main democratic pillars and the institutional structures representing them. Similarly, the question that enables children's agency to grasp their rights as living rights, as rights from below that are in constant change and diverse across the world, needs con-

sideration (Liebel, 2010). "Agency, as central terminus with the new sociology of children's rights describes the subjective ability to act and the capability as well as the factual possibilities to acquire these and to make use of them" (Liebel, 2017: 16, own translation).

Harcourt & Hägglund (2013) base their research on children's participation on interacting with children "on a par" as adults and to respect them as human beings in interaction. In particular in pre-school and school settings, where children spend the most time every day, it is important to live and experience bottom-up rights.

Not only should children be respected, they should also participate in the process of elaborating on the decision to be taken, as well as in the actual decision-making. It does not suffice to consult with children and hear their views; if they are not respected or are not asked or consulted they do not truly find access to the decisions made on issues affecting them.[111]

4.5. Janusz Korczak at the Intersection of Childhood Studies and Children's Rights

"Children don't become human beings, they already are"[112] (J. Korczak, "Rozwój idei miłości bliźniego w XIX wieku", Warsaw 1899

Janusz Korczak (1878 or 1879-1942), Polish pedagogue, paediatrician, children's book author, who died almost 50 years before the CRC was opened for ratification was one of the first child advocates to challenge paternalist approaches to children (Markowska-Manista, 2016). To the best of one's knowledge and belief, Korczak can be seen as a pioneer of children's rights and surely, he was a major inspirational figure in the development of children's rights understood as bottom up, living children's rights (Kerber-Ganse, 2009; Liebel, 2014; Liebel & Markowska-Manista, 2017; Markowska-Manista, Gilad & Tsur, 2017) "Goldszmit[113] set himself no smaller aim than to make the world a better place, and he observed that 'to reform the world means reforming [sic.] the method of child rearing'" (Kulawiec, 1979: 23 in Eichsteller, 2009: 379)

Characteristic for Korczak's pedagogic approach is the radical involvement of children: self-governing structures are at the heart of his educational system, ensuring that the basis for a discourse between child and adult is independent of the adult's humanistic attitude, for instance to respect children's opinions (Ungermann, 2006) and dialogue among children and adults (Markowska-Manista & Dąbrowa, 2012). Korczak's children were rights-

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[111] For a comprehensive collection of participation models see: Creative Commons (2012): *Participation Models: Citizens, Youth, Online- a chase through the maze*. Second edition

[112] Original: *Dzieci nie będą dopiero, ale są już ludźmi (...).*

[113] Korczak's given name was Goldszmit- an immediate thought would be that he changed his name as not to be recognised by the Nazis, however, he changed his name after having participated in a writing competition at high school, where he submitted a script for a theatre play under the (mandatory) pseudonym Janasz Korczak. Due to a printing mistake, the "a" was replaced by a "u", making him Janusz Korczak. Hitherto he called himself Janusz Korczak- sometimes he still used his original name in the context of his medical work (Hebenstreit, 2017: 69).

owners and could be certain to enforce any violation of their rights (Eichsteller, 2009: 382). For Korczak, a foremost principle was that the adult educator cannot know what is best for the child. He must acquire this knowledge together with the child and constantly question it in his interaction (dialogue) with the child, because "A child has a right to be respected and treated seriously. It should develop in an atmosphere of liberty, mutual respect and observance" (Markowska & Dąbrowa, 2012: 40). This also means questioning the power constitutive for pedagogical action and being ready to meet the children on an equal footing and being ready to learn from them. Here is an example in which Korczak describes his learning experience in a children's summer colony:

> "I had understood that children are a power that can be encouraged to participate and raised against oneself by disrespecting them, but which you definitely have to reckon with. [...] The next day, during a chat at the walk in the woods, for the first time I did not talk to the children, but with the children; I did not talk about what I want them to be, but what they wanted and could be. Maybe that's the first time I've convinced myself that one can learn a lot from children, that they, too, make demands and conditions and object, and that they have a right to do so" (Korczak, [1919-20]1999b: 222).

As a pioneer of children's rights, Korczak formulated the Magna Charta Libertatis (1919). The overarching right in this revolutionary declaration is the right to respect. From his experience of working with children he saw a necessity to give them the right to explore freely in all areas of their interest, with all consequences respecting children's equal rights.[114] He challenges the paternalistic approach of society in general, whose members deprive children of his or her life "for fear that death could take our children from us (...); in order to prevent his/her death we do not let him/her fully live" (11).[115/116]

Contrary to long- standing developmental approaches to children, Korczak claims children's *right to today*'s *day* which he exemplifies by demonstrating the "(....) general opinion, that the child is not anything yet, but that it will become someone/something, it doesn't know anything, but it will only know something, it is incapable, but will only be capable in the future, (....) (13)".[117] Korczak criticises the fact that the common perception of children was (and in large parts still is) one of inferiority and incapability, i.e. the emphasis laid on what they (still) cannot do and what they are not (yet). Every adult faces the challenge of respecting children as equals and, wherever possible, understanding their point of view and acknowledging their will. Korczak is not concerned with "empowering" or "involving" children, but with creating conditions that will enable children of all ages to express their views in a dialogue and their will by active participation. From Korczak's point of view, children do not have to "mature" to express themselves freely and participate in decision-

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[114] Adults often enough overestimate their ability to act as well, whereas no one would claim that they do not have the right to do so.

[115] Janusz Korczak und die Grundrechte des Kindes Version 11, 79.201.119.194 am 13.3.2008 12:47. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/de/.

[116] See also Liebel & Markowska-Manista (2017) for a discussion on Korczak's right to dignity and death.

[117] Own translation from German "(…) grundsätzliche Meinung, das Kind sei noch nichts, sondern es werde erst etwas, es wisse noch nichts, sondern es werde erst etwas wissen, es könne noch nichts, sondern werde erst etwas können, (…)." (13).

making, it is the educator, who must look for the conditions that the child can do it *now*. Korczak carries out this search together with the children. In his book *Happy Education*, he gives us to consider "either the life of adults – on the verge of children's lives. Or the lives of children – on the verge of adult life. – When will that moment of frankness arise, since the lives of adults and children will stand side by side?" (Korczak, [1919]1999a: 459). Hence, one hundred years ago, Korczak argued for the competence and the right of every child to be fully respected today, in the present, in his or her status as a child, as a full member of every society. "Korczak included his pedagogical ideas primarily in the tetralogy *How to love a child* (1920), *A child's right to respect* (1929), *The rules of life* (1930) and *Playful pedagogy* (1939), as well as a number of other works. In these texts, he called for a recognition of the fact that from the moment of birth a child is a full person, worthy of respect, and remains so at each stage of existence" (Markowska-Manista, 2016: 54). How revolutionary for the time and how strange that it has only been coming into consciousness again over the past 25-30 years. "For the child's tomorrow, which is out of reach and understanding for the child, it is being robbed of many years of life" (15). At the same time, Korczak did not deny the fact that children have to learn and acquire certain basic and essential competences and skills such as walking, talking, reaching a sense of the world and specific capacities for which they depend on others to acquire them. In this sense, he agreed with the concept of evolving capacities enshrined as a principle in the CRC and appropriated by academia.

As sociologists argue today, Korczak acknowledges the fact that children are different from adults and are to be respected in their own reality, sphere and life. By not accepting childhood as a stage in life, which persists over generations, which merits just as much respect in its own right, children are incapacitated. Korczak states: „...half of manhood is not fully existent; their lives are nothing but talks, their ideas naïve, their emotions volatile and their views ridiculous" (14).[118] Childhood is seen as a stage in life that is somehow a pre-stage to *real* life, not a stage with conditions, possibilities and challenges different to other stages in life, however with the same right to existence. Based on this, childhood is only viewed as valuable in view of oncoming adulthood and the child is only valued according to competences she has acquired so far on her way to this future. Actions led by this belief and understanding of childhood deprive children of (their) *today*. It is important that the caregiver, parent, teacher or any other adult (and peer) who takes on responsibility for children's every day (inter) actions must act in the present, and not in view of her or his role as a future adult. "It is easy and comfortable to underestimate the child's today in the name of higher slogans for tomorrow. (...) it is easier to postpone taking on responsibility into a nebulous tomorrow instead of accounting for every hour today".[119] As the carer is obliged to take on responsibility for *today*- he or she is not held responsible for the (distant) future. There must not be an excuse in the name of future possibilities or future careers, future doings of a child to constrain the child in the present. Taking on responsibility and depriving the

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[118] "Die Hälfte der Menschheit ist nicht im vollen Sinne existent; ihr Leben ist ein Geschwätz, ihre Bestrebungen sind naiv, ihre Gefühle vergänglich, ihre Ansichten lächerlich" (14).
[119] „Es ist bequem, den heutigen Tag des Kindes geringzuschätzen im Namen erhabener Losungen für morgen" (23).

child from her today in imposing behaviours and educating the child to mould into the "normal" social order is criticised for its core belief of upholding this order and its continuous reproduction over generations. To a certain extent, responsibility for the future status and position of the child as an adult in society is needed, it cannot however be used as excuse to disregard the long and significant time of childhood which is a life phase all human beings live or have lived through. Korczak does not only criticise the improper and inappropriate treatment of children, but also questions why this is so. He continuously encounters an adult-created image of children- ideas of what children are or are not supposed to interfere with. According to him, a deep and curious contact with children is required in order to understand what their standpoint, their interests and their beliefs, needs and wishes are. "Korczak not only propagated the best interests of the child, but through practical activities in a dialogue with children- with reference to particular situations- tried to define what these best interests are for them" (Markowska-Manista, 2016: 57).

This clearly mirrors the newer approaches to child research, child-led research and research with children with participatory methods. Normative childhood images overrule the possibility to look into the child, as the understanding of childhood has a profound impact on how children are treated. This is in no way outdated: a majority of adults working and living with children do not place the child at the centre of action and attention. The perceived necessity to create and "offer" a normal childhood as we, the adults, believe is proper, doesn't always do justice to the child.

Korczak's Magna Charta Libertatis is just as relevant today as it was at the time he wrote it nearly one hundred years ago. Only the conditions and contexts are new, in which children's rights should be considered.[120] Even though childhood as an important and special stage in life has been argued for in particular in sociology beginning in the late 1980's and throughout the 1990's as demonstrated above, the predominant view of children from a Western standpoint is still a volatile and underestimated one. Adults' best intentions are often used as a means to justify the act of "oppressing" children. The aim to respect and meet children on par with adults is what Korczak achieved. It was all there! But it was given up again and nowadays we have to re-learn to respect children, putting them at the centre of all matters affecting them and working on a par with them. Liebel & Markowska-Manista (2017) postulate this re-learning process concerning children's rights, showing the heritage of Korczak in relation to the problems of children and their human rights in the contemporary world.

The spirit of the MACR is based on the belief that children, in order to claim and live their rights need to be placed at the centre, met on equal terms with an open mind to negotiate issues concerning her or him in his or her best interests. Several MACR students have engaged in projects dealing with children in a respectful way and reconsider the meaning and how it can be achieved notwithstanding our inherent biased belief system that is not easy to overcome. Even though we may theoretically know or believe that children are just as

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[120] For further discussion on the relevance and transferrability of Korczak's Magna Charta Libertatis for today, see: Liebel & Markowska-Manista, 2017): Prawa *dziecka w kontekście międzykulturowości. Janusz Korczak na nowo odczytywany* (*Children's rights in the context of interculturalism. Janusz Korczak revisited*), Wyd. Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej, Warsaw 2017.

competent as adults only in different ways, we may behave otherwise because our beliefs are so deeply engrained by our education, our upbringing and our position in the world and society.

Passion-driven as Korczak was, he repeatedly demanded:

"Love the child, not only your own" (Korczak, 1999).

This approximation to a theory of children's rights and childhood studies serves as the main building block for the curriculum of the MACR, which will be introduced in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 - M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights

This chapter is dedicated to the aims of the MACR and the motivation to establish such a specialised programme in universities across Europe. The negotiations and activities as well as obstacles and difficulties of developing the curriculum will be traced taking into account the stakeholders involved and discussing and analysing their contribution to the process. In the second section of this chapter, the principal content of the MACR is introduced, while referring to the children's rights and childhood studies theory discussed in the previous chapter; in this context, the modules of the programme are depicted.

5.1. Aims, Curriculum and Structure

5.1.1. Aims of the M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights

The aims of the MACR are to

> *"acquire human resources of higher learning education for policy and programme design, implementation and institution management, to produce knowledge, innovative methodology and tools for policies, strategies, and implement a professional technical service specialized in promotion and development of children's rights projects" (programme's website).*[121]

The motivation of the scholars of the European Network of Masters in Children's Rights to develop study programmes in the special field of children's rights is manifold. The original condition when starting the development process of the MACR had been that firstly there had not been any complete academic degree programme at any university in Europe and secondly the general understanding of children's rights was limited to the CRC and its lacking implementation.[122] Further, children's rights were still widely seen as an issue for the "developing" countries in the South.[123] To come to a more differentiated understanding, the overall interest was (and still is) to create a space to trigger social change through theory-based action. In order to reach this ambitious goal, the initiators agreed that a change in perceiving the human rights situation of children and the deconstruction of predominant conceptions of childhood were indispensable, through which subsequently steps towards such social change can be taken. Thus, the objective has been to train students in accordance with this ideal. Further, the assumption of the initiators of the master's has been that by educating students about childhood and raising their awareness about children's rights in all their facets and their placement within the broader human rights framework, a basis

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[121] https://www.fh-potsdam.de/en/studieren/fachbereiche/sozial-und-bildungswissenschaften/studium/studiengaenge/master/ma-childhood-studies-and-childrens-rights/

[122] On the "implementation gap" see e.g. Vandenhole, 2015 (chapter 4).

[123] Researchers and activists had already demanded the implementation of children's rights in the North as well, however, awareness of these movements as still rare- on these efforts, refer also to chapter 3.2.

for changing attitudes and behaviour patterns as the first step towards social change is taken.

After having read the MACR, students are meant to understand the structural conditions for children's rights and in consequence take conscious and deliberate decisions on how to act and interact with children as a basis for reaching a multifaceted understanding of childhood not as a neutral phenomenon but rather as a socially constructed category which changes over time and space (MACR website; Archard, 2004: 25). Furthermore, students should develop the competency to reflectively intervene in situations of children's human rights' violations, coupled with the competence to critically analyse these and the possibility for intervention from different perspectives. Here, the emphasis is on children's perspectives and the ability to link these perspectives to historical, social, cultural, political, geographic and economic aspects of their rights. Having learned this, students should then be adequately qualified and confident to contribute to policy and practice at different levels, ranging from personal, communal, municipal to national and international levels. On the one hand, the aim is to qualify the students to engage in straightforward practical activities for the promotion of children's rights, such as analysing policies with implications for children's rights, writing policy recommendations on specific children's rights issues or lobbying for their (political) advancement. On the other hand, the MACR intends to nurture the growing passion for the rights of children as to consequently bring attitudes of respect for children and their rights to the fore. In particular, alumni who work directly with children should have developed knowledge about the necessity of a mindful and respectful interaction with children, with respect for their agency.

On a theoretical level, "the problem of a missing or only fragmental acceptance and anchoring of human rights (in society, in citizens, in children etc.) is an inherent reality of them. A systematic analysis of human rights is needed for this research desiteratum!" (Fritzsche, 2016: 7, own translation). Drawing on this statement of K.P. Fritzsche's, a first step would and should be to engage in a systematic analysis of the concept of human rights as a task for research, which evidences that the MACR programme is to act as an interface for human and children's rights research and is meant to give impulses for independent, analytical children's rights research. In addition, students should also be qualified to conduct further research, e.g. in the frame of a PhD or in their future jobs as researchers, to raise awareness on issues of concern and commend their knowledge of children's rights to other practitioners.

5.1.2. Curriculum Development

5.1.2.1. Chronological description of the project's process

The original curriculum was developed in the years 2004-2007 in the frame of an EU-funded project, "European Network of Masters in Children's Rights- Curriculum Development" (ENMCR-CD). The aim of the project was to develop a joint European Master's in Children's Rights at five European universities (the founding members of the ENMCR, see chapter 3) and to extend the network to Central Eastern Europe. The master's programme was to be offered as a blended-learning programme (partly e-learning, partly face-to-face sessions), including e-learning in the content delivery. During the two-year development phase, meetings of the network members took place approximately every six months each with a different focus.

The first meeting took place in Berlin and was dedicated to general project structures and the decision on the kind of master's that was to be developed as it had become clear that offering a joint degree among the universities involved was not feasible (see structure of the course, 5.1.3.). A second meeting in London was dedicated to the realisation of the course with e-learning methods. After having been introduced to a master's that had been offered as a pure e-learning course, the project members quickly agreed that this form of content delivery and conveyance of knowledge was not desired, the value of face-to-face sessions for a satisfactory learning experience was estimated to be high and not to be discarded. The following meeting took place in Amsterdam as a workshop with practitioners and students who had a potential interest in the MACR (see below, 5.1.2.1.). In the fourth meeting in Stockholm, the content of the MACR was discussed with a focus on competencies to be achieved in the modules. The last meeting took place in Madrid, during which the curriculum was completed and the programme's pilot phase (2006/2007) was prepared. The final step in the curriculum process, prior to the full implementation of the master's study programme, was an intensive summer school on the topic of "Children's European Citizenship: Information and Participation" offered to prospective students of the programme, in which the core themes in childhood studies and children's rights were outlined and introduced. These two core modules were to be offered at all partnering universities and to be followed by specific modules in the second semester according to the disciplines involved. The experience of bringing together students from across Europe in the intensive summer school programme was very valuable in creating a common sense of identification for the continuing cooperation in the network.[124]

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[124] On the development of the network and the master's see also Manfred Liebel (2009a)- both he and I were present at all the meetings.

5.1.2.2. Linking theory and practice

The MACR is mainly conceptualised as a practice-oriented university degree.[125] The practical know-how is based on theoretical, reflexive knowledge. Bringing practice and theory together can be challenging. To meet this challenge from the beginning of the curriculum development and further implementation of the MACR, the initiators of the master's involved stakeholders from practice (organisations, associations, foundations, institutions and individuals) early on in the curriculum development process. Besides personal discussions about the endeavour to set up a master's programme in children's rights, the initiators designed and distributed a stakeholder survey[126], which aimed at revealing the stakeholders' needs and expectations, including space to make suggestions for the delivery of the planned programme. Results of the survey were that:

1. All stakeholders agreed that the degree could be useful and that they would encourage staff members to study the programme (under the condition that studying is compatible with working hours).

2. A majority was willing to offer internship placements for students.

3. Approximately half the respondents offered to come to the programme to report on their practical work.

The results of the survey were presented and discussed in a stakeholder workshop held at Universiteit van Amsterdam. The results of the survey and the discussions were, as far as possible, included in the MACR's curriculum.

Table 4- Results of Stakeholder Survey (2006)

Competencies to be achieved and Indispensable Content of Curriculum	Delivered in
Profound knowledge of the CRC and its complexity	Module 2
Knowledge of national and European legislation concerning children's rights	Module 2
Knowledge on methods in the field of research with children	Module 3
Ability to secure children's and young people's access to children's rights policies on all levels	Module 2 and 3
Extensive knowledge of organisations and institutions working on children's rights and with children	All module[127]
Linking theory and practice	Module 7: internship, annual "Praxistag"[128]; guest lectures

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[125] "Anwendungsorientiert" as antidote to a research-oriented university degree.

[126] Two completed surveys can be found in the annex (annex no.3)

[127] Also, through events on children's rights and other information sent through the coordinating office.

[128] Every year, the MACR organises a "Praxistag" to which practitioners, representatives of children's rights organisations are invited to network and get into contact with students and elaborate on cooperation possibilities.

Competencies to be achieved and Indispensable Content of Curriculum	Delivered in
Holistic/interdisciplinary approach (rights, education, psychology, development, etc.)	All modules
Networking and lobbying skills	Modules 4 & 5
Taking children's perspectives, understanding children as agents (child-friendly writing)	Introductory workshop, Module 1

5.1.2.3. Negotiation of content

Coming from different disciplines (social work, sociology, education, international development and behavioural studies) communication and negotiations on the content and implementation of equivalent modules[129] were challenging not only in formal issues which are based on the varying higher education policies in the individual countries and universities (see below 5.1.2.4.). Although the disciplines involved are not so far removed from one another and all are placed within the humanities, approaches to issues, themes and topics vary and provoke intense negotiations to find a mutual approach. Some scholars involved would have liked to have seen more psychological and developmental approaches to children in the curriculum- other scholars strongly objected, to the extent of threatening to leave the project or the network if developmental psychologists were included, arguing that this perspective contrasts or even contradicts the master's "philosophy" of the protagonist role children as agents should play in the design of their surroundings. Other than that, the project consortium agreed on (module) themes quickly, reminding that everybody would fill the topics from different perspectives and disciplines, as the MACR acts as an interface for human and children's rights research and study.

5.1.2.3 Technical and bureaucratic challenges

Technical and formal, bureaucratic issues were much more difficult to come by and used up much of the common time in the few meetings during the development process. The formal frame the EU defines for master's programme, namely describing competencies to be achieved in the master's modules in accordance with the "Dublin Descriptors"[130] and in

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[129] The project members agreed to develop and offer equivalent basic, core modules, not only to meet the objective of offering the same content (joint degree as overall objective) but also for students to have a common basis they can build upon (e.g. when studying one semester at a partner university, or when engaging in cooperative research projects).

[130] The "Dublin Descriptors" are the cycle descriptors (or "level descriptors") presented in 2003 and adopted in 2005 as the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area. They offer generic statements of typical expectations of achievements and abilities associated with awards that represent the end of each of a (Bologna) degree cycle or level. The descriptors are phrased in terms of competence levels, not learning outcomes, and they enable a distinction in a broad and general manner among the different cycles. A level

conformity with the Bologna regulations posed challenges and constraints. The national regulations in the different countries on e.g. accreditation procedures or required length of a master's programme framed by the nearly incompatible national academic calendars were discussed at length. In most cases, solutions were found.[131] The overall objective of the project to establish a joint degree in children's rights at the cooperating institutions was not reached. Nonetheless, to have a (no-direct-cost) exchange option for students and teachers, bilateral Erasmus exchange agreements have been signed between several universities.[132] The establishment of such exchange agreements is one element in the aspirations of the European universities towards more internationalisation in their institutions and programmes. See Fabricius et al. (2017) for a critical discussion of the objective vs. outcome/result of internationalisation processes in European higher education, the factual harmonisation of curricula and study experiences e.g. by creating joint degrees. Fabricius et al. also highlight the difficulty of having introduced English as the predominant and universal language for international university studies. The development away from linguistically and culturally diverse research induces a limitation of viewpoints, which however are one major asset of the MACR, as I will show in Part II of this study.

Having said this, internationalisation processes at higher education institutions, which are praised and pushed in all areas, become ambivalent (Fabricius et al., 2017). The MACR aims at encouraging students from different regions and linguistic backgrounds to use research published in their native languages, as besides the languages that have dominated academia in the past century (German, French and English –some Spanish) not many sources are available or found. This fact inhibits the MACR and its students from fulfilling this ambitious objective and draws on English literature almost exclusively. Yet this fact does not suggest that internationalisation processes should be thwarted; on the contrary, the aim should shift towards further diversity combined with mutual respect and tolerance and open- mindedness for other opinions and perspectives (Gordin & Tampakis, 2015).

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descriptor includes the following five components: Knowledge and understanding; applying knowledge and understanding; Making judgements; communication; lifelong learning skills: Bologna Follow-Up Group (2005) *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*. Copenhagen, p. 9.

[131] In order to be independent of the academic calendars, students e.g. go abroad during the third semester when they do not have classes anymore, i.e. when writing their thesis or doing their internship.

[132] For a list of agreements, see www.fh-potsdam.de/macr (accessed 12.1.2018). FUB and UBB have established a double degree programme. A double degree is a certificate/diploma issued by both universities. The grounds on which this degree is awarded is that students have studied at least a part of the programme at the respective partner university and that one supervisor from each university must correct and grade the final MA thesis. Over the past decade, approximately ten students completed the master's as a double degree –eight Romanian and one or two German students.

5.1.3. MACR structure and eligibility criteria

The below tabular depiction of the programme reflects the structure as it is as of 2013-15. When the programme was developed, it was conceptualised as a one-year, 60 ECTS[133] master's programme, leading to the title *European Master in Children's Rights* (EMCR). Offering the programme as a one-year course was attributable to the team's assumption that it would be more attractive for prospective students and more compatible with working hours and commitments, arguing that one year of "stress" can be handled, whereas everything more would possibly discourage potential participants. Concerning the content of the programme, it would have been easy to fill the master's with two or more years' worth of seminars. After three years of offering the master's as a one-year programme it became ever more clear that the time is too short to effectively develop competencies to engage in valuable work with and for children. Also, students increasingly voiced their disappointment in "just having started studying and then having to engage in thesis writing". At the same time of extending the programme to three semesters, i.e. to one and a half years worth 90 ECTS, the team decided to rename the master's to better reflect the content, moving away from the pure connotation of "rights", adding "childhood studies". Hence the master's was offered as *European Master in Childhood Studies and Children's Rights* (EMCR) from 2010-2014. In 2013, the FUB, in the frame of restructuring advanced master's programmes offered to rename the programme again, turning it into a "proper" M.A. programme. Since then (2013-15) the master's programme has been offered as *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights* (MACR).

The modules are generally composed of two seminars and one tutorial or colloquium. In order to accommodate working students, tutorials and colloquia take place in face-to-face sessions on Thursday evenings; seminars on Fridays and Saturdays from 9am-6pm. As the MACR is an advanced study programme, it is directed to professionals who have a first university degree and have been working for at least one year before commencing the programme. As the language of instruction is English, students must prove their ability to follow an advanced study programme in English. This proof needn't be an official test, e.g. a confirmation of having studied or worked in an English-speaking country suffices.[134] Besides these formal eligibility criteria more important for the MACR is a motivation letter to enrol in the programme, in which the motivation and expectation towards the programme are made explicit. The motivation letters will be taken up further on in Part II of this study. First, however, I will introduce the individual modules, going through them step by step according to the structure depicted in table 5.

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[133] ECTS. European Credit Transfer and accumulation system is a credit system, which was introduced in the frame of the Bologna process. It aims at making programmes across the EU compatible and alleviating the recognition of credits earned at another university. For more information see: https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources/european-credit-transfer-accumulation-system_en (accessed 1.1.2018)

[134] See www.fh-potsdam.de/macr; FAQ's (accessed 1.1.2018)

Table 5 - Structure of the M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights

Modules	When?	Credits
1. Childhood Studies	1st semester	10 ECTS
2. Understanding Children's Rights	1st semester	10 ECTS
3. Methods and Techniques of Childhood and Children's Rights Research	1st semester	10 ECTS
4. Work and Education of Children in an International and Intercultural Comparison	2nd semester	10 ECTS
5. Children Out of Place and Child Rights -Oriented Practice	2nd semester	10 ECTS
6. Children and Media	2nd semester	10 ECTS
7a. Internship **or** 7b. Practical Project **or** 7c. Research Proposal	3rd semester	10 ECTS
Master's Thesis	3rd semester	20 ECTS
TOTAL		**90 ECTS**

5.2. The MACR's Principal Content

Besides the introduction to the modules and the description of the pertinent seminars, their learning objectives and the teaching methods, I will give a broader view of the individual themes treated in the modules and recall and elaborate on underlying theories, as defined in chapter 4.

As an introduction to the master's, the consortium strongly suggested holding a workshop on self-reflection about one's own generational and cultural identity and engage in a self-reflection about one's own professional experience with children and young people with reference to the concept of adultism.

5.2.1. Introductory Workshop: Adultism

"The power difference is often a daily one - even at family gatherings this is one that comes up for me a lot...but at work specifically because every situation in teaching is often a power situation...there are times when we need to finish something and sometimes I find myself approaching it from a very top heavy angle - "you need to please sit down and..." - those are the moments I catch myself and try to think of a way that we can get the work done without a power struggle/shift in power from us to me... In every situation with children - whether at the grocery store or in my class...it's like a constant underlying current in every situation between an adult and a child..." (Eileen, E: 81-88).

Adultism, an all-encompassing everyday phenomenon, is introduced at the beginning of the MACR in a workshop on critical thinking, including biographical work. By delving into their own childhood and the experiences students have made, the aim is to reach an understanding of the (social) constructs underlying one's own beliefs about children and those of the society we live in. Hearing and listening and respecting children's voices and ascribing as much value to them as to any other person's and in particular adult's opinion, children's access to all social and political services, respect for children's dignity as human beings with human rights can be seen as the absence of adultism. Adultism, as other –"isms", such as sexism or racism, describes a structure of societal power imbalance and a form of discrimination, by depicting "the systematic mistreatment and disrespect of young people, (that) is relatively new and has not been widely accepted as a reality" (Bell, 1995, p. 2).

"The extra power adults have (compared to children) comes from their special legal and socio-economical responsibilities, rights and privileges from the generally greater physical strength of adults compared to children" (Flasher, 1978).

Discussion on adultism first arose in the late 1970s, when Jack Flasher described the discriminatory relation between adults and children (Flasher, 1978). However, discourse about the phenomenon quieted in the following three decades and was only revived in the late 2000's and earlier 2010's in particular in the frame of children's rights studies. Research on adultism can be understood as the process of unveiling the hierarchical structures between adults and children and the inherent and unavoidable power imbalance that can lead to an abuse of the adults' power over children (Liebel, 2014; Ritz 2008; LeFrançois, 2014). Adultism is distinct from other forms of discrimination, as everyone has experienced adultism in her or his childhood, e.g. through belittling, placing emphasis on still undeveloped capabilities, assuming that children are intellectually inferior and do not know what is best for them. Accordingly, there is widespread social acceptance for adults' treatment of children with an attitude of superiority (Bell, 1995: 1). Adultism is also a distinct form of discrimination, as everybody also *acts* in an adultist way at the latest when a specific age is reached, and society concedes capability of reasoning. This may be a factor due to which adultism

has not yet found its way into research as it is accepted as an unquestioned norm.[135] On his platform, FreeChild.org[136], Flasher differentiates between three main forms of adultism, which have been discussed by several scholars over the past years. The most common (and most hidden or unconscious) form is "internalised" adultism. It is manifested by the belief that children and young people are per se inferior to adults (see also Bell, 1995, LeFrançois, 2014) and is marked by doubts about children's capabilities to reach differentiated decisions, thus requiring adults to decide for them. With reference to Finn & Checkoway (1998), Liebel (2014) speaks of a culture of silence amongst the young generation. Not only do young people internalise their supposed inferiority or incompetence compared to adults. Adults have likewise internalised the younger generation's need for guidance to develop cognitive, social, economic and political skills.[137] A second form of adultism is described as having been "institutionalised" (Hernandez & Rehman, 2002) exemplified by the systematic restriction of children's access to specific realms of society and societal participation (e.g. the right to vote, the right to drink alcohol, "antisocial behaviour orders" enacted by city councils or governments or for example the prescribed use of online filters) (Liebel, 2010). "Cultural" adultism, the third form of adultism, is described as inter alia young people's lower payment for equal work due to their age or child-free zones e.g. in front of hotels or (corporate) "consumer temples" or restrictions on children playing in courtyards owing to their young age (see Liebel, 2014). The restrictions are often justified by arguing inter alia that adults can generally judge better, by wisdom of age.

All forms of adultism are marked by the power difference between young and old, children and adults, which has been in place for centuries and enshrined in our cultural understanding of societal generational order and as such hampers change. Neither a significant number of children nor of adults are aware of this form of discrimination and many who are made aware of it will not deem it necessary to counteract, as it is socially accepted and "normal". Students are sensitised for this power imbalance and are provoked to question the "normality" of it, considering their own behaviour as well. The rationally understandable and most occurring adultist behaviour is control over a child or young person through seemingly harmless ideas, e.g. about when, at what age a child can go to school alone and when it is supposed to go to school alone or at what age she can climb a tree or at what age she is mature enough e.g. to go to a party with peers. Adults seem to always know everything better - most children experience this on a daily basis. "Adultism may be expressed in part in not permitting, expecting, or encouraging a child to think, feel or talk and generally behave in ways that facilitate the constructive evolution of his or her particular potentials,

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[135] Another reason for adultism not being a prominent form of discrimination to discuss is its hidden reality, more so than discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour, sex, gender, language, religion, differing opinion etc. as written in the non-discrimination articles of the human rights declarations and conventions (UNDHR, Art.2; CRC, Art.2 (1).

[136] www.freechild.org (accessed 4.5.2017)

[137] On the notion of children as beings in the now, not only becomings for the future, see previous chapter on the construct of childhood in the frame of research within the New Sociology of Childhood. Some examples to demonstrate the exploitation of children and young people are e.g. the portrayal of youth as apathetic by the media or academic misconceptions of youth that are supported by poor research or corporal punishment and stereotypes about youth subcultures, amongst others (www.freechild.org, cultural adultism, accessed on 27.4.2017).

experiences, and unique personality" (Flasher 1978, 517-518). This discriminatory generational order has become static, there is hardly any flexibility, which however is the most important criteria for a healthy non-adultist relation between children and adults (Willems, 2012). Adultist behaviour patterns and actions can never be seen as the sole form of discriminating children, separated from other forms of discriminatory actions. On the contrary, taking intersectional approaches to forms of discrimination is indispensable and as such the MACR continuously puts adultist behaviour in relation to other reasons for discrimination (such as religion, ethnicity, etc.). Discrimination on the basis of age is special though, as it is the form of discrimination all children experience and only children experience. Due to this (often unconscious) discrimination, children are inhibited from participating in society on their own terms, they can only participate on adults' terms (Ennew, 1986: 8).

The master's aims at revealing and overcoming these socially engrained views and behaviours and has the objective to ensure that children's voices are heard and to take their participation seriously by placing them at the centre of actions. In her essay, Zara, answering to the question: "What theory (from the MA studies modules) do your use/apply in your profession? How and why?" writes:

> "The concept of Adultism is for me a guiding principle which always is at the center of my work. I think from the master's programme I utilize all the theories we went through and mostly related to viewing things from the perspective of the child and creating research and spaces for children to lead and work on their own interests. I use these information and skills in spreading awareness on Adultism, making sure that the children are given the space to counter the power structure set with the adult researcher and designing programmes based on the needs of the children rather than what the donors see as convenient" (Zara, E: 53-59).

This statement summarises what competency can be developed in the master's and how knowledge and awareness about age-based discrimination against children can make a change in adult-child relations (see also Liebel, 2014). Placing the child at the centre of actions and keeping in mind the rather hidden adultist behaviour and continuously reflecting one's own position is one of the guiding principles of the master's. How this theoretical concept is reflected in the individual modules is part of the summarised descriptions of the modules of the MACR below. The theoretical developments in childhood studies and children's rights studies discussed before in chapter 4 are reflected in the respective thematic modules or areas of research.

5.2.2. Semester 1: Three core modules

In the process of developing the curriculum, the project members aimed at establishing a joint degree (programme with congruent content, leading to a degree of all universities involved), with equal "core" modules, followed by modules with specific foci in the second semester. As the introductory workshop, the contents of the core modules serve as a basis for the programme and are referred to throughout the MACR. The overview refers to competencies, mirroring the concentration placed on them during the negotiations of the curriculum. Whether the envisaged competencies are achieved will be assessed in the second

part of this study, drawing on the activities graduates are engaged in and how they describe the meaning of the acquired knowledge for their work.

I will introduce each module with a description of its content and the foci of the different classes (seminars, tutorials, colloquia) and conclude with a statement of each a different research partner to demonstrate how students feel about specific module contents and how the envisaged competencies have been developed.

The three core modules are:
1. Childhood Studies
2. Understanding Children's Rights
3. Methods and Techniques of Childhood and Children's Rights Research

Module 1: Childhood Studies

Children's agency and the understanding of children as beings in the present and not simply future beings is discussed in the first module "Childhood Studies", which gives detailed insight into the (new) sociology of childhood as a relatively new field of study. At Freie Universität Berlin, it was composed of two seminars of which the first focuses on introducing the historical emergence of childhood as a separate stage in life compared to adulthood. It sheds light on the different existing notions of childhoods across the globe. The second seminar concentrates on postcolonial as well as Eurocentric aspects of concepts and understandings of childhood(s) and discusses prejudices and hidden racism in European languages and behaviour patterns. Ideally, as agreed within the consortium, the competences acquired after reading this module are:
- Understanding of childhood as a social construct
- Knowledge of selected theories, concepts and research approaches as well as main results of international sociological and historical childhood research
- Competence to critically reflect common assumptions on children as "becomings" instead of "beings" and understanding of the concept of childhood agency and children as actors
- Competence to handle these independently and link them to children's rights
- Competence to recognise, understand and explain theories and concepts of childhood research in their relevance for the analysis of children's life situations and for political, pedagogical and juridical action
- Competence to critically reflect on common notions of childhood
- Understanding that childhood is a socially and historically changing phenomenon.

"...well, I think the focus was clearly on the ideas of childhood in the convention and what societal debates there are and what it means" (Sabrina, I: 118-120).[138]

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[138] *„....also ich denke der Fokus lag ganz klar bei den Ideen von Kindheit in der Konvention und was für Debatten es gibt darüber in der Gesellschaft und was es bedeutet." (Sabrina, I: 118-120).*

Module 2: Understanding Children's Rights

Taking the CRC as the starting point (see chapter 2), the "child rights project" is dealt with in the second core module. The module is dedicated to the historical development and current implementation of children's rights including philosophical, anthropological, sociological, legal approaches. Children's non-protagonism in the development and design of "their" Convention and the Western hegemonic ideas about childhood as reflected in the document are discussed. In order to understand the (universal) concept of children's rights, the international human rights system is introduced and discussed. Mechanisms for monitoring the Convention and its implementation in different countries and world regions are critically reflected. Other approaches to children's rights and rights articulated by children and young people themselves which are not enshrined in the CRC are analysed and discussed.[139] To understand why certain rights remain unwritten, "...a prior (and in many ways more difficult) issue has to be addressed. That is the question of whether it is morally desirable or politically appropriate to link commitments to social values and personal interests in terms of rights at all" (see Lacey, 1996- also Lacey, 2003- interview with Dall'Agnol). Ideally, the competences acquired after reading this module are:

- Competence to grasp the status of children's rights in the global human rights regiment
- Competence to identify core actors and issues in the international promotion of children's rights, both within the institutions of international law and politics as well as outside
- Competency to understand the social reality of children and to analyse and locate children's rights in their historical, social, cultural, economic and cultural context
- Competence to understand the difficulties that result from a discrepancy in policy – and law-making on the one hand and the transformation of cultural practices on the other
- Ability to critically understand the concept of the "best interests of the child".
- Competence to understand the theoretical background to, and fundamental principles of the child rights-based approach
- Ability to apply the child rights-based approach in different fields of practice.
- Knowledge of the monitoring system of the UNCRC
- Competence to recognise possibilities for, and obstacles to the further development of child rights
- Ability to identify procedures for the further development of child rights.

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[139] see chapter 4.3.2. on the discussion about written and unwritten rights of children (Ennew, 2002: 399) and "laws in the waiting" (Sen, 2004)

"...in any case the programme placed exactly these human and children's rights conventions in a global human rights system and I would say, even more so as international law, I would say" (Sabrina, I: 109-111).[140]

Module 3: Methods and Techniques of Childhood and Children's Rights Research

The third core module introduces qualitative social research methods with a focus on participatory research methods including methods to involve children and young people as meaningful research partners and as researchers themselves (See e.g. Alderson, 2008; Ennew & Young, 1982; Ennew & Plateau, 2004; Cree et al., 2002). In this module, students discuss qualitative research projects and how they can be developed and conducted. They work with literature concerning the methodologies and methods of qualitative research (Flick 2009; Mason et al., 2010), and their application in research projects. Students conduct a small-scale research project and in practical working sequences the module follows the principle of learning to conduct research by doing it. A focus is placed on specific problems of childhood research: How can research respond to different contexts and problems of childhood(s)? Which are the typical obstacles in participative research constructed to empower children and young people? The learning objectives of this module are:

- Acquiring practical skills, theoretical and methodological knowledge to conduct qualitative research and participatory action research projects concerning childhood and children's rights
- Acquiring skills to conduct and reflect qualitative research projects and participative approaches in working with children and young people
- Obtaining competences to write and evaluate qualitative research projects.

In addition to the qualitative research methods presented in the seminar the accompanying tutorial on the introduction of academic writing techniques assists in particular those students who have little or no experience with academic writing as done in Europe.

Based on the knowledge acquired during Module 3, appropriate research methods for the final study of the M.A. thesis can be developed. One guiding question is: How can I use qualitative, participatory research methods to facilitate children's participation in research?

"After the master's programme, I worked with an international NGO as a consultant to conduct research with married adolescent girls in Lebanon on their perspectives on the reasons of marriage and the needs of married girls. The research was in an effort to build the programme and create services based on the needs of the girls (....). My previous experience in the thesis for the master's and research project of the master's programme are what helped me build the skills I used in my one year consultancy, especially in creating research proposals/plans, designing the research and mostly creating participatory tools and using participatory methods with children while reflecting on my role as a researcher" (Zara, E: 32-41).

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[140] *„...auf jeden Fall hat das Studium genau diese Menschenrechts- oder Kinderrechtskonvention platziert in so'n, in eben das globale Menschenrechtsystem und ich würde sagen noch mehr als international Law würde ich sagen" (Sabrina, I: 109-111)*

5.2.3. Semester 2 and 3: Modules with Specific Foci

The modules in the following two semesters build upon the first three modules and have specific foci:

4. Children's Work and Education in an International and Intercultural Perspective

5. Children Out of Place (and Child Rights Oriented Practice)

6. Children and Media

7. Theoretical Research Project Proposal; Internship or Practical Project

Module 4: Children's Work and Education

Module 4 is dedicated to the children's right to education and working children's rights. Seminar 1 on education focuses on reform pedagogical approaches, global and informal learning as well as inclusive education approaches. As most people agree, education (and learning) is a key factor for succeeding and progressing in one's life. Based on case studies, the right to education written and manifested in CRC, Art.28 (1) and quality education, as discussed in General Comment No.1, is introduced and critically discussed. Traditional approaches to education are challenged leading to an elaboration of complimentary or additional forms of education and learning concepts. The pros and cons of specific educational settings are enunciated. Reasons for children's education and what type (and quality) of school, educational system or institution should be accessible for them in which world region or social strata are discussed.

Further challenging questions in the module are whether children ought to be educated with the objective of their becoming a part of the functioning workforce, rather than focusing on learning for life in general. Alternatively, should children be educated to become socially responsible members of society or to become supporters of specialised knowledge and progression? (Ross et al. 2012: 1). Issues discussed in the MACR are the different connotations of education and learning, learning understood as a lifelong, informal process, that occurs in any life situation compared to education, which is mainly attributed to formal education in institutions (Singh, 2005: 93). In addition, in seminar 1, module 4, reform pedagogical approaches such as the Reggio Emilia, Montessori or Waldorf approaches to education and learning are introduced and alternative schooling forms are critically reflected and discussed. An excursion to a school with a specific approach to education is part of the accompanying tutorial. The knowledge to develop in this part of module 4 is:

- Acquiring a deeper knowledge of the national and international discourse on „Education as a Human Right"
- Knowledge of the implementation of inclusive education in the German education system
- Competence to explore the meaning and influence of inclusive education

to socialisation and society
- Knowledge of education and learning theories
- Ability to reflect on one's own role as educator in different societies.

"I now compare constantly the view of the child in Waldorf education and in children's rights, which do not really diverge from each other. I try to find for me a sensible combination of both, always putting the child in the centre and try to make the situation with or without them considering their rights, but also in a way that relates to reality, not only ideally" (Taléia, E: 42-46).

"I work on a Hutterite Colony school - a one-room school house with students from kindergarten to grade nine. Although it is difficult to bring the concept of children's rights into such a conservative setting I am able to better see where things can/need to change and, as a teacher, I am able to create a different environment in my schoolroom - more mutual respect" (Eileen, E: 38-42).

The second seminar in Module 4: "Children's Work in an International and Intercultural Comparison" introduces and invites students to re-think the familiar and widely agreed upon concepts of (detrimental) child labour and to demonstrate child workers' heterogeneous living circumstances. The topic of children's economic contributions to family or community income and the rights of working children is one of the most controversial subjects dealt with in the MACR. A differentiation of meanings of children's work for the children themselves (and their families) and its impact on their lives is rarely stressed outside academia, where a wealth of critically researched and reflected publications on street and working children can be found (Liebel, various years; Bourdillon et al., 2010; Bourdillon, 2017; Saadi, 2012; Reddy, 2017; Invernizzi, 2017). Not all working children are exploited; many work to contribute to their families' income in order to have a stronger basis for survival. Children's work does not necessarily and only take place in mines, sweatshops or similar exploitative economic arenas as is often demonstrated in both the media and aid organisations' fundraising campaigns. Children also work e.g. as street vendors of homemade food or as shoe cleaners, to earn some money for schooling or the family's income. This type of work is not perceived as being an exploitative labour activity for most children, rather, it can evoke pride in the activity and a feeling of self-efficacy to contribute to the well-being of the family (and community). Working children's movements, in particular in Central and South America (NATS- Niños y Adolescentes Trabajadores), but also in Africa and India are introduced in the seminar and their activities discussed, analysed and evaluated considering their own testimonies and case studies (Grillo & Schibotto, 1992; Liebel, 1996; Abebe & Bessel, 2011; Bourdillon et al., 2010; Ennew & Myers & Plateau, 2005; Liebel, 2013). The competencies to be developed in this part of module 4 are:

- Ability to critically reconsider the core terms relevant in the academic and political debate on the economic participation of children
- Competence to understand the relevance economic activity retains for children globally
- Ability to discern and critically evaluate the implicit assumptions on and conceptions of childhood underlying different approaches and policy recommendations aimed at children's economic participation, including those

> proposed by working children themselves

- Competence to understand core international legal instruments relating to the economic participation of children and to critically evaluate their adequacy against the background of the realities lived by working children
- Ability to understand the value and the limitations of the current children's rights framework in relation to an amelioration of children's working and living conditions.

"The MACR has changed my way to approach the issues and problems in regard to children. Or even the perception of children! Good example is working children. Before this master's course, I was totally against child labour and supported the idea that all children should go to school instead of working on the street or factory. I wouldn't have known that some children actually claim their right to work if I hadn't studied this master's course…Manfred's case study in Latin America was a big surprise for me!" (Tsukasa, E:3-8)

Module 5: Children Out of Place (and Child Rights-Oriented Practice)

The term "Children Out of Place" is borrowed from Judith Ennew and Marc Connolly (1996), who, in an editorial to *Childhood*[141] introduced it as a conception of children who are in some way marginalised, excluded, i.e. not where they are "supposed" to be. The authors referred mainly to children in street situations, however the term has been refined to include children who are not in the place they supposedly should be; not only measured by the dominant, normative, Northern understanding of children and their childhood, but also by the local community in which they grow up. Here are a few examples of who can be viewed as children out of place: young refugees and migrant children, (see e.g. Penn, 2005), working children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, child orphans (Bourdillon, 2017), children heading households, child domestic workers, children in forced marriage as well as sexually exploited and sex-selling children (Invernizzi, 2017). In addition, the term does not only refer to groups of children but also to research about children and how it is done- in order to grasp the circumstances disadvantaged children face, more disaggregated data is needed (Liebel & Budde, 2017) and the children who are out(side) of place may have to "move to the centre", they must be given a space to participate and their life experiences need contextualization (Kjørholt, 2017: 157-170). Hence Children Out of Place can be described as one of the most vulnerable, excluded and marginalised groups of children.[142]

The ideology and the understanding of "helping" the poorest people in the world, the most marginalised children, of whom street children are a prominent example (Ennew, 2002: 399; Williams, 2007) is a one-dimensional, arrogant perspective, of pretentious knowledge. This ideology is constrained by its focus on what, according to its prescriptions, these chil-

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[141] *Childhood* is a major international peer reviewed journal and a forum for research relating to children in global society that spans divisions between geographical regions, disciplines, and social and cultural contexts. Childhood publishes theoretical and empirical articles, reviews and scholarly comments on children's social relations and culture, with an emphasis on their rights and generational position in society: http://journals.sagepub.com/home/chd .

[142] The module was originally titled "Disadvantaged and Marginalized Children and Their Rights"

dren are in need of and how they can overcome their problems to become children with a childhood according to our Northern concept, which has been engrained in us over hundreds of years (for a post-colonial viewpoint, see e.g. Nieuwenhuys, 2008; Liebel, 2017c).

The competencies to be developed in the frame of this module are:
- Ability to critically assess best (and worst) practices
- Competence to weigh different approaches against each other
- Ability to develop an understanding and sensitivity for the situations of different groups of children, the various rights and responsibilities and the diverse ways in which these children (Out of Place) can be supported in coping with their lives.

The accompanying tutorial in module 5 refers mainly to migrant and refugee children in the European Union. Although child and youth migrants in multicultural societies face problems and these are being increasingly researched especially today with the high numbers of refugees coming into multicultural societies and societies that are in the process of transforming into multicultural ones, the difficulties these children face may be judged differently than realities of marginalised and excluded children in some less developed and poorer regions, states and communities. In view of the contemporary global political situation, it is of utmost importance to look at issues that have emerged over the past approximately five years and to take all possible measures for the integration of refugees and migrants and their inclusion in European societies so as not to see them being doomed to remaining one of the most vulnerable social groups.
Competency to be achieved:

- The tutorial means to enable the students to develop strategies for practical work with refugee children and youth from a participatory children's rights perspective.

"..generally speaking, yes. I really believe that the master's had various tools and they have helped me-particularly all the classes of the module Children Out of Place helped me (...) how to work with such a vulnerable population well, yes it gave me very important competencies. The importance also of this multi-disciplinarity- work with different tools and methods" (Pedro, I: 135-139).[143]

Module 6: Children and Media and Module 7: Internship, Practical Project or Research Proposal

Before engaging in an internship or developing a (hypothetic) research project proposal and writing the final master's thesis, module 6: Children and Media, discusses advantages and the potential as well as risks and dangers of new media and representation of children

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[143]*…"eh si, en general si, en verdad creo que en la maestría hubo varias herramientas eh y que me ayudaron – en particular todas las clases de children out of place que me ayudan - la dinámica eh (…) de cómo trabajar en, en una población tán vulnerable entonces si me dieron herramientas muy importantes, la importancia de esa multi-disciplinaridad- trabajar con distintas herramientas gente de otros disciplinas" (Pedro, 135-139)*

in the media including children's potential participation in it. Also, students get an insight into media production about, for and with children through an introduction and first-step workshop to acquire first practical skills. These skills are then tested by students in a media production; e.g. short videos with children, about children's rights; pocket photo exhibitions made with children, photo galleries and more.

After having read the module Children and Media, students should have developed the following competencies:

- Competence to think critically and to have analytical skills in the field of media and children
- Ability to develop one's own ethical standpoint and argumentation
- Competence to creatively develop potential projects and media initiatives in group work
- Have a deeper understanding of both the potential and challenges of the internet for children's rights
- Ability to recognise (and acknowledge) different perspectives of stakeholders in this process including children's perspectives.

Module 7 is the only module with optional choices. Students can either do an Internship (7a) or develop a Practical Project (7b) or write a Theoretical Research Project Proposal (7c). All these activities have to be related to childhood or children's rights. Students with a lot of practical experience may choose to develop a project or write a research proposal, others may choose to get a foot in the door by doing an internship at a potential future employing organisation. Both in the internship and the practical project[144] the students get exemplary insight into a working field relevant to children's rights. Hereby, the competencies to be achieved are:

- Competence to independently plan a child rights project, to implement and evaluate it.
- Competence to take on management functions in a working field relevant to child rights.
- Knowledge of funding possibilities and ways of acquiring funding for projects.

If students decide to write a theoretical research project proposal they are accompanied by colloquium meetings which in sum qualifies them for conceptualising research proposals on practice-relevant childhood and children's rights subjects and to apply for funding for the implementation of the project proposed.

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[144] A practical project can be e.g. conceptualising and organising a lecture series or a symposium; smaller projects such as developing a project with children in their work surrounding.

Reflection

The experience of having been allowed to observe and participate in the process of developing the curriculum of the MACR has been rewarding for two reasons: First, it enabled me to experience a negotiation process between several researchers who are working in the field of children's rights, a field new to me at the time (2004). It was a great learning experience and a good starting point for the following activities in the network and in the MACR itself. Not having been familiar with children's rights discourses at the time of drafting the curriculum allowed me to take a more distant, observing position, which proved valuable for this research. In one meeting, the consortium drafted the first core module: "Children's Rights in Global Perspective" (a combination of the subsequent two core modules "Childhood Studies and Understanding Children's Rights").[145] Re-reading this draft after ten years of its development was an interesting experience, as the content is still reflected in the modules and their descriptions today. Equally astounding is a statement written by Manfred Liebel, founder and director of the EMCR/MACR from 2007-2016. It refers to the potential of such a master's degree, listing different career options and job possibilities for graduates.[146] The remarkableness is that this vision reflects in large parts where and what graduates and alumni are working today.[147] However, up to this time, to my knowing, there are no enterprises that have created job positions for children's rights experts. This is still an aim to be followed up upon. On the contrary, experience has shown that students coming from the entrepreneurial field wish to leave this work environment and take up jobs in a different sector.[148]

I have outlined the content of the modules and the respective competencies and learning outcomes. Later in chapter 10, under the assumption that students have gained knowledge in the MACR that they now use, I will review these competencies and elaborate on the importance they have for the graduates and how these competencies are applied.

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[145] The draft can be found in the annex (no.4)
[146] Liebel's statement can be found in the annex (no.5)
[147] see chapter 7 in which the students and research partners are introduced
[148] Of the research partners see e.g. Daniela, Nora

Chapter 6 – Method of Data Gathering, Analysis and Interpretation

"As honest social researchers, we don't tend to make up our data; instead, we write down what our informants tell us or what we have seen in the field (see Geertz, 1973). In doing so, we try to offer a faithful account of the world that is out there, albeit an account that is shaped by our questions and interests and by the conditions of the data generation process itself" (Mason, 2002 in: James, 2012: 567).

6.1. Preliminary Thoughts

This study is largely based on qualitative social research, albeit there are some quantitative research activities included for cross-referencing. Qualitative social research has a much younger tradition than quantitative social research. Whereas applying standardised methods, quantitative research seeks to generate resilient statistics of social phenomena, qualitative research focuses on researching social relations and their quality (Flick, 2009: 12). There have been many critiques of qualitative research methods, mainly about the validity of research results. The paradigm that research must be objective, whereby the subjective views and perspectives of the researcher are eliminated, has been widely questioned. Taking a positivist approach, quantitative research collects data via standardised questionnaires e.g. in the field of education via tests. Such research seldom reveals the social context and system in which research partners are posited during the research period and can therefore be blind to specific factors and criteria that have led to the (statistical) results generated from the data. In qualitative data, on the contrary, the researcher's participation in the study undertaken and his or her reflection on his or her own actions and observations in the field, impressions, irritations, feelings etc. are understood as an inherent part of the data material and form part of the interpretation of the data (ibd. 16, see chapter 1). Nonetheless, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, such as e.g. in the children's study (Kinderstudie) of the NGO World Vision[149], can be useful when quantitative results are not set forth by taking a positivist approach in which the researcher(s) do not understand themselves as pure and "objectively" judging investigators.

The belief that even though people are in the process of becoming ever more individualistic, with the consequential assumption that individuals are devoid of their social surroundings needs critical consideration.[150] Although solidarity seems to be on a downturn in Europe while fierce capitalism is (still) on the rise, individuals are part of this society and the system they live in. Much of the position in society and the attitude and behaviour towards one's surroundings cannot be revealed by quantitative research alone. To grasp one's own

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[149] The Kinderstudie was carried out three times, in 2007, 2010 and 2013 and aims at uncovering children's own understanding, their visions and their feelings on specific topics (child participation, 2010, child wellbeing, 2013). The study draws on a combination of methods. Qualitative data (in interviews) with children collected across Germany is assessed by quantitative methods in order to reflect a "neutral, objective" picture of the situation researched. See further information: https://www.worldvision-institut.de/kinderstudien-kinderstudie-2013.php (accessed 28.4.2017).
[150] Refer e.g. to the development process of the CRC and the Western paradigm of individualist societies (chapter 2).

localisation within this system as well as the field and persons researched, a qualitative approach seems almost imperative.

As this evaluative study aims at disclosing the beliefs of graduates and the impact of a study programme on their personal and professional biographies as well as the competencies achieved in the MACR including the application thereof (see chapter 1), the necessity of qualitative research in the form of verbal data (interviews, essays) and participatory evaluative activities is apparent.

6.1.1. Knowing the field

My role as researcher has been special in two ways, on the one hand it has been challenging and somewhat ambivalent, on the other hand enriching and rewarding.
I have been very close to the research field internally as the coordinator of the European Network of Masters in Children's Rights (ENMCR from 2004-2009, now CREAN) and since 2015 a member of the steering committee of the network, as well as the coordinator of the curriculum development project which led to the *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights,* which I have been coordinating since its inception in 2006/07. I am in the unique position to have an insider's view by being a constant integral part of the programme. The challenge of perhaps being too close to the programme and the possibility of being biased or not "objective" enough in researching and evaluating, is one I have encountered sincerely and contentedly for mastering it. In cross-checking with persons who are not as closely involved in the project, I came to realise that the asset of such proximity to the subject under investigation outweighs the risks it also bears. Why so? By following and interacting with the students since the first year of offering the master's and by the on-going personal contact with the graduates and the cooperation between members of the CREAN network enabled very direct and comparatively easy access to interview partners and stakeholders of this research (see chapter 1.5.). This saved a lot of time that would have been needed to get acquainted, gain and build trust and confidence in a relationship that allows the research partners to open up enough to me as the researcher to reveal "true" and "valid" opinions, perspectives and thoughts on the questions and thematic categories discussed during the interviews. Nonetheless, as researchers we have to be wary of not being narrow or even closed-minded when very close to the field. We must also reflect aspects that are discussed considering the knowledge of the field of study and one's being involved in it, as one may take these for granted, but which an outsider or newcomer to the theme may not comprehend without explanation. Thus, albeit knowing the field well by having been involved in the development of the curriculum and knowing (at least) part of the biography research partners have as student members of the MACR, information I give here should not suffer from compendious description, analysis and discussion.

6.1.2. Research methods

Before introducing the methods I have employed in this research, some basic information about research designs in general is required. According to Mayring's introduction to qualitative social research, in order to grasp what is to be researched, at first a concept, plan or

the design of the investigation must be developed by which the research will be guided (Mayring, 2002: 40). Mayring (2002) introduces and distinguishes several research designs: case studies, document analysis, action research, descriptive field research, qualitative experiment and qualitative evaluation. In line with a triangulation of evaluative methods applied, the research design is a combination of what methods the scholar describes. In taking a strict methodological approach following only one method or technique of gathering, analysing and interpreting data, the researcher limits herself; while when choosing a combination there is a risk that methods can become arbitrary and therefore not "objective" ("evidence-based") and scientifically valid. However, in the present context, a combination of methods is required to do justice to the theme researched, the qualification in children's rights at universities. It is commonly agreed that in open guideline-oriented interviews, which are used to obtain verbal data in this research, the partners can be selected randomly (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2010; Mayring, 2002; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996), yet the choice of interview partners is dependent on what information is sought by which questions (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2010: 197). Applying a combination of methods in this study enables a more comprehensive investigation of the basic research question(s) as defined in the introduction:

- How are children's rights conceptualised in the MACR, on what theories are they based?
- Who are the participants and graduates of the MACR?
- What qualification do they achieve?
- What knowledge and competencies do they develop and how do they develop them?
- How is this reflected in their everyday lives in a professional (and private) setting, if at all?

The answer(s) to these questions lead to the following question of what impact the employment of the developed capacities has on the students themselves and on the children and young people they work with or for and whom they encounter in their daily lives and beyond.

The evaluative research is based on participatory observation mainly conducted during coordinative meetings of students and mentoring sessions, evaluation meetings with teachers and advisory committee meetings and to a lesser extent on students' evaluations of individual MACR courses. As a further element of the qualitative evaluation, case studies, as a core element of qualitative research approaches (Mayring, 2002: 42), form part of the study via interviews with students and structured written essays by alumni, revealing parts of their biographies related to the MACR. In the process, pre-MACR moments are considered as well as attitudes, cultural affiliations, academic backgrounds as part of students' biographies. Post-MACR attitudes, competencies and subsequent new features of personal understandings, both by the graduates and alumni themselves and by me as the researcher in the analysis of the data form a large part of the gathered research material. Although first-case analyses aim at understanding man or woman as the realm of object and his or her individuality within a concrete context and surrounding, cases can encompass groups of people as well. In the case here, the group is composed of students and

graduates, the subjects of the research, both as individuals and as groups who are united owing to them studying the MACR and having become members of the children's rights community.[151] The assumption is that the subjective living environment and everyday life of the interview partners can be apprehended. Generally speaking, researchers expect to portray and explain social processes and subjective experience and action as person-environment interaction (Huber & Mandl, 1994: 172).

6.1.2. Ethics

As this study traces the life worlds of individuals who may be recognised by the readers, ethical standards for research are of the utmost importance. Generally, as a fundamental ethical standard, research participants of programmes under evaluation must be informed about the activity and give their informed consent to use their verbal, physical and mimical input as a contribution to the evaluation. This has been a challenge during the data collection period for this dissertation inasmuch as the decision on which data that was collected over the past ten years would be significant for this work. Often, ethical questions in research arise concurrently with the decision on whether the research is to be open or disguised. Engaging in hidden research may be unethical, yet it has the advantage that maximum authenticity of the data can be assumed seeing that those being researched do not alter their behaviour but act completely "natural" (as in "non-artificial") as if no one were observing them in a research context. By contrast, open research is (more) transparent to the subjects under investigation and is as such more ethical. Participants are informed about the research, its design and the expected results, and for what and whom it is being carried out (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2010: 56). The most vital principles of ethical research are that research participants do so voluntarily and can withdraw at any given time. Potential benefits or risks research participants may face during the research must be communicated clearly (Silverman, 2013: 161; Morrow, 1996; Morrow, 2018).

In my research, these basic standards have been adhered to, whereas in the case of standardised evaluations of seminars, tutorials and lectures after their completion via pre-set standardised questionnaires, students of the first years were not informed that their answers may be used in the frame of this research. As the questionnaires do not reveal much information on the concept of the programme nor the theoretical foundation it is based on, the results were mainly used for improving the classes in the following years (teacher student relation; preparedness and structure of classes; teacher's teaching competencies etc.). The answers are given back to the teachers as anonymous feedback. In the actual analysis of the body of data in this study some references will be made to outcomes of these questionnaires by reflecting on changes to the programme, as in the process of rethinking and reviewing all the data and compiling it into a fieldwork journal; some of the comments and assessments of the students are indeed useful for getting a clearer picture of how such programmes should be conceptualised and structured. Therefore, some answers to open questions, that are also posed on the questionnaires may serve as corrobo-

[151] I elaborate on the concept of the child rights community in chapter 11.

ration for specific interpretations. Over the years, the students were informed about the research, however the explicitness of the information varied from group to group. In reviewing and analysing the data I cannot clearly discern differences between the information received from groups who were informed in detail and those who were not. Therefore, in retrospect, I believe this research would not have suffered from being explicitly open and not only semi-transparent, and consequently more ethical, as most students are very open-minded and self-assured, bringing me to the assumption that their behaviour and evaluation of the MACR would likely not have been biased in the event of them knowing that all their assessments and views could potentially be used for a larger study.[152]

6.2. Methods Used

The methods I used for this study varied from the time the curriculum was developed (2004-2006) to the years of setting up firm structures at FUB (2007-2012) to the smooth implementation of the programme (2013-2017). In the beginning, while developing the MACR, a quantitative stakeholder survey was conducted to assess the need for such a specialised master's in children's rights according to local, regional, national and international organisations and associations working in the field. Undergraduate students were also asked their opinion about their interest in the MACR in a standardised questionnaire (see chapter 5.1.2.2.). After the establishment of the MACR, field notes of participatory observations were written in a field note journal, notes on evaluation activities were taken, interviews with graduates were conducted and alumni wrote brief essays on their estimations of the use of the MACR in their personal and professional lives.[153] I will first give an overview of how and when these methods to collect data were used before discussing the procedure of their analysis and interpretation.

6.2.1. Field notes of participative observation and evaluation activities

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) in conducting ethnographic social research, stated that any social research is a form of participative observation, as the social world is not researchable without the researcher being part of it. The process of becoming or being part of the researched subjects, people, actions, behaviours, biographies, cultures etc. has been described as "going native". This can be highly ambivalent, as becoming an (almost) integral part of the research objects and/or subjects, may go at the expense of a certain distance the researcher must retain in order to be able to objectify and analyse data with the remoteness needed to counter possible bias (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2010: 58). As mentioned above, in my role as coordinator of the MACR and mentor of smaller groups of stu-

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[152] One group was quite upset when they learned that I might use their evaluation of classes for this research, at the same time in our discussion about this faux-pas on my side, students confirmed that their being offended was a question of ethical research principles (which they had just learned about).

[153] The field notes, protocols of evaluation meetings as well as interview transcripts and essays are archived in an electronic file "empirical data" and can be accessed through me, Rebecca Budde: rebecca.budde@web.de

dents throughout their studies as well as my offering a colloquium for discussion of the research project students develop during module 7c) and for preparation of the final thesis, I have been rather tightly involved in the field I am researching. According to Friedrichs, (1980: 289 in Mayring, 2002: 57) any field researcher must simultaneously participate in the process and develop critical distance. At times, I found myself confronted with a balancing act, when the separation of my two roles (researcher and coordinator) was on the brink of getting blurred. At the same time my great advantage has been that I was able to "go native" without which, "...it is virtually impossible to construct a complete replication of the linguistic resources (...) and even then there are no guarantees" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 106). A certain level of intersubjectivity is a must in order to understand "what's going on"; without a certain level of intimacy it is difficult to understand the situation and the student or graduate at the particular time of studying the MACR, at the same time lacking distance renders it not easy to reflect on the data in a social scientific manner (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2010: 60).

The balancing act of integrating both my roles occurred most frequently in personal, private conversations with students in which I assisted the respective student with whatever his or her difficulty, doubt, question or concern was and at the same time thinking of what this specific issue could mean in relation to my research on the effects and impact of the MACR on students. An example of such a situation would be: a US American student in her first semester, whose mentor I am, asks me for a meeting to discuss the concept of childhood as a social construct which is completely new to her and which has thrown her off balance in how to interact with children. She is no longer sure that she is on the right track and doing justice to the children, as she has realised that a childhood children have need not necessarily be a safe and protected space, free of responsibilities and marked by innocence, but is constructed as being such by adult society (of the North). In such situations, I am faced with trying to ease the doubts and to reassure the student that these new thoughts may well materialise into a reflected interaction with and discussion about children. At the same time this meeting is highly interesting for this study as it gives insight into the process students undergo while reading the MACR. Another example of documented field participation are e.g. brief face-to-face encounters in the hallway or the office in between classes or telephone conversations and mentoring meetings in which students talk about how the course is going, whether they are enjoying the class and find it interesting or whether they feel tired and bored, i.e. instances in which short exchanges about these subjective feelings take place. Again, it gives me, the researcher, the possibility to gather data about subjective impressions and feelings of students, which, documented in field notes, compliment other data as narratives and therefore facilitates comprehension of the complex formations underway. The strength of thinking about the data as a narrative is that it opens up the possibilities for a variety of analytical strategies. And the analysis of these narratives can provide a critical mode of examining not only key actors and events, but also cultural conventions and social norms (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 80). This may be further illustrated by another example: A student from Armenia approaches me for assistance and advice with her master's thesis. She is struggling to find a good structure for her exposé and to me doesn't seem like she quite understands what the requirements for an acceptable exposé are. I guide her through the structure of a thesis and make suggestions for her theoretical backing and the methods she could possibly use. She agrees and doesn't

say much on her part. I feel as if we haven't moved along with the issue as she doesn't comment for re-assurance on what we have "discussed". A few weeks later she submits a proper exposé which is structured along the lines we have spoken about. Having watched her and other students from countries with a more hierarchical social and academic structure where students are passive receivers of knowledge and are not encouraged to voice their own opinions, I understood that she may not have commented or asked further questions, as this is not customary in Armenia (field note). Answers to the questionnaires distributed in the last session of each class are also taken into account (see above). Other documents, which are used to back up the study are protocols of evaluative teachers' meetings and meetings of the advisory committee to the MACR.[154]

6.2.2. Jour fixe meetings

In feedback meetings with the students during their studies (jour fixe meetings) my role enables me to get a "feel" for what meaning the participants place on being in the MACR, to understand doubts, inconsistencies, assessment of teaching methods and quality, and, importantly, specific group dynamics.[155] Following the hypothesis that these themes are significant for the experience of being a MACR student and that they (can) have implications for future activities of graduates, the observations have been a valuable source of information. Generally, the students are invited to meet the coordination team twice during each of the first two semesters and once near the end of the third semester, whereas this last meeting is dedicated mainly to final evaluation activities. In this overall evaluation meeting, students are asked to fill in a general evaluation form[156] to give (anonymous) feedback about the programme with the aim to further improve the course (for MACR team, incl. coordination, direction, advisory committee, teachers) and for the students to facilitate a reflection on the process they have gone through. During this activity, I gathered research data by taking field notes of the atmosphere in the class room and the willingness (or unwillingness) to participate in the activity.[157] Student feedback enables a view behind the

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[154] Members of the committee (as of April 2017): see: https://www.fh-potsdam.de/en/studieren/fachbereiche/sozial-und-bildungswissenschaften/studium/studiengaenge/master/ma-childhood-studies-and-childrens-rights/

[155] At times, student groups are dominated by 1- 4 students who take up most space and time, in the classroom and also in these common meetings. Sometimes it deems necessary to make them aware of this fact, in order to calm down the group, who also merits place and space to participate and to counteract possible negative "vibes", if one of the protagonists of the group has a difficulty with one or another issue (e.g. assessment methods; quality of presentations; structure of particular seminars and classes)

[156] The form can be found in the annex (no.7).

[157] Often, I perceived a kind of reluctance to fill in yet another evaluation form, in particular as it looks the same and takes up several questions also asked in the questionnaires on the different seminars, which students had filled in at the end of each course. Nonetheless, the questionnaire has a different focus, as it refers to the whole programme. A possibility to counteract such reluctance maybe to present the questionnaire in a different format. This has been tried in the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, with evaluation of individual sessions via an electronic system connected to the seminars on the learning platform used, the final evaluation however remains the same as at FUB.

Note: Since having written this dissertation, a new form of evaluating the individual classes has been discussed with the students, with the decision to combine open and closed questions and an agreement to do the evaluation

scenes about the common "mood" referring to the classes and their opinions on them. Possible criticism of courses is voiced here and pressing organisational issues are discussed.

In the previous jour fixe meetings at the end of the first and the end of the second semester the mood is again sounded out and weighed against the atmosphere experienced in the middle of the semester at the time of the first jour fixe. Questions are raised as to what and how things have changed during the semester and whether in consequence students' feelings and their satisfaction have been altered compared to a few months earlier. In these meetings, much time is also dedicated to organisational issues such as questions and answers about writing the required module papers (exams); the amount of readings to be completed and the reference made to them in class; and simply how to technically register for courses and how to use the student web-based learning platform most effectively.

6.2.3. Final evaluation

Another activity of the final general evaluation session at the end of the third and last semester is an evaluation of the MACR employing a target diagram evaluation, and a comparison of statements on childhood and children's rights written at the Opening Day of the programme and again at the beginning of the evaluation session at the end of the programme. On the one hand, the aim of the activities is to get an understanding of the experience the students have made, on the other, it is a form of formative evaluation as the results serve as a basis for improving the programme in the following years. This is also an opportunity for students to praise the programme and/or to voice their dissatisfaction with it. It is also a form of summative evaluation at the end of the course, which reflects and weighs the achievements and success and satisfaction with the programme against the original goals and expectations.

In the past several years, we have engaged in:

1. Answering a more general questionnaire concerning the overall satisfaction with the one and a half-year programme, the coherence of the curricula, the greatest and the least benefit of the whole course, the organisation, the literature, the e-learning platform etc. and revealing information on the significance of the whole course and the aspects learned. The survey has open and closed questions, which the students are asked to answer in about ten to fifteen minutes.

2. Assessing specific topics with the use of a target diagram (bull's eye). The bull's eye serves to collect participant feedback on a variety of issues related to the design, implementation and organisation of the MACR.

Instructions for a bull's eye target diagram evaluation: Draw the bull's eye on large posters (flip chart paper) and hand out stickers with which you ask the participants to rate the questions from "1" as in "very much" to "6" as in "not at all". "1" is represented by the inner

on paper again, the reason for which is the motivation to assess the class at the end of its delivery without having to access the computer and the respective form when at home. By this, it is expected to have a higher turnout of answers which are more representative of the atmosphere in class and the learning process.

circle (the bull's eye), "6" is on the outer circle. Note: it is important that participants mark their ratings on the stickers before walking up to the bull's eye to attach them on the circles, as to avoid participants influencing each other with their ratings. Also, it is advisable that the facilitator leaves the room during the rating. Once all the participants have attached all their stickers, the results of this feedback, which are now visualised (often there is a conglomerate of stickers in certain spots), are discussed in the group and the facilitator can learn about the reasons behind the rating (see Hirseland et al., 2004: 46-47).

3. The third component of the evaluation session is comparing and reflecting on students' understandings and ideas about childhood and children's rights from the beginning of the MACR with the understanding of these at the end of the programme. Possible changes thereof are revealed by them answering the same questions on childhood and children's rights as they did at the beginning of the course.

Instructions: On the Opening Day, i.e. the first personal encounter with the teachers, the academic coordination and the organisers, students are asked to write in a few sentences answering the questions: *What is childhood?* And: *What are children's rights?*

These estimations, opinions, perspectives are collected and kept until the end of the last semester, when the students answer both questions once more. After this exercise, they are given back their opinions from the beginning of the course and by doing this can themselves see what shift has taken place or how their understanding has been altered, exemplified and theoretically confirmed by having read the MACR. The members of the MACR team, subsequently ask the students to share their findings with the group.

6.2.4. Interviews and essays

In order to substantiate the findings of the above described activities and observations, I conducted twenty (20) interviews with graduates and alumni and requested thirty-three (33) alumni to send me answers to questions related to the use of the competencies achieved in the MACR in the form of essays, of whom fourteen sent back information.[158]

The selection of research partners was random in that whenever there was an event of the children's rights community (to which the graduates now belong, see chapter 11), I would meet one or the other and ask for an interview. Whereas the decision on from whom and how to collect further data is not pre-set when creating the research design and plan, it is constantly reconsidered throughout the research process and may be altered substantially e.g by including interview partners who weren't foreseen, let alone thought of, when planning the investigation. I did have an idea about the "personal framework and system of relation of the interview partner" (Huber & Mandl, 1994: 122). It is not advisable to research persons who are very close to you personally. Nonetheless relations with students can become very close, due to the physical proximity owing to their continuous accompaniment while in the MACR; the fact that several alumni are now working in the MACR team as

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[158] Data of one interview is excluded here, as the research partner withdrew.

tutors, teachers and assistants in the coordination team has, over the years, led to relation-ships and even friendships. I did not interview these particular students in order not to risk the possibility of disrespecting the necessary distance required of me as a researcher.

The interviews can best be classified as a combination of half-open, semi-structured guide-line-oriented (expert) focus interviews, in which thematic blocks were developed and trans-lated into questions on specific aspects of the MACR (Huber & Mandl, 1994: 119-120).[159] The research interest, in this case the structure and delivery of the master's programme (for formative evaluation purposes) and the assessment of the knowledge gained and in what way competencies can now be and are used was translated into a complex of questions. For summative evaluation purposes questions are included on whether doing the MACR has contributed or will contribute to personal and social change. Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr (2010: 139) describe the use of guideline interviews as the best method to be applied when researching a specific question. The guideline should only serve as orientation, therefore this type of interview is also labelled "open" guideline interview, as the manner of conducting the interview is not one of adhering to the specific questions formulated in the categories to be investigated, rather, they should serve as a reminder of what else would be interesting and as support in case of any interruptions or longer periods of silence. In such open interviews, explorations, descriptions and argumentative explications and depictions as well as hypothesis generating are at the forefront (ibid: 140). I used this form of open yet semi-structured and focused guideline interviews, as it was of interest to understand the meaning of the qualification for the graduates and the purpose of (newly introduced) theo-retical assumptions on which advanced interdisciplinary children's rights studies are based. Even though not in an original sense, e.g. as described by Liebold and Trinczek (2009), the interviews can be classified as expert interviews since all the graduates are as-sumed to be experts in children's rights in a variety of perspectives. Not only do they have specialised knowledge of the field, they also have a specific role within this context which others ascribe to them and they also claim for themselves. This may be somewhat of a bias, however by having accompanied the students throughout their studies and knowing which topics they have learned about in the master's it is clear that the interview partners ARE experts in the field. Nonetheless the interviews cannot be classified as pure expert inter-views, as the aim to receive information provided by the research partners as experts was only one aspect of the interview. When performing within the same system of relations it is a challenge to be at all times aware of the expert knowledge the interview partners have acquired. I sometimes took the knowledge about childhood and children's rights for grant-ed, which bore the risk of limiting descriptions and attitudes the interview partners them-selves would explicate. Many questions need not be voiced or answered if there is a mutual understanding from the beginning. This can lead to "[T]he essential material (staying) hid-den, if researcher and interview partner understand each other too quickly" (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2010: 89, own translation). On the other hand, my knowledge of the field opened the possibility to go beyond as well.

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[159] For an overview of other forms of interviews: see e.g. Schütze 1983; Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2010: 92-95; Witzel, 2000)

The interview questions I asked were discussed with supervisors and other persons involved in the development process of the MACR as well as MACR advisory committee members, through the assistance of whom the guideline was refined and set. The interviews took place with graduates who had very recently obtained their degree (a few weeks before the interview) and others who had graduated up to eight years prior to the interview, covering a wide range of impressions.

The guideline covers four overarching themes:

1. The *motivation* behind studying the programme and the *expectations* towards the MACR before studying, followed or combined by a reflection on whether these have been fulfilled.

2. The *achievement* and *use of competencies* (subject-related, practical, tangible competencies and transferable, intangible, theoretical knowledge)- this block of questions formed the main section of the interview giving the most comprehensive information on what qualification is being offered and how it is used.

3. The *structure, organisation and coherence* of the MACR.

4. The *Europeanness* of the programme (questions on how the master's is embedded in a European agenda occupied more space in the first interviews (from 2008-2011)). At the time the programme was still the "European Master in Children's Rights" and "European Master in Childhood Studies and Children's Rights" respectively (see chapter 5.1.) [160]/[161]

The interviews with the graduates were voice-recorded after getting consent to do so by the interview partners. The locations of the interviews varied from the MACR office at FUB, to different cafés across Berlin, in my home and the interview partner's home. The interviews were literally transcribed, as they were relatively short (between 50 minutes and 1h 45). They were conducted in German, English and one in Spanish. Of the German and Spanish interviews, only the most salient sections and statements have been translated into English. Due to the large time span of this study in coding and analysing the interview material, I realised that voices of further alumni would enhance the body of data in particular with respect to theoretical competences achieved during the master's and how they are reflected in everyday work situations.

In early 2017, I sent an e-mail to thirty-three (33) alumni, randomly picked from student lists from every year, requesting an answer to the following questions:

- In what way has the EMCR/MACR (reading the MA) impacted you (in your life – personal, job ...)?
- How can you use the competencies acquired during the MA in your work? (What/Where are you working)

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[160] The first few years one focus was put on Europe, the course having been developed as a European project- however this direct connection slowly disappeared- what remained were a few exchanges between students from other European universities via Erasmus as well as guest lecture invitations from partner universities.

[161] The interview guideline is in the annex (no.8)

- What theory (from the MA studies modules) do you use/apply in your profession? How and why?
- What changes can you make out/depict in your personal and professional activities after reading the MA?

Fourteen alumni sent either individual answers to the questions or wrote a brief essay.[162]

6.2.5. Online survey with alumni of children's rights study programmes

Up until three years ago, the aim of this study had still been to retrieve data not only from the MACR at FUB, but from several other European universities (members of ENMCR/CREAN) where study programmes in children's rights are offered. Therefore, I developed an online survey using the online software programme "Survey Monkey"[163] that I sent out to alumni lists at FUB, University of Geneva/Sion, Switzerland, Universitatea Babeś- Bolayi, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, (UBB) and University of Edinburgh, UK (UoE).[164] This should have reached approximately 350-400 graduates. The turnout was very low with only about forty (40) participants to the survey, all of which were either graduates from Geneva/Sion or the FUB. Therefore, the answers are in no way quantitatively representative of the opinions of children's rights study programme graduates and I decided not to include them in the analysis- nonetheless I will draw on some answers to two open questions given by respondents.[165]

6.3. Making Sense of the Data

6.3.1. Data processing

The data, having been gathered, must be analysed and interpreted, appraised and evaluated. Wolcott's (Wolcott, 1994: 36) approach as claimed in Coffey & Atkinson (1996: 8) divides methods into three types, which according to him are the three primary elements of qualitative research: description, analysis and interpretation. In all three types it is important to adhere to the data but to keep the necessary distance in making scientifically valid sense of it, as all methods are always subjective. While analysis to him is management of data, in-

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[162] The e-mail request for an essay can also be found in the annex (no.9)
[163] www.surveymonkey.com
[164] At UoE, there is a MSc in Childhood Studies which includes children's rights topics. In the other three universities, full children's rights study programmes are offered: UBB: European Master in Children's Rights; Sion: Advanced Master in Children's Rights and MACR at FUB/Potsdam University of Applied Sciences
[165] How has studying children's rights impacted on your personality?
Has your mindset changed, and if so, how would you describe this change?
Please add any information/aspects you find important in this respect.
In your view, what contribution have academic children's rights programmes made to raise awareness on children's rights and realizing children's rights for children in general?

terpretation in contrast, can be casual, unbounded, aesthetically satisfying, idealistic, generative and impassioned. Data analysis has also at times been said to be data handling, its analysis refers primarily to the imaginative work of interpretation, and the more procedural, categorising tasks are relegated to the preliminary work of ordering and sorting the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 6). Traditional qualitative data processing, analysis and interpretation can be quite daunting, as massive amounts of paper (or digital documents) are produced which requires diligent ordering to prevent drowning in material. Transcriptions of interviews and their subsequent manual coding can be said to be almost out-dated. Today there are several software programmes for qualitative data analysis that make the coding and categorisation of the material more time-efficient and well-arranged. In addition, the process of analysis can be more easily traced by the research audience and is said to have a higher degree of validity and reliability (Richards, 2011). At the time I started this research and collecting the data, computer software programmes were not yet as developed as today, on account of which I did not even consider using one. Many method scholars appraise these rather new software tools for qualitative data handling for the above-mentioned reasons; in my opinion such a software can also be limiting as it narrows down data rapidly, compared to traditional approaches, there is the "fear (...) that they also run the risk of removing the craft element that (...) is an essential component of the analytic imagination that lies at the heart of interpretation" (James, 2012: 564). A variety of perspectives are inherent to qualitative approaches in general. "Researchers have different styles, different talents and gifts, so that standardisation of methods would only constrain and even stifle social researcher's best efforts" Strauss (1987: 7; see also: Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 4).

6.3.2. Coding

Several social research methods scholars firmly believe that all collected data needs coding. In view of extensive amounts of data this can be immensely time-consuming and, as many other scholars agree, is not required to get answers from the data. In fact, there is agreement that only the most salient portions of the data related to the research question merit examination, which can lead to summarising or even deleting up to half or even two thirds of the data to engage in intense analysis of the remaining material. In doing this, qualitative researchers are prepared to sacrifice scope for detail (Saldaña, 2016: 17; Silverman, 2013: 105). Notwithstanding, I did code the data I collected.

In a first step, I underlined and commented passages in the interviews and later in the essays graduates had sent me, marked striking passages relating to the question of whether and most importantly why and how the MACR has had an impact on them, their surroundings, their beliefs. These passages are induced in thematic blocks (codes) that I consecutively filled with further data sections. In order not to lose sight of the research question (which can actually happen quite easily as new themes and topics arise while coding the data) I followed Auerbach and Silverstein's (2003) recommendation to keep a one-page outline of the research question and the theoretical framework with the goals of the study next to my computer. This proved to be helpful to keep track even if the theoretical frame shifted between nuances throughout the coding procedure. After having found and explicated several categories (belonging-friendship-network-child rights community; power relations –

adultism- child agency; attitudes and beliefs; competencies-expertise; interdisciplinary teaching and learning), a list of codes was generated on the basis of the preparatory investigation and its suggestion on what might appear. These codes were directly deducted from the interview guideline and essay questions respectively, guided by the assumption that research partners would describe their opinions and views on the MACR and reveal the assumed impact it had on them. Furthermore, while deducting themes, I was guided by the hypothesis that reading the MACR can contribute to a change in attitude and subsequently lead to social change. I conjectured that I would find statements in the material to manifest and prove these assumptions. While engaging in deductive category building by taking the themes questioned in the interviews and the questions raised in the essays as well as having the transcending theories and concepts of the MACR as the basic starting point, new topics crystalized, so that it was deemed necessary to build on an inductive extraction of findings, which were put into context with the students' narrations to validate and confirm the findings.

In a second step, I engaged in value coding (Gable & Wolf, 1993; Le Compte & Preissle, 1993; Saldaña, 2016: 131ff) in which the codes applied aim at reflecting the interview partners' values and attitudes, beliefs and worldviews. In addition, I continually reflected my own role as researcher and my personal value system according to which the value coding takes place. This method of coding was extremely rewarding, as a hypothesis of the MACR has been that reading it can and does alter attitudes, deconstruct solidified belief systems, behavioural patterns and cultural values.

6.3.3. Analysis

After coding the data ("culture of fragmentation" Atkinson & Coffey, 1996), one must place it back into the overall picture of the research. The move from coding to interpretation of the data means playing with and exploring the codes. These can be changed in the process of reviewing the data they derive from. "Exceptions, misfits, and 'negative' findings should be seen as having as much importance as do the easily coded data" (ibd: 46-47). Researchers should be looking for patterns, themes, and regularities as well as contrasts, paradoxes, and irregularities.

In analysing the research data of this study, I follow the straightforward qualitative content analysis developed by Philip Mayring (1993, 2002). Mayring speaks of fluent transitions of data processing and appraisal in applying descriptive categories and classifications (perspectives) that are essentially on a higher level of abstraction than the data itself (Mayring, 2002: 99). Content analysis is anchored in the basic hermeneutic thought that "texts, as anything man made, (…) are always connected to subjective meanings and sense" and that "an analysis of only visible characteristics doesn't lead very far if it is not possible to crystalize this subjective meaning in interpretation" (Mayring, 1993: 5, own translation). The advantage of content analysis is that the material is analysed step by step and critically controlled. Mayring differentiates three basic forms of content analysis:

1. Summarising, which reduces the material (data) as much as possible without losing the essential articulations, adhering to the original structure of the data.

2. Explication: the aim of this form of analysis is to add further information to the data with the objective to explicate the basic data and contextualise it within a wider framework.

3. Structural analysis that aims at extracting specific aspects of the material which have been pre-defined to achieve a cross-section of the data and be able to evaluate it according to specific criteria (Mayring, 2002: 115).

The categorical system that is developed during this process is at the centre of the analysis. This system is based on theoretical assumptions and hypothetical ideas about how other ideas can be related to the material at hand (Dey, 1993: 51 in: Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 140). In this sense, I have reviewed the literally transcribed interviews from different angles, with the aim of detecting as many perspectives and views as possible and what their meaning could be. On the one hand, they are subsumed in categories maintaining essential expressions and viewpoints to exemplify them; on the other hand, further information is added, such as reflections, relations and active use of the theories discussed in the MACR. In all this, I have chosen a structured approach by aiming at evaluating the statements according to the aspects sought in the interview. This proved to be limiting at times, as new aspects and criteria started crystallising while transcribing, coding and reflecting on the interviews. These themes were further validated in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

6.3.4. Interpretation and representation

There has not been much literature on the interpretation and representation of qualitative research data over the past decade(s). David Silverman has published the third edition of his seminal work *Doing Qualitative Research* (1993) under the new name *Interpreting Qualitative Research* (2015). I lend to his recommendations how to represent my research findings as well as on Coffey & Atkinson's (1996) argument from twenty years ago that "theorizing (imagining) and theory building are part of the process of analysis and interpretation of qualitative data".

As such, in the analysis and interpretation of data, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the reflexive and imaginative process the researcher engages in and must engage in (Mason, 2002: 149). This reflexive procedure is essentially a self-reflection and places the researcher within the research and data itself. What is the role I play in this and how have I "manipulated" the data by having gathered and coded it the way I have? (ibd.). James (2012) describes the interpretation of data as practicing the art of a craftsman or -woman contrasting the action of a technician. There is no straightforward mechanical way of interpreting qualitative data. This gives the researcher the unique possibility to go back to the data several times to find and discover aspects other than those in previous interpretations (James, 2012: 568). In accordance with Clifford Geertz (1973), James claims that data interpretation "is a messy business. The commitment to interpretation involves committing to the view that (1) any understanding of the social world is 'essentially contestable' and (2) that any progress we make 'is marked less by a perfection of consensus than by a refinement of debate'" (Geertz, 1973: 29). The possibility to contest the interpretation of the data stems from the choice of which and how the results of the analysis are represented. The audience the

presentation is directed to and in what relation the audience is with me, the researcher and author of the study, will play a major role in deciding upon the interpretation and form of representation of my findings (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 118ff).

Conclusion- Part I

In Part I, I have set the scene for the assessment of the impact a master's programme in childhood studies and children's rights can have; on its participants and on society in general.

I have introduced evaluation methods and discussed the evaluability of a university programme that conveys tolerance, critical and reflexive thinking, democratic values and respect. Such non-measurable, intangible competencies and reflexive knowledge require some foothold to understand their impact, compared with practical hands-on skills and tools to work with children and their rights, which can be much more easily detected and described. Still, the programme under investigation, the *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights* (MACR) at Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) is directed at professionals and claims to be more practice-oriented than research-oriented, making the challenging task of combining theory and practice a central one to the master's. Hitherto, in the outlined development process of the curriculum and the curriculum itself, practitioners have been introduced, demonstrating their role in the negotiations concerning the content and in the implementation of the master's. Prior to the development of the curriculum, the *European Network of Masters in Children's Rights* (ENMCR), a network of approximately thirty member universities from across Europe, was established and subsequently provided a stable backing for the MACR through knowledge and teacher exchange and by contributing to internationalisation processes at the member universities.

As further background to the following Part II, I have discussed several theoretical approaches to children's rights and childhood as the basis to answer the question in what way children's rights are conceptualised in the master's. The MACR, like the ENMCR, is grounded in a theory of children's rights and childhood which is in constant development, taking its starting point in social science approaches and in particular in the new sociology of childhood. Children are understood to be independent subjects of human rights, they are competent in the now and have agency to act in their lives and those around them, they can act as knowledge brokers and shapers of their surroundings and they merit respect. I have presented approaches to childhood and children's rights from various disciplines to demonstrate the manifold access points to the mainstream topic and to underline the interdisciplinary character of the research (and work) field. In order to assess the impact the MACR has on its graduates, I conducted several semi-structured guideline interviews with students and alumni and collected written essays based on four questions sent to a random selection of graduates. To gain an understanding of the meaning the master's has for the graduates and alumni, I have also drawn on some statements from alumni given in an online survey. I have analysed and interpreted the data employing a combination of methods, leaning towards content analysis methods. Analysing and subsequently interpreting stories and narrations from the respective persons is, in the context of programmes for

(children's) human rights, in my opinion, the most appropriate method to gain reliable insight into the field and what impact it can have.

In the second step of this study, Part II, I will turn to the participants of the MACR, discuss their motivation to enrol and expectations for the MACR. The composition of student groups plays a major role as well as the graduates' estimations and assessments of the programme and how they make use of the competencies they have developed. Based on these results, I will conclusively conjecture what impact the programme has on the graduates, professionally and personally, and in what manner the conceptualisation of children's human rights affects this impact. In a final conclusion, I will suggest the effect such a programme in tolerance and respect, that is taught with respect and tolerance, can have on society more generally and elaborate on whether we can contribute to social change by means of qualifying highly motivated individuals from across the globe to become child rights experts.

Part II

Part II of this study is dedicated to the findings and results of the empirical data which was collected over the past ten years of the *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights'* implementation. On one side, it reflects the general atmosphere at the end of the programme, before students engage in professional activities after graduation. On the other hand, it is an analysis and interpretation of graduate voices about the programme and its worth as much as its value for them.

First, though, I will introduce the participants of the MACR, to know whom we are listening to and about whom we are talking.

Chapter 7 – Participants of the MACR

7.1. Students, Alumni and Research Partners

The MACR brings together people who are interested in the rights of the child on various levels and who aim at changing children's and young people's position in society (help them), with the ultimate goal to promote and trigger social change in their local communities and work places. Most students attending the MACR have backgrounds that are highly influenced by different cultural and national experiences. Students with first academic degrees from a wide variety of disciplines apply and attend the MACR, e.g. from sociology, social work, pedagogy and education, law, politics and international relations. Yet several also come from fields (seemingly) more remote from children's rights, e.g. from an economic or marketing background, from urban planning or journalism (see figures 7.5.-7.7., below). Also, the age (and experience) of the students varies, with most students in their late twenties or early thirties, some with a lot of experience, some with less and in every group there are also students who are looking for a career change after having been working for many years. Students' biographies and in particular their experiences are highly heterogeneous, the majority have a 'globalised background': they may have more than one citizenship; have lived in countries other than their home countries for several years, some may have enjoyed parts of their former education at universities across the globe or they may be a migrant or "hybrid"[166] when coming to Germany to partake in the MACR, they may have moved to Europe from other parts of the world to study the programme or they may come from multinational families or have some sort of migration history[167]. I will portray the research partners of this study (as case studies) below, to demonstrate examples of such heterogeneous backgrounds. First, I will give an overview of the students' nationalities and disciplinary backgrounds to get an overall picture of the variety of participants in the MACR.

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[166] On "hybrid" identities of students in Germany, see e.g. Stefanie Schuman (2011): *Hybrid identity formation of migrants. A case study of ethnic Turks in Germany*. Grin: http://www.grin.com/en/e-book/166974/hybrid-identity-formation-of-migrants (accessed 1.1.2018)

[167] The only aspect which is not very heterogeneous is gender- the great majority of the students are female.

7.1.1. Students' Nationalities/Citizenships

The figures below depict the nationalities of the MACR students from the first year (2007/08) to demonstrate the composition of the student groups directly after having established the programme. Compared with figure 6.2., we can see that the group composition became more multicultural over the years of its existence. Figure 6.2. depicts the academic years 2010/12, which was the first year the master's was offered as a one and a half-year (instead of one- year) programme. Also, it was the first year of students who commenced their studies in the European Master in Childhood Studies and Children's Rights (EMCR), rather than the European Master in Children's Rights.[168] Figure 6.3. depicts the composition of students in the first year of the programme as "M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights (MACR)", 2012. It could be assumed that the composition of students would be more international, as a Master of Arts is a straightforward internationally recognised title, whereas the EMCR was largely unknown, or at least required explanation. In the first group the majority of students were from Germany, with a total of seven different nationalities represented. In the following figure 6.2. we can see that the composition of the student group had become more multicultural with a total of twelve nationalities and Germans no longer making up 50% of the students. As expected, with re-naming the master's and offering it as MACR, the number of nationalities rose to fifteen.

Figures 6.1.-6.3.- Students' Nationalities 2007/08; 2010/12; 2013/15

Figure 6.1.

Nationalities/Citizenships
2007/08
European Master in Children's Rights

■ Germany ■ Nigeria ■ USA ■ Serbia ■ Holland ■ Switzerland ■ Erasmus: Romania

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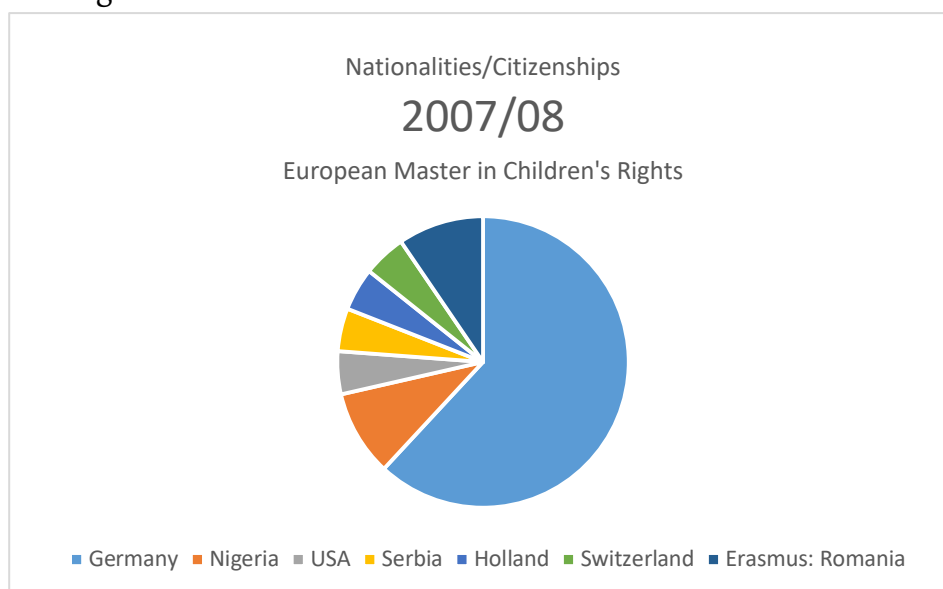
[168] On the development of the master and its name and structure see chapter 5.1.3.

Figure 6.2.

Nationalities/Citizenships
2010/12
change to
European Master in Childhood Studies and Children's Rights

- Germany
- Austria
- Greece
- Iran
- Cyprus
- Turkey
- Peru
- Switzerland
- Ecuador
- Portugal
- Belgium
- USA/France

Figure 6.3.

Nationalities/Citizenships
2013/15
change to
M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights

- Germany
- Lebanon
- Egypt
- Japan
- Netherlands
- Iran
- Turkey
- Switzerland
- Albania
- USA
- Brazil
- Jamaica
- France
- Greece
- Mecedonia

In total, students from 45 countries studied the MACR at Freie Universität Berlin (FUB), (fig. 6.4.) if the nationalities of the students at University of Applied Sciences in Potsdam are counted as well, individuals from 53 countries have studied the master's. In total, up to the end of 2016, 209 students have completed the MACR. All the numbers exclude the student group of 2009/10 for lack of data.[169]

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[169] In this year, I was on parental leave and could not retrieve data on my return.

In figure 6.4. we can see that notwithstanding the great variety of national backgrounds the students have, not surprisingly, the largest single group of students are Germans (by nationality and citizenship). It is worth considering that in their CVs they send with their application for registration and enrolment, that not few of the German prospective students, have completed part(s) of their studies abroad or have spent longer periods of time outside of Germany. The students who have other citizenships have either been living in Germany before enrolling in the MACR, have moved to Berlin specifically to study the master's or have studied in other countries and regions of the world. The mixture of student groups is immense and forms a rich source of viewpoints, opinions, approaches and perspectives the programme can draw from.

Figure 6.4.- Students' Nationalities – all years

All nationalities/citizenships 2007/08- 2016/18 (excl. 2009/10)

Legend: Germany, Greece, Switzerland, USA, Romania, Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Hong Kong, India, Irak, Iran, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Palestine, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Singapour, South Africa, Sweden, Syria, Taiwan, Turkey, UK, USA, Uzbekistan

7.1.2. Students' Disciplinary/Academic Backgrounds

Just as heterogeneous as the national (and cultural) backgrounds of the student groups are the disciplines they come from. The figures 7.1.-7.3. below visualise this composition. As above, the depicted disciplinary backgrounds are of students in the first year of the course, in 2007/08, after three years in 2010/12 and at the time of the last change of the programme in the years 2013/15.

Figure 7.1 – 7.2.- Students' Academic Backgrounds 2007/08; 2010/12 [170]

Figure 7.1.
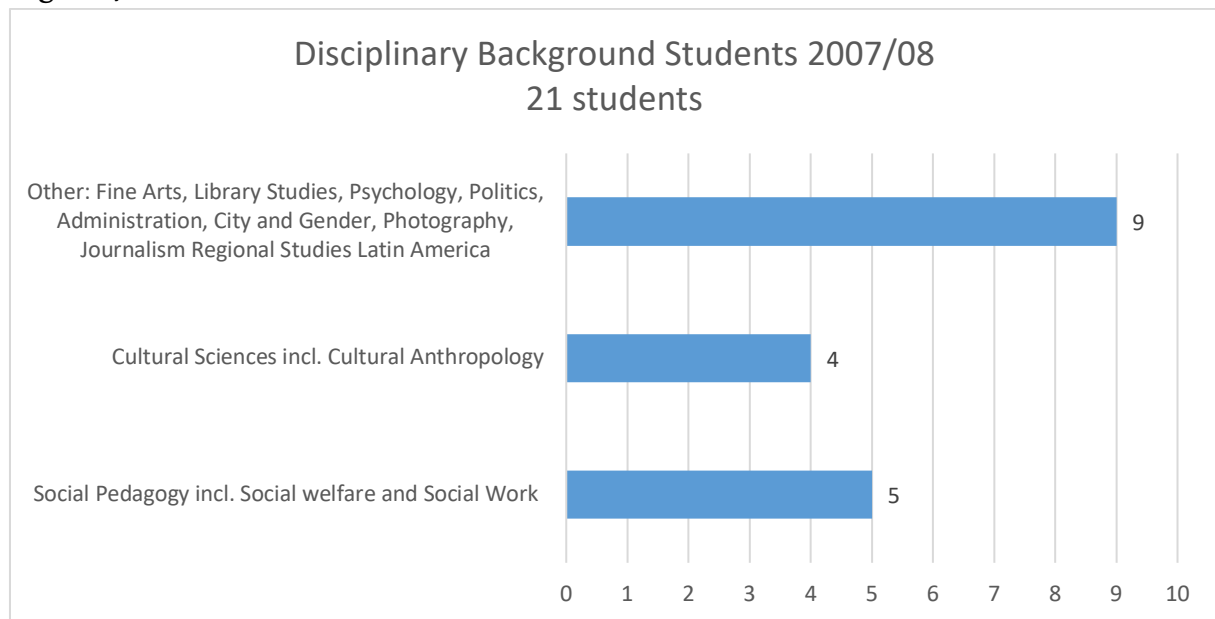
Figure 7.2.

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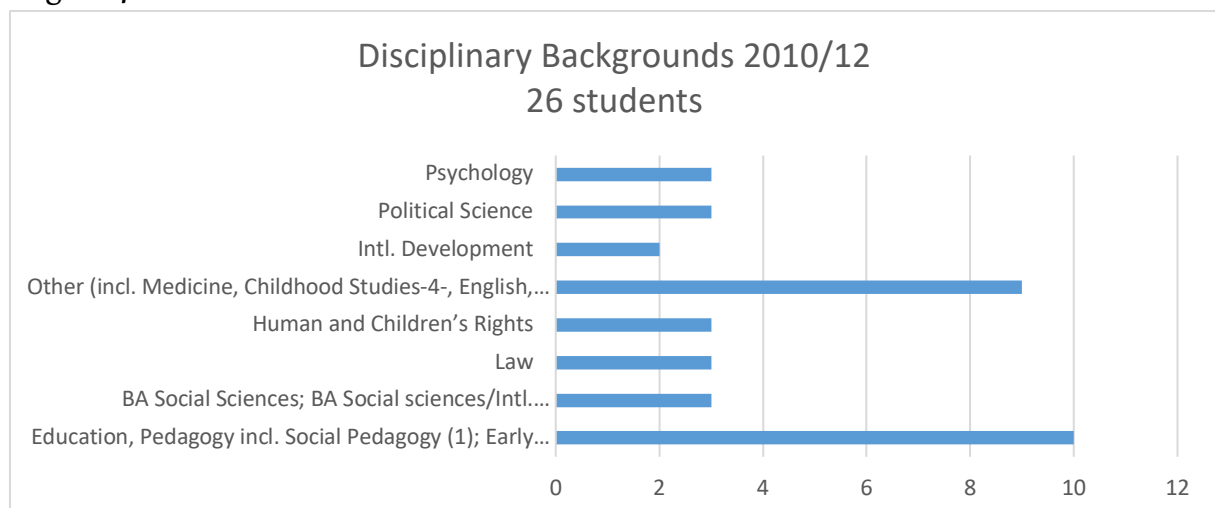
[170] The figure is missing a bar „Education and Educational Sciences", 3 students.

The depiction of children's rights as a discipline here is noteworthy, as it may come as a surprise that two students had studied children's rights before in other courses- both students (from Iran and Egypt) came to the course via an ERASMUS MUNDUS scholarship[171]. Both wanted to receive a degree from a European university as well as to deepen their knowledge of the subject.

Figure 7.3.- Major Disciplines of all Years [172]
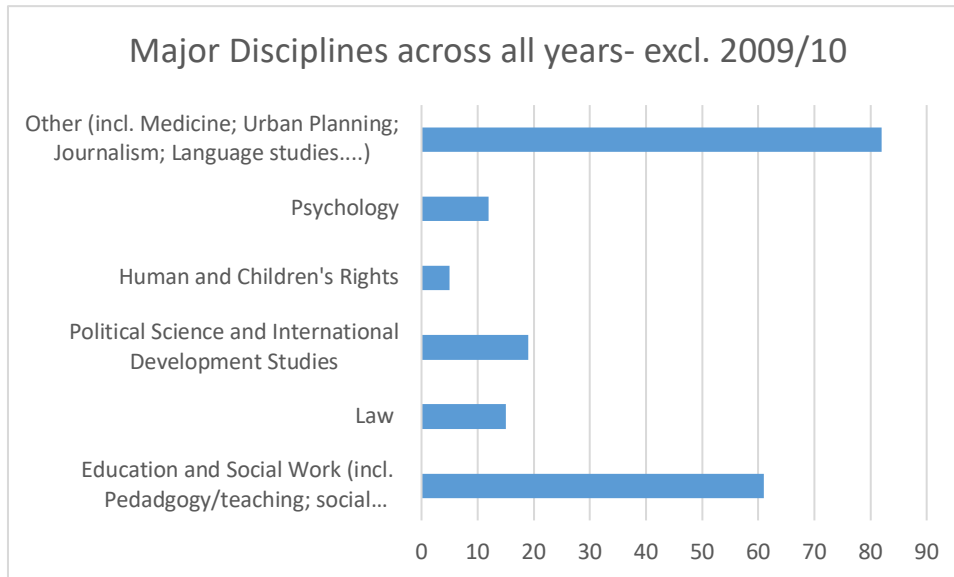
As students come from all over the world to participate in the programme, they may have experienced a different academic culture during their first degrees and for some students, the North Western academic culture (mainly West Europe; North America and Australia) is new and adaption to the new situation can be challenging. Coping with unfamiliar exam formats (writing individual module papers on a topic of choice related to the respective module[173]) requires considerable motivation and endurance. Hardly any student however

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[171] Erasmus Mundus is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education that aims to enhance the quality of European higher education and to promote dialogue and understanding between peoples and cultures through cooperation with Third Countries. In addition, it contributes to the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of Higher Education Institutions in Third Countries by increasing mobility between the European Union and these countries. The Erasmus Mundus programme provides support to:
- higher education institutions to set-up inter-institutional cooperation partnerships between universities from Europe and targeted Third Countries
- individual students, researchers and university staff who wish to spend a study / research / teaching period in the context of cooperation partnerships
- any organisation active in the field of higher education that wishes to develop projects aimed at enhancing the attractiveness, profile, visibility and image of European higher education worldwide.
Retrieved from: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/programme/about_erasmus_mundus_en.php (accessed: 1.1.2018)
[172] The missing discipline in the legend (amounting to 62 students) is "Education and Social Work" (incl. pedagogy/teaching; social pedagogy//combination of both).
[173] See chapter 9.3. on different forms of assessing student's performance.

withdrew from the course or failed to pass all exams, although Several require intensive guidance and mentoring to achieve these goals, which, as the student groups are rather small, is possible to do..[174] This shows clearly the motivation behind completing the programme and learning as much as possible. Feedback given on the methods of teaching and learning show that the heterogenous composition and participatory character of the courses is greatly valued by most students. Some students however, in particular from Western academic cultures, felt that at times the teachers could have given more input and let students talk less.[175] In comparison with the former academic culture, Aziza and Branka, for example, refer to the benefit of experiencing this new (for them) type of academic learning, the value of respecting other students' opinions and acknowledging the value of the knowledge gained through other students. "You are developing your own ideas and how you see them and (..) you are more criticising and you are giving your own input even, (.) professional or even personal and (..) this is really missing in Egypt?" (Aziza, I: 233-235). Often, in other cultures, hierarchies are lived very strictly, highly respected and not questioned and often, if they are critically challenged the lower ranking person puts him or herself in danger of being dismissed.

7.2. Research Partners (Interviewees and Essayists)

I will introduce the research partners by giving information on their backgrounds, interests, professional activities and biographies, as far as I have information about them in order to be able to classify their statements, arguments and opinions expressed in the interviews and written essays. Also, to demonstrate their interests at the time of completing the master's programme. To get a glimpse at students' research projects, I include the titles of their final theses.[176] This basic information about the interview partners, interviewees and the alumni who answered questions in brief essays serves as background information, assuming that it is only possible to understand the context in which they are placed by knowing these "objective" facts.

7.2.1. Interviewees

In total, I conducted twenty interviews (of which four were with male and sixteen with female graduates, which does not reflect the imbalance of gender within the course). I conducted the interviews over a timespan of nearly ten years (2008-2016).

First, in 2008, I interviewed four recent graduates (Paula, Branka, Soo-Ri, Jelena) and one other student who, after some consideration, decided that she did not want her statements about expectations, motivation and experiences she had in the MACR to be included in

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[174] Several require intensive guidance and mentoring to achieve these goals, which, as the student groups are rather small, is possible to do.

[175] Not only did some interview partners mention this aspect in our conversation, the final evaluation of the courses also hints at this topic. See also: Shiraev, E., & Levy, D. (2007). *Cross-cultural psychology*. (3rd ed.). Boston: Allen & Bacon. on western culture and the difference to other academic cultures in higher education.

[176] Examples of students' research can be found in the annex (no.1).

this study.[177] These first interviews took place in 2008, under the premise of investigating the satisfaction of students and weighing their competencies compared to the goals set out in the curriculum developed over the previous two years (2005/2006). As such, these interviewees were participants in the first generation of students having been awarded a *European Master in Children's Rights* (EMCR), a nearly unknown degree which by its name alone did not clearly reveal what kind of skills and knowledge a graduate of this master could have. It is worth mentioning that in 2008 the child rights community of activists and dedicated individuals was still largely unknown. In addition, children's rights were still not on political agendas. There was an emerging research community that at times shared their knowledge with students within specific disciplines; a systematic approach within a full master programme however was still non-existent (see chapters 4 and 5). Almost ten years ahead, the community has grown. By offering a master's degree in childhood studies and children's rights the child rights community has potential to grow further. In Germany alone, 200-250 persons have graduated from the master up to now (early 2017), of whom a good number of international students have returned or will return to their home countries- leaving about 150-200 persons who have been qualified in children's rights on a graduate level to work in various fields within Germany. Highly qualified persons working with and for children and young people transfer the scientific knowledge based on scholars' and their own research to actual practice, thus enlarging the children's rights community "on the ground" (see chapter 11).

I spoke with the first graduates soon after they had completed the programme. two had just graduated, the other a few months before the interview took place. I asked permission to do the interviews in English, as this research is written in English and in transcribing the interviews my attempt was not to change or lose meaning, emphasis or connotation in translation. I am aware that the use of a foreign language can also distort actual behaviour and speech and as such change the (exact) meaning of what is said; however, the MACR's language of instruction is English and about half the interviewees didn't seem to mind answering questions in English. Nonetheless, nearly all German interview partners opted to be speak with me in German (Paula, Zoë, Sabrina, Tobias, Miriam, Lisa, Wiltrud, Ruth and Annette). Pedro was interviewed in Spanish. Some research partners were interviewed and sent an essay as well (John, Aziza, Paula).

The quotes I refer to here and in the following chapters are included as footnotes, and direct citations within the actual text are translated for easier reading. In order to distinguish whether quotes and references are extracted from interviews or essays, they are marked either with "I" for interview or "E" for essay respectively.

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[177] She decided not to be included because I had sent an e-mail to the research partners, asking permission to use their real names in this study, where she had been sure that it would be anonymous. By not having sent this e-mail individually, but to all interviewees in an open e-mail, I breached ethical standards of research, which led her to withdraw from the study. All other research partners agreed to have their real names in the study, nonetheless I opted to use pseudonyms.

Introduction to the individual research partners in chronological order of the interviews:

<div align="center">

2008

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Paula

Paula is German. I interviewed her right after she had graduated from the EMCR. At FUB, there had been the possibility to do the EMCR without having a bachelor's degree. This option led to the award of a certificate but no formal Master of Arts. Paula was one of the few students who opted for the programme under this premise. She had worked for ten years at the German Child Protection association as a photographer and journalist before enrolling in the master's. She felt she was not advancing in this position, which led her to apply for the EMCR. In 2017, I found Paula again! In the meantime, she is the editor of the monthly news at a German Retirement Insurance Company (Deutsche Rentenversicherung Knappschaft-Bahn-See (headquarters in Bochum)) and is responsible for the internal communication for Germany.

The topic of her final thesis is:

> *„Zwischen Familienpflicht, Eigenmotivation und Eigenverantwortung: Ein empirischer Forschungsbericht über arbeitende Kinder und Jugendliche in Betrieben der deutschen Landwirtschaft".*[178]

Soo-Ri

Soo-Ri, a US citizen of South Korean descent, is a graphic designer who worked at Universal Music Group as a communications designer before studying the MACR. Her incentive to study the MACR, in her words was: "make them (children) happier (....) the whole issue of child poverty and social exclusion within Europe, exactly these questions about child well-being- the issue of what makes children happy" (Soo-Ri, I: 132-134). I have lost contact to her and do not know what exactly she is engaged in at the moment- she had wanted to start projects making use of new media for children's rights and had quit her job at Universal Music Group at the time I interviewed her.

The topic of her final thesis is:

> *"Opportunities and Challenges of New Media Communication Tools for Children's Learning Environment"*

Branka

Branka holds a degree in education and English literature. She had been working as a teacher in Serbia, her home country, and had come to Germany to do an internship in the German Federal Parliament. There, she met her future husband who had been living in Berlin. She aspired to a master's degree in English and wished to stay in Berlin. With the

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[178] *„Between family obligations, personal motivation and responsibility: an empirical research report about working children and young people in German agricultural business".*

degree, she hoped to be in a (better) position to earn money. At the moment, she is still working as a teacher. Up to now, she has been employed at a private free school and has just started teaching in a state school this year (2017/18).   From 2012-2015 she worked as a tutor in the MACR in module 4, children's education.

The topic of her final thesis is:
   "Making school more attractive – analysis from a child-rights oriented point of view"

Jelena[179]
Jelena came to Berlin on an Erasmus exchange in the framework of the Double Degree scheme offered by the Universitatea Babes-Bolyai (UBB) in Cluj-Napoca, Romania and the FUB. She had studied psychology and social work before starting the European Master in Children's Rights at UBB. For her, it was the first time to go abroad for a longer period than 2-3 weeks and she was very impressed by how differently university is organised in Germany and the completely different teaching and learning style compared to Romania. I do not know where she is and what sort of work she is doing at the moment of writing up this evaluation.

The topic of her final thesis is:
   "The Role of School in Improving Gypsy Children's Self-Empowerment, Resilience and Active Participation"

<div align="center">2010</div>

Zoë
I interviewed Zoë, a graduate of the first year of the EMCR, in October 2010, two years after she had graduated. At the time, she had become a staff member at FUB, working in the MACR team coordinating the project "Diploma Public Policy and Children's Rights" (DPPCR) of which Aziza is a graduate, whom I also interviewed after she had completed the MACR in Berlin- see below). In Zoë's case, I had to be especially cautious for us not to be too close as we started working together at the time of the interview (see possible pitfalls of working with and knowing research partners who are very close to the researcher herself-chapter 6.1.1). Zoë is a Swiss national who has lived an ideal, typical globalised childhood, youth and young adulthood. Growing up in a diplomat household, she moved across the globe and attended schools in many different countries. She obtained her high school leaving certificate in Brussels, Belgium and studied international relations. At the end of 2012, after the formal completion of the DPPCR project at FUB, Zoë left the team and took on a job as UNHCR child protection manager based in Uganda where she worked with

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[179] Erasmus bilateral exchange agreements are set up between universities in the European Union, to enable an exchange of students, teachers and staff members. The advantage of studying at a partner university with an Erasmus scholarship is that possible fees at the exchange university are waived and the students receive a small amount of money as a scholarship to support their expenses abroad (about 300€/month, depending on which region in Europe you are studying in; see also chapter 3.1.1.).

refugee children. During the time of writing this dissertation, she had changed jobs and had taken on a position as child protection manager with UNICEF in Myanmar. Her motivation to enrol in the MACR was to follow up on her interest in human rights with a focus on children's rights.

The topic of her final thesis is (she wrote it together with another student):
> *"Illusions or Denied Opportunities? A Case Study on Unaccompanied Senegalese Migrant Minors in Madrid"*

John
In the following year (2010), I interviewed John at the end of his studies just before he was to leave and go back to Uganda, from where he had come to Berlin on an Erasmus Mundus Scholarship to do the EMCR. According to his motivation letter and his statements in the interview, the situation of children in Uganda was not even considered after having experienced war for two decades, "they don't even know they have rights, yet they *do*" (I, 35-36). His incentive to participate in the programme was mainly the opportunity to study at a European University and obtain an MA degree with a scholarship- he did not know much about childhood studies and children's rights before doing the EMCR but claimed that his respect for children as subjects with their own views, opinions that deserve recognition grew with the programme. The fact that the programme is international was also an important factor for his decision to come on the course. Before commencing his studies in Berlin, he had studied labour and commercial science and had worked in this sector for a year- his plans on return to Uganda were to work as a child rights activist. I contacted John again in early 2017, asking him to send me some answers to questions (an essay), which he did very quickly. He is now working as a child rights activist in media, mainly on the radio and in print media (newspapers) and is, as he wrote, advancing children's rights in Uganda through his work.

The topic of his final thesis is:
> *"Children in armed conflict areas: Challenges and consequences of war on children in Northern Uganda"*

While conducting these first interviews, I felt some discomfort asking the research partners about their experiences and opinions about the programme coordination and organisation. Being the coordinator of the programme, we were layered with experiences made together during the year's programme. Nonetheless, or perhaps especially because of my personal connection with the programme, very interesting and useful information is gathered here, not only for future students, but also for other universities that are negotiating the establishment of child rights master's courses.

Aziza
Several years later, in 2014, I interviewed Aziza, an Egyptian citizen, just after she completed the MACR. She had also come to FUB on an Erasmus Mundus scholarship. Her background is in economics and political science. Directly before coming to Berlin, she completed the DPPCR at Cairo University, Egypt. Her wish to study in Germany arose after having been in Germany for a two-week intensive course in the framework of the DPPCR. She had worked in the field with institutionalised children and children living on the street for seven years before completing the Diploma in Cairo. She was disappointed in the DPPCR as it covered mainly legal and political aspects of children's rights. She seems to have benefitted more from the MACR in her opinion, yet has a rather critical view on the programme and how it is taught. Aziza can be characterised as a hardworking student with high aims for herself- very knowledgeable and self-assured. She attended several child rights conferences and activities such as a moot court on children's rights in the frame of the MACR. During her studies, CREAN was being established (2012-2014; chapter 3.1.3.), through which scholarships to attend an intensive summer school and various conferences were available to students.

In general, the interview with Aziza refers to or is dominated by a comparison between the DPPCR offered in Cairo and the MACR in Berlin. She describes the differences between university in Germany (the MACR) and the Egyptian approach to higher education. Her statements provide insight into the university system in Egypt (and other Arabic) countries, however it is very complex and cannot be included in this study in such detail. Hence it will be considered only as an example of differences between academic cultures (chapter 9).

I contacted Aziza again to write an essay for this research. She immediately answered the questions raised. At the moment, she is working as project manager at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODAC), at the regional office for the Middle East and North Africa Region. The project is working on improving the juvenile justice system in Egypt and when she started the project it was still in the pilot phase and covered four detention centres for young people (males and females) aged 15-18 years old. In the meantime, she is co-authoring a procedural manual to raise the childcare quality standards of the detention centres for juveniles and delivering on-job training to caregivers working in these centres.

The topic of her final thesis is:
"Case Management System for Vulnerable Children in Egypt: Challenges and Tribulations".

Katerina
Katerina from Greece completed the EMCR in the years 2010-12. I interviewed her in 2014, approximately one and a half or two years after she had graduated. She had worked as a

teacher before the programme and was still working in the same field as a kindergarten teacher. She was seeking a career change at the time of the interview.[180]

The topic of her final thesis is:
"Early Childhood Educational Software and Children at Promise: Teacher's Perspective"

2015

Sabrina
One year later, in 2015, I interviewed Sabrina, a German alumna. She had studied the MACR from 2011-2013. The effect the programme had and has on her personally and professionally was the main topic of the interview. At the time, she was working as a child emergency officer for Plan International in Ethiopia. When I interviewed her, she had just been offered a position at the Plan International headquarters in Hamburg to work with refugees in Germany and had happily accepted it, as she felt it was time to be based in Germany (at least for a while) again, after having been directly exposed to children's emergency situations for several years.
Before the MACR, she got her BA at University College Maastricht, the Netherlands, with an emphasis on social science and humanities. The programme there was multidisciplinary; she focused on psychology. During her BA studies, she went on an exchange semester to the USA where she concentrated on human rights and anthropology (human rights of indigenous people and African cultures). According to her, the main question in her studies was how children develop in different cultures and why this is so, i.e. the cultural influences which determine these developments.

The topic of her final thesis is:
"Towards a Holistic Framework of Child Safety".

In 2016, I realised that in order to have a better basis for analysing students' satisfaction with the study programme, the impact it has had on them personally and professionally and the use of theoretical and practical competencies acquired during their studies, more interviews had to be conducted in order to have a more substantial idea of the MACR graduates. Most interestingly for me was how they estimate their own personal impact on the children's rights project- in their specific and diverse working situations.

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[180] The café we met in for the interview was very noisy, so that the recording is quasi incomprehensible. Therefore, she cannot be introduced as detailed as others.

Miriam and Tobias

I interviewed Miriam and Tobias in 2016, both graduates of 2015, both German, both working at Save the Children, Germany within the same department, however in different, but similar projects. I interviewed them one after the other individually. We met in a small restaurant close to their office in Berlin-Mitte. Both found their jobs through the master's network (children's rights community, chapter 11) and are working on projects for refugees-the predominant issue in Germany since the war on Syria started. Both Miriam and Tobias seem very happy about working in a large organisation, this had been their dream. At the same time, they also view critically approaches taken by Save the Children (and other international non-governmental organisations), which, despite good intentions can at times harm those (children) who are in fact claimed to be the beneficiaries of actions (see e.g. chapter 3.1.2.).

Miriam has a background in Islamic studies and spent time working in Damascus with refugees from Iraq, Syria and Iran. When she came back to Germany, she continued working with refugee (children) and was motivated to study children's rights to ameliorate their situation here.

Tobias has a background in social pedagogy. Tobias feels very close to the MACR, at the time of moving the programme from FUB to University of Applied Sciences, Potsdam, he convinced the management board of Save the Children, Germany to fund a small scholarship for students in the MACR. In the meantime, he has been appointed member to the MACR advisory committee.

The topic of Miriam's final thesis is:

> „*Perspektiven. Eine empirische Studie über Zukunftsperspektiven von unbegleiteten minderjährigen Flüchtlingen in Deutschland*"[181].

The topic of Tobias's final thesis is:

> „*Zwischen Menschenrecht und Asylgesetz. Das Menschenrecht auf Bildung im Kontext der Beschulung junger Flüchtlinge in Berlin*"[182].

Moritz

I interviewed Moritz, a graduate of the very first year (2008), now the child rights representative for a small NGO in the field of child and youth work and tutor on the MACR (module 2 and module 5). He, as Miriam and Tobias, found his job through relations via the programme. Moritz has a background in social work and worked as a school social worker for about five years in Berlin-Wannsee, one of the most affluent districts of Berlin. Moritz has a UK passport, he went to school in Germany and has been living in Berlin for many years. When applying for the EMCR, he sought to widen his perspective. He got to know

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[181] „*Perspectives. An empirical study about future perspectives of unaccompanied minor refugees in Germany*".
[182] „*Between human rights and asylum law. The human right to education in the context of schooling young refugees in Berlin*".

about the master through the former director Manfred Liebel and since he trusted Manfred Liebel, he decided to apply for the course.

The topic of his final thesis is:

„Wege und Hindernisse der Partizipation junger Flüchtlinge in Deutschland"[183].

Ruth

Ruth is a German paediatrician who studied the programme from 2012-14. She has life-long working experience as a paediatrician specialised in neonatal intensive care medicine. Over the years she started developing an unease about how premature infants, "tiny beings", are treated in the university hospitals, especially during bedside teachings with medical students. The root cause is that the infants are treated as "study objects" and are spoken about as if they weren't even there. After having graduated, Ruth is still very close to the MACR team and is always interested in staying in touch. At the moment, she is developing a checklist leaflet for paediatricians on the rights of child and youth patients in medical treatment, which is to be distributed to paediatric practices throughout Germany.

The topic of her final thesis is:

„Kranke Kinder als „patient experts". Zur Partizipation von Kindern in Kinderkliniken – Beispiele, Herausforderungen, Chancen".[184]

Wiltrud

A few weeks later, I spoke with a German graduate of the second year, 2009, Wiltrud, who has a background in ergo-therapy and does not hold a first university degree (see Paula above). In the meantime, she has been working a lot around children's rights to play and leisure time. She expresses the difficulties in succeeding with endeavours, as funding is scarce. Although she has given guest lectures in the MACR on the topic and seems to be profiting from the children's rights community she has been introduced to, her view of the programme is very critical and she voiced her disappointment about the programme throughout the interview.

The topic of her final thesis is:

„Partizipation – ein zentrales Kinderrecht: Die Untersuchung einer praktischen Menschenrechtsbildungsarbeit mit Kindern in Schulen"[185].

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[183] *„Ways and obstacles to young refugees' participation in Germany".*
[184] *"Sick children as "patient experts". On the participation of children in children's hospitals- examples, challenges, chances."*
[185] *„Participation- a central children's right: the investigation of practical human rights education training with children in schools."*

Annette

I interviewed Annette, a German student and very recent graduate of the year 2016 directly before she received her certificates and her diploma. She is working in a school as an assistant to prepare pupils' transfer from school to vocational training for specific professions. She has also founded a small association: Perspektiven 2013 e.V., driven by the vision to integrate children and young people mainly from "difficult" and non-German families from Berlin-Neukölln, the most multicultural district in Berlin, into (mainstream) society, giving them a voice and empowering them to master their special situation.[186] Her background is in economic engineering, during which she had been involved in humanitarian aid and its logistics. She had e.g. been to Chile after the severe earthquake in 2013 to assist in re-building up the infrastructure. She mentions several times that people in her surroundings have told her to go into development aid. She seems not to be sure and will first continue with her local work in Neukölln.

The topic of her final thesis is:

> *„Voraussetzungen für das gelingende Arbeiten auf Augenhöhe in Kinderpatenprojekten. Eine Analyse auf Grundlage von Expert_inneninterviews mit ausgewählten Patenprojekten aus Berlin Neukölln".*[187]

Lisa

Lisa is a German graduate of the year 2013. Her background is in social pedagogy. She studied in a dual educational system, which is characterised on the one hand by periods of theoretical learning and on the other by practical work stages. During her studies, she worked at the public youth administration office, which she enjoyed; however, she was also sure she didn't want to continue working there after graduating from the MACR. She started working at the International Social Service while she was doing the MACR, as the substitute for a colleague who is also a MACR alumna. At the International Social Service she is responsible for cases of separated children, children in parental divorce situations and international abductions and adoptions. At the time of the interview she was on parental leave, however she likes her job and can imagine working there again. Her main interest is in the power imbalance between children and adults.

The topic of her final thesis is: *„Adultismus – Muss das sein?"*[188].

Lulu

Lulu, graduate and Erasmus Mundus scholarship holder, who graduated in 2014, is from Macedonia and Roma by ethnicity. She has won several scholarships and studied and worked in different parts of the world. She studied in part in the USA, then she worked as a librarian in Alexandria, Egypt up to the outbreak of the Arab Spring in 2010. At the mo-

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[186] Annette has been awarded a prize by the district of Berlin-Neukölln for her engagement.
[187] *"Preconditions for successful work as equals in children's projects. An analysis on the basis of expert interviews with selected sponsorship projects from Berlin-Neukölln."*
[188] *„Adultism- a necessity?".*

ment, she is working as a Roma school mediator in so-called welcoming classes for refugee and asylum-seeking children in Berlin. She has also been a tutor on the MACR since 2016/17 (module 5 on education). Her identity has been shaped by her ethnicity and the experiences she has made throughout her life due to this fact. She is very passionate about the MACR and what she learned and feels she has arrived where she wants to be, doing what she wants to do, after having worked in several different ways.

The topic of her final thesis is:

"It is easier to command and scold than ask for the opinion of a child. Roma Children's perspectives on migration to Germany and their education"

Julia

Julia graduated in 2011 and at the time of the interview had just completed her PhD, in which she developed a module on children's rights with the aim to include it in general teacher's education in the Berlin school curriculum plan.[189] She is German and lived and worked in the UK as a teacher for a long time before enrolling in the MACR. She has been working at a Berlin International School in Berlin-Dahlem, a rather affluent district of Berlin, with many diplomat residencies. Most pupils at the Berlin International School are children living in these households. Update: at the time of completing this thesis, Julia has taken on a job in teacher's training in the Netherlands.

The topic of her final thesis is: *"Inclusion in India."*

PhD:

"Lehrende als 'agents of change' – Konzeptionelle Überlegungen zu einer kinderrechtlichen Annotation und Ausdeutung der Standards für die Lehrerbildung".[190]

Pedro

Last but not least, I interviewed Pedro from Paraguay. He returned to his home country while still writing his thesis and has found a job with the government as general director of the national service agency for delinquent children and youth. His background is in law. He decided to come to Germany and study here; as he had been working for eight years and supporting a family with no outside support, he wanted to take a break and "breathe" a bit.

The topic of his final thesis is:

"Protection or criminalization of urban working children in the street in Paraguay (2000-2005)"

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[189] The development of children's rights modules to be included in extant study programs of nearly all disciplines (social and natural sciences) is an issue and in my view a valuable task, which is worthwhile pursuing.
[190] *"Teachers as "agents of change"- conceptualising thoughts on a child rights annotated and descriptive standards in teacher's training".*

7.2.2. Essayists

This next section is dedicated to the introduction to graduates who responded in brief essays to the questions raised on competencies achieved and used as well as the impact of the programme on them personally and professionally. After having gone through a rough and subsequently more detailed analysis of the interviews, I realised that more information from graduates on the use of competencies achieved through the programme is needed to substantiate the findings and give more weight to the estimation on competencies developed. Therefore, I decided to gather answers to four questions from graduates of all years, asking three to four graduates of every year by random selection (see chapter 6.2.4.). In total, fourteen alumni answered.

Eileen
Eileen, a graduate of the year 2012, worked in child and maternity health care before enrolling in the MACR. She is a Canadian citizen, and now working in Canada as a teacher on a Hutterite Colony where she constantly strives to introduce a child rights perspective and take a child rights approach in her work in this very conservative community setting. In particular, issues of hierarchy are challenging for her as a young teacher from outside the colony in view of engrained hierarchical structures, which are lived through subordination of the younger. Giving these youngest community members a voice and empowering them, promoting their confidence to speak up against age-based discriminatory practices is a constant, challenging task which she enjoys mastering.

The topic of her final thesis is:
  „Angestrebte Schulabschlüsse von Schülern mit Migrationshintergrund in Berlin".[191]

Didier
Didier, a Belgian by nationality who graduated in 2012, studied business before starting the MACR and was also looking to a career change. He is now working for the "Youth Empowerment and Participation Project (YEPP)" in Berlin and claims he is using the knowledge gained in the EMCR on a daily basis.

The topic of his final thesis is:
  "Children's rights promotion through music: A Ghana case study"

Nora
Nora, a German citizen who studied the EMCR in the second year (2008/2009), has a background in economics and marketing and had been working for Emirates Airlines in the marketing sector before enrolling in the master's programme. She had been seeking a career change. In the meantime, she has founded a small NGO "Younitiate" in Johannesburg,

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[191] *„Aspired school graduation certificates of pupils with a migrant background in Berlin."*

South Africa for youth empowerment, in which she initiates projects with young people, always aiming at placing them at the centre of activities.

The topic of her final thesis is:
  "Exclusion is not an option any longer: Theories of Childhood Studies within International Development Cooperation"

Rosario
Rosario is from Ecuador and graduated in 2014. After having completed the MACR, she has been seeking a PhD position or scholarship, as she wants to continue in research and academia.

The topic of her final thesis is:
  "El arte como herramienta de aprendizaje cultural en un 132nalysi social diverso: en el ejemplo de niños/as indígenas y Salasakas en Ecuador".[192]

Zara
Zara is an Erasmus Mundus scholarship holder from Lebanon. She graduated from the MACR in 2013. She has gone back to Lebanon and to work with girls, mainly concerning early marriage, by engaging them in participatory research. She can build much up on the research she did for her final thesis. As of 2017, she has started writing a PhD. Update: she recently contacted the MACR team and reported that she now is in Peru working with street children.

The topic of her final thesis is:
  "Citizenship and the Right to have Rights. Study with Bedouin Stateless Children in Lebanon"

Femi
Femi graduated from the EMCR in 2009. She is from Cameroon. She has gained solidity by studying in the master's programme in Berlin and by obtaining a degree from a German university. She is now working at a refugee centre in Berlin, assisting the staff in daily activities. She has also recently applied for a PhD position in the UK.

The topic of her final thesis is:
  "Evaluating the impacts of children's rights-oriented NGOs in Cameroon. Case study: Plan-Cameroon (North West Province)"

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[192] *"Art as a learning tool in a diverse cultural con-text: on the example of the Salasakas and indigenous children in Ecuador"*

Marlies

Marlies studied with the first group of EMCR students and graduated in 2008. Her background is in cultural studies with a focus on human rights. After graduating, she wrote a PhD on "Human Rights Education through Ciné Débat- Film as Tool to Fight Against Female Genital Mutilation in Burkina Faso", which she completed in 2016. At the moment, she is not working with children directly. She is managing five micro credit projects for small enterprises in countries of the Global South – she wants to use film as a tool to further human rights also in the future. She also founded a small NGO based in Togo, with which she has established kindergartens.

The topic of her final thesis is:

„Beschneidung in Burkina Faso: Tradition aus Unwissenheit?".[193]

Claudia

Claudia graduated from the EMCR in 2009. She is a German citizen with a background in pedagogy. Before starting the EMCR she had worked in international development in several orphanages in Peru. After having graduated, she soon became the director of a private high school in Germany. At the age of 26, she was the youngest school director in Germany. She includes her knowledge on children's rights on a daily basis in her work at school. Her students have developed a short film on the need to include children's rights in the German constitution with the second public TV channel of Germany. The pupils interviewed leading politicians from the four largest parties in the German parliament. Several students were also invited to meet with the then German president, Joachim Gauck, to discuss children's rights with him. Also, at the time of this writing, they are in the process of establishing a children's parliament in the town the school is located in. She confirms that children's rights belong to everyday life: free expression and reasoning of opinions, individual promotion of strengths and weaknesses of the pupils, respect for their personalities, learning accompaniment, as well as their participation.

She has also completed a PhD on "Teacher-student interaction as a contribution to human rights education". Additionally, she is active as a lecturer in universities on the topic of participation, children's rights and inclusion. At the time of answering the questions, she had started working on her post-doctorate on "Inclusion as a child rights topic".

The topic of her final thesis in the EMCR is:

„Service-Learning als Umsetzung des Rechts auf Partizipation im schulischen Musikunterricht".[194]

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[193] *"Female Cutting in Burkina Faso: Tradition or Ignorance?"*
[194] *"Service learning as implementation of the rights to participation in school music classes".*

Tsukasa

Tsukasa is a Japanese citizen. She has travelled extensively and lived in several countries and now, at the time of writing this dissertation, returned to Berlin from New York, where she spent the previous two years. She graduated in 2015 and has been in search of a job in the field of children's rights, yet hasn't had success until now. Instead, she has taken on minor translation and interpretation jobs.

The topic of her final thesis is:
> *"The relationship between tourism and children: A case study of Hmong children in Northern Vietnam"*

Taleía

Taleía is Brazilian who has been living in Germany for thirteen years. She completed the MACR in 2015. During her studies, she was still working as fundraiser and coordinator of worldwide fundraising campaigns for Waldorfschools. She completed the Waldorf seminar and is thereby qualified to teach as a class teacher in Waldorfschools. After graduating from the MACR, she was looking to a career change to work directly with children's rights. However, this resulted not to be easy. In the meantime, she has been offered to teach an 8th grade at a Berlin Waldorfschool, which she accepted after some consideration.

The topic of her thesis is:
> *"The Four Principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Waldorf School Practice: A Critical Comparison of Two Holistic Approaches to Protecting and Educating Children"*

Daniela

Daniela is a German citizen and graduated in 2014. She has a background in economics and has experienced the MACR as a major turn-around in her career and thinking. She is promoting the master wherever she is. At the moment she is teaching at "TeachFirst", an association which places children in the centre of attention in order to work on eye level with them.

The topic of her final thesis is:
„Evaluation der Beteiligung von Kindern und Jugendlichen am Beispiel des Jugend-Demokratiefonds „Stark gemacht! – Jugend nimmt Einfluss" in Berlin".[195]

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[195] *"Evaluation of children's and young people's participation. The example of the adolescent democracy fund "Stark gemacht! - Jugend nimmt Einfluss" (made strong!- adolescents exert influence) in Berlin".*

7.3. Students' Incentives to Study the MACR

The first category of the analysis is the motivation and incentives for students to apply for and enrol in the MACR. It seems to be wishful thinking that all students who enrol in the MACR are guided only by interest in the topic of childhood studies and children's rights. When looking at the research partners' narrations and field notes taken over the past ten years, the motivation to study in this programme differs contingent on the background and context the students come from (geographically, culturally, disciplinary and professionally), although, not surprisingly, there undoubtedly is a general interest in childhood studies and children's rights. I open up six reasons for studying the MACR, which I heard in the interviews and read in the essays: Aiming at getting a master's degree (with our without a scholarship), desire to stay in Berlin, finding job opportunities in Germany, follow-up on interests that existed before and the desire for a career change. This does not suggest that several students did choose the MACR first of all because of the topic:

- *Practical reasons*: Some research partners mentioned very practical reasons for choosing the MACR. Obtaining a graduate degree to enhance their career possibilities on the job market seems paramount for several students to enrol in the programme. The fact that the MACR is a master's degree that takes only one and a half years instead of two full years as most other M.A. degrees seems to be an incentive for some students as well. "...I wasn't anticipating staying in the children's rights field long term, didn't want to bind myself.... I thought like, this is, eh faster- (1.5 years) and it is cheaper" (Lisa, I: 22-25)[196].

- *Obtaining a M.A.* (with a scholarship): According to the material gathered and analysed, another reason which seems to be specific to non-German students, is the option to obtain a higher university degree from a German university with an excellent reputation.[197] In particular, students who came to the MACR either with an Erasmus Mundus Scholarship or short term inner-European scholarship in the framework of Erasmus bilateral mobility agreements, made use of the opportunity to come to Germany and learn about a topic of their interest. The main reason however seems to be the possibility of obtaining a (generous) scholarship. Most likely, their attendance would not have been possible without the scholarship, as deducted from the statement of the scholarship holders, the desire to enrol

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[196] „...aber ich habe nicht vorgehabt mich langfristig im Bereich Kinderrechte- oder überhaupt irgendwie festzulegen- und ich muss ehrlich sagen – ich fand das total spannend aber war dann auch dieses so, ‚ah, das fängt jetzt schon an und das geht schneller und günstiger." (Lisa, I: 22-25)

[197] As mentioned when discussing the trend towards neo-positivist approaches to higher education and the increasing focus on competition between universities (chapter 3.1.3.), the fact that the FUB is one of the "Universities of Excellence" in Germany (with the pretense of being equivalent to Ivy League universities in the USA (and the UK) likely plays a distinct role in choosing this institution for studying. The attractiveness of Berlin adds to the incentive. However, after having moved the MACR from Berlin to Potsdam University of Applied Sciences, a tiny university compared to FUB (35,000 students compared to 3,500 students) the number of applicants to the MACR did not decrease, which hints at students increasingly being inherently interested in the topic rather than in the institution and locations that offer it.

in the programme would not have been incentive enough to search for other sources of funding (see e.g. Lulu, I: 73-80).

- *Staying in Berlin*: One interview partner mentioned the desire to stay in Berlin by being a student in the MACR (Branka, I: 53). In personal conversations the desire to extend visas by enrolling in a degree programme were often mentioned as well (field notes).

- *Opportunities in Germany*: Also in field noted personal conversations, several non-European graduates expressed the wish to find jobs and career opportunities in Germany after graduation, as they did not see any chances to use the competencies developed on return to their home countries due to political situations, living circumstances and for example poverty, yet also because of liking Berlin and Germany– however, many of them were not successful in this endeavour and did return after their permission to stay in Germany for 18 months after graduation had expired.[198]

- *Continuation of existing interests*: Another group of students decided to enrol in the MACR as a continuation of their former interests in human rights and international politics: "I fought for human rights already during my high school time- therefore the study programme didn't really give me a new direction but rather nourished my general interest" (Marlies, E: 50-52).[199]

- *Career change*: Some students coming from remote disciplines, such as engineering, economics or marketing were looking for a new orientation in their career and understood children's rights and childhood studies to be more valuable for society and themselves than their former work (see Nora, E: 8-9; Daniela, E: 37-39; field notes).

I will now aim at substantiating these objective reasons for enrolling in the MACR with research partner's claims to their expectation they had for the programme.

7.4. Students' Expectations Towards the MACR

Students' motivation to study the MACR widely echoes their expectations towards the programme. Receiving an M.A. degree, being fit and having developed necessary competencies to engage in a new profession and making use of the degree in either their home countries or in Germany are key attractions. In this sub-section I will shed light on the expectations students have at the time of applying for the master's programme, drawing on their

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[198] In Germany, the law allows non-EU graduates of German universities to remain in the country for 18 months. If a job has been found and the state can be sure that it will not have to support the person, the permit is renewed. See:https://www.international.hu-berlin.de/en/studierende/aus-dem-ausland/wegweiser/10/10_01_02?set_language=en (accessed 6.12.2017)

[199] „Ich habe mich schon seit der Schulzeit für Menschenrechte eingesetzt. Somit hat der Studiengang mir jetzt nicht eine neue Richtung vorgegeben, sondern eher meine generellen Interessen genährt". (Marlies, E: 50-52).

motivation letters sent with their applications and their estimations of whether their expectations have been met, expressed mainly in the interviews.

Some research partners I interviewed several years after graduation did not recall what they had written in their motivation letters and were surprised at the expectations they had formulated towards the programme. Moritz, for example, had expressed his wish to work in a large international organisation, which he could not imagine anymore after having completed the EMCR (Moritz, I: 15-21). Again, categories for the expectations can be made out. Many research partners claim that they did not have clear expectations, others were most interested in having the competency to write good scientific papers after graduating, several were attracted to the programme for its internationality and most expected the programme to be much more juridical:

- *No clear expectations*: Some research partners couldn't define or express what their expectations had been and claimed not to have had a clear idea of what to expect from the programme.

> *"I thought by making the spontaneous decision: firstly, don't have too high expectations. I thought it would be hard to get into the university structure, and it was that way. The themes were very attractive. I didn't really know how the modules would be related to each other. I looked at it as a way to get more knowledge. I couldn't have any expectations" (Paula, I: 71-75).* [200]

- *Writing scientific papers*: Others had very concrete, practical visions when starting the master's programme and reflected on whether these expectations were met. Two research partners expressed their motivation to write scientific papers, as both had not written any theses or papers in their former studies. One of the interviewees was driven by the incentive to write an M.A. thesis, to go into more depth and research a specific theme in detail (Zoë, I: 43-47). The other interviewee expressed the "....need to write really good scientific papers that are reflected on the reality of the children I am working with and I would like to publish it? And to participate with it giving presentations on it in international conferences" (Aziza, I: 181-185; see also I: 405-407). The incentive is not only to learn how to write the scientific papers but to publish them and make them known amongst the scientific children's rights community.

- *Studying an international programme*: The possibility to experience studying in a new, international and interdisciplinary environment was seen as a great asset of the programme at the time of applying for the MACR (see e.g. Zoë, I: 47-49; Soo-Ri, I: 90).

However, in particular one research partner who had studied the MACR in the second generation expressed her disappointment, as she did not feel this expectation had been fulfilled.

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[200] "Ich dachte durch spontane Entscheidung: erstmal keine zu hohen Erwartungen zu haben. Ich dachte es wird schwer werden in die Unistruktur hereinzukommen, und es war auch so. Die Themen fand ich sehr ansprechend. Ich wusste nicht richtig wie Module miteinander verknüpft werden. Ich habe das erstmal als Form des Wissensgewinns für mich gesehen. Ich konnte keine Erwartungen haben" (Paula, I: 71-75).

"..the expectation, as I felt it was very interesting in the description of the programme that it was interdisciplinary, so law, education, psychology together and that was exactly what I wished for. So I, I wanted to get to know the network on a theoretical level and accordingly that's the reason I am so disappointed. " (Wiltrud, I: 205-209).

Wiltrud is an exception in view of the statements of the other research partners concerning the interdisciplinarity of the programme (see chapter 9).

- *Gaining knowledge on children's legal rights*: An expectation almost all students expressed was to acquire knowledge of children's legal rights.

"....more in the field of legal requirements, so the law part was very important- what documents exist,- that was a great expectation, i.e. to really make a cut from seven years of educational science- enough of that- to learn real, hard facts" (Julia, I: 45-49).[201]

"...Yes, I do think that from the title 'children's rights' I expected that it will be more, at least 50% children's right and because I had never- I had general human rights courses but nothing specific to children's rights- that was definitely an expectation- to learn everything about that"(Sabrina, I: 47-61).[202]

As the main focus of the programme is not on children's legal rights (see chapters 4 and 5) before re-naming the EMCR to include Childhood Studies in the title, the team explicitly pointed out that the MACR is not a pure legal study programme (field notes and e-mail exchanges from 2010 onwards). In retrospect, the discrepancy between students' expectations to learn about children's rights taking a legal approach and the actual content was levelled in most cases. The clear focus of the MACR also on sociological, pedagogical and anthropological aspects of childhood and children's rights, offering a highly interdisciplinary programme was clearly seen as one of the great assets of the programme. This, because it enables moving away from only one standpoint towards tolerating and accepting several opinions and ascribing just as much value to them as to one's own. One graduate expressed it in stating "it is not only black or white" and: „....well, I had at first thought, that the programme is more legally oriented, well, that there would be more juridical content- but in the end I was very happy, that it wasn't that way!" (Miriam, I: 36-38).[203]

Tobias didn't expect the course to be focussed on legal studies, instead, after having followed the master's on the web for several years while waiting to fulfil the eligibility criteria (see chapter 5.1.3.) he thought that childhood studies were equal to childhood education studies. Amongst applicants and beyond, the presumption that the two approaches to childhood are equivalent is still widespread. One reason for this may be the abundance of study programmes in early childhood education, whereas childhood studies (sociological)

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[201] ".mehr im Bereich diese gesetzlichen Grundlagen so rechtliche Teil war auch sehr wichtig- welche Dokumente gibt es ehm – das war so ne große Erwartung, das heißt vom großen auch wirklich dann so ein Cut machen nach 7 Jahren Pädagogikstudium- genug davon—harte Fakten auch wirklich kennen" (Julia, I: 45-49).
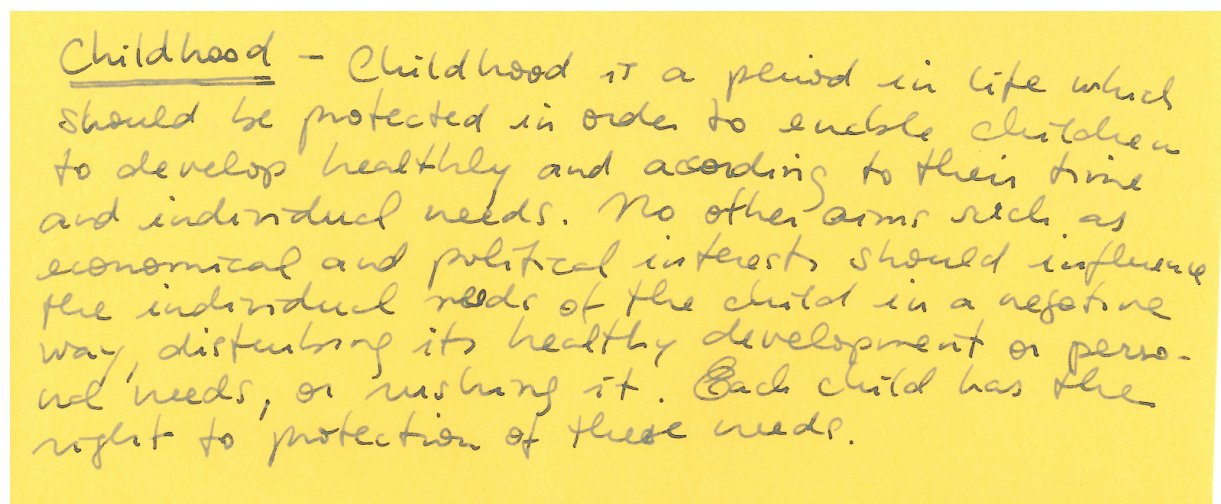
[202] „...ja ich glaube dass ich auch den Titel children's rights schon erwartet, dass es stärker mindestens so zu 50% um Kinderrecht geht und da ich nie- ich hatte allgemeine Menschenrechtskurse aber nicht speziell auf Kinderrechte- das war auf jeden Fall eine Erwartung- da alles drüber zu lernen" (Sabrina, I: 47-61).

[203] „...also ich hatte im ersten Moment auch gedacht, dass er mehr rechtsorientiert wäre, also, dass man noch mehr diese juristischen Inhalte- aber ich war im Endeffekt froh, dass es nicht so war!" (Miriam, I: 36-38).

are still scarce (Tobias, I: 24-26). This misunderstanding should be an incentive for the MACR team to clarify what childhood studies entail, on the MACR website and in other contexts of "marketing" the programme.

Notwithstanding the different expectations mentioned, the desire to change children's situation in society is what unites the students from the beginning, their opinions and standpoints about children, childhood and children's rights are, however, very different. Some participants begin their studies having an understanding of children as still becomings, who need to develop and mature and reach adulthood, the stage in life when you are to have developed the seemingly necessary competencies to be commonly understood to be a full member of society, a citizen. Also, due to the perception of children as being inferior to adults, they are mainly regarded as requiring protection, in order to safeguard them against the evil and malicious (adult) world surrounding them. Hitherto, childhood is often viewed mainly as a preparatory phase for adulthood, which should be characterised by traditional psycho-pedagogical factors: love, freedom, joy, play, curiosity and no responsibility. According to the statements about their understanding of childhood and children's rights students write up during the opening ceremony of the MACR (refer to chapter 6.2.3.), a number of participants see children's main need (besides protection) in education and consequently aim at contributing to the implementation of the right to education for all children (this may be related to the fact, that many students have a background in pedagogy and education -see fig 7.6. above). Few students begin the programme with an understanding of children as "complete" beings in the present and with varying lived realities depending on region, culture, history and socio-economic position.

Picture 1- Examples of student's understanding of childhood and children's rights at the beginning of the MACR

Childhood – Childhood is a period in life which should be protected in order to enable children to develop healthily and according to their time and individual needs. No other aims such as economical and political interests should influence the individual needs of the child in a negative way, disturbing its healthy development or personal needs, or rushing it. Each child has the right to protection of these needs.

Children's Rights –
Every child has the right of protection for its own healthy development in its own individual needs. The application of the rights should be of common sense.

Childhood is the stage of life when one grows and develops as a person the most. It is the period before when one is (or should be) responsible to completely take care of themselves, but rather when one is raised, and educated by parental figures and educators.
Children's Rights are the human rights children have to be free from oppression, to be safe, to receive an education, etc. External people/ structures/ forces are to protect these rights.

As far as a generalisation is possible, students' notion of children and childhood is grounded in their relation to adults and the adults' responsibility to protect and promote children (and safeguard their rights). The topic of how perceptions change in the course of studying in the programme is key to this study and I will refer to it in several of the following chapters.

This rather "objective" information, about where students come from, what academic background they have and what they are engaged in after having graduated is substantiated by further information given by the alumni about the specific meaning of the MACR for them personally and the use of the competencies acquired in their professional work (if they are used) in the following chapters. As the topic of group dynamics and the significance of the group for a successful and satisfying study experience is often voiced at the end of the MACR in the final evaluation, I present and discuss these and other results in the next chapter (chapter 8). Then, I will highlight students' experiences of working and learning in an international and interdisciplinary group and what potential and challenges of studying in such an environment entail (chapter 9). Chapter 10 is dedicated to the theoretical and practical competencies students develop and how they mirror the objectives described in the individual modules (refer to chapter 5.2.). In chapter 11, I discuss the consciousness of being a member of the child rights community and how students and graduates make use of this network in their professional and personal activities.

Chapter 8 – Evaluation at the End of the MACR

On the last day of classes in the third semester of the programme, students register for their final theses and, together with the coordination team, engage in evaluative activities to re-capture the experience made, to assess the success of the programme, to weigh up their own expectations against the actual experiences made during the MACR and to measure and reflect their satisfaction with the master's after completing the last face-to-face semi-nar, before starting their theses. In this chapter, I will depict and analyse the findings of these activities:

- Evaluation of specific themes via the "bull's eye target evaluation" and
- Recapturing the change of perspective towards childhood and children's rights via comparison of written statements at the beginning of the master's and on the day of the final evaluation. [204]
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8.1. Bull's Eye Target Evaluation

We started applying the bull's eye method (see chapter 6.2.3) in 2013. The results have a formative character for the design, content and structure of the curriculum as well as for the teaching methods. They have been used inter alia as a source of information for the improvement of the programme itself and its general realisation.[205] For the students, the evaluation at the end of the programme has a summative character, as they give an account of the experience and value they place on the master's, yet they will not experience the possible suggested changes to its delivery themselves. For the coordinators, directors and the teachers the results are used to further form the programme with the students' feed-back.

The bull's target is divided into a certain amount of sections that refer to certain topics, which are to be rated by the students using stickers to mark the level of satisfaction with the issues by placing the stickers towards the centre, depicting complete satisfaction and to demonstrate their dissatisfaction or disagreement with the statement by placing their stick-ers further towards the outer circles. Some of the topics were pre-defined by the coordina-tion team, the others were determined and added by the graduates. Often, feedback rounds are characterised by expressions of criticism rather than appraisal. It is not surprising that the topics introduced by the students themselves are the least popular (Stewart, 2015).

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[204] I will not place an emphasis on the results of the final written, anonymous (and quantitative) questionnaire that students answer on the same day.

[205] Discussions from teachers' and advisory committee meetings as well as jour fixe meetings with the students and individual course evaluations are forms of formative evaluation as they accompany the successful and ameliorating process of offering the programme, some of which are included within this study (refer to chapter 1).

The below three pictures (Pic 2.1-2.3.) of the target evaluations in the years 2010-12; 2012-14 and 2013-15 serve as visualisation.

The themes were:

- I am a CR expert
- My expectations were met
- The group was important for a good learning experience
- The modules were appropriate to master the module papers
- The teacher's knowledge of other modules was good
- The length of the MACR is adequate
- I can use competences for work
- The MACR was good for my (personal) development

Picture 2.1.-2.3. Target Evaluations, 2011/13; 2012/14; 2013/15
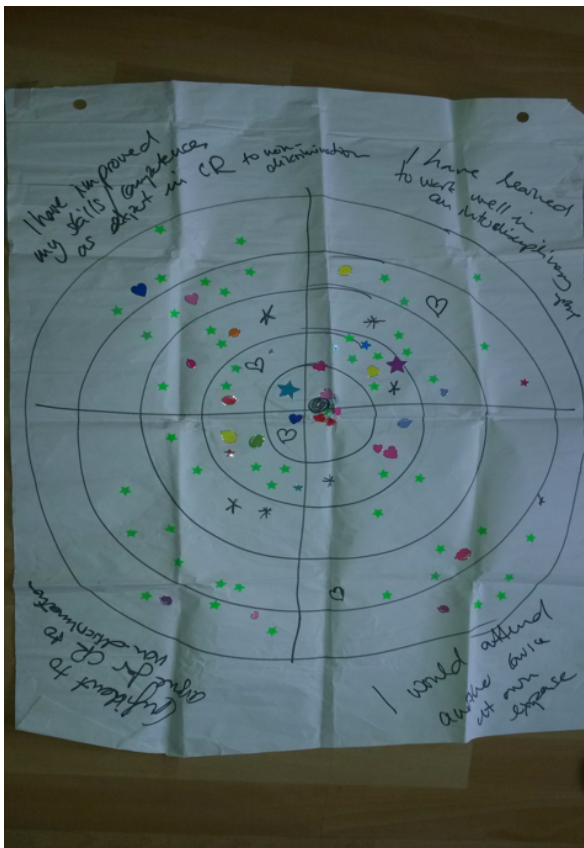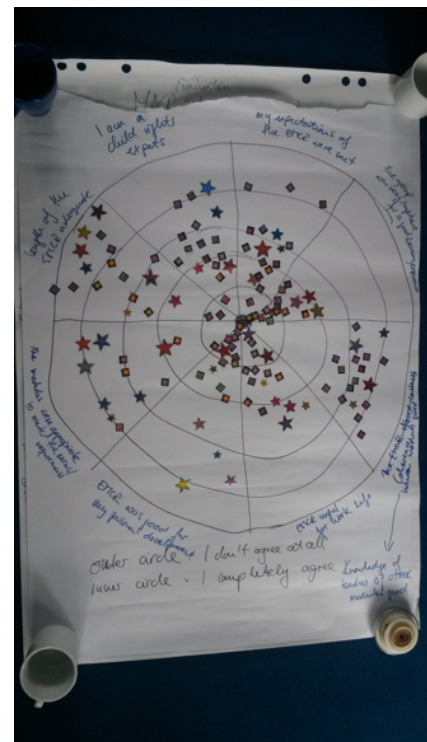
Picture 2.1. (2011/13)   Picture 2.2. (2012/14)
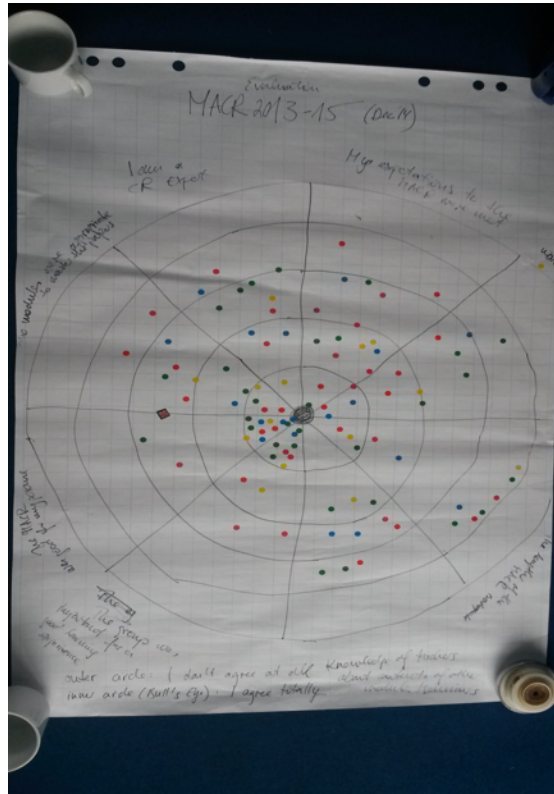
Picture 2.3. (2013/15)

I will briefly discuss each theme drawing from the analysis and interpretation of the pictures as well as the comments of students in assessing the picture and the subsequent discussions.

I am a child rights expert

Over the years, the coordination team introduced slightly nuanced themes. One recurring theme has been whether the students believe they are children's rights "experts" after having read the MACR.

Approaching differing forms of competencies and qualification from sociology and describing them as a special form of knowledge and expertise summarises implicit, reflexive knowledge.[206] They are described only in context of specific actions and as capabilities to solve problems in specific circumstances (Kurtz & Pfadenhauer, 2010: 22). These competencies are nourished by implicit knowledge, "knowledge of acquaintance" (Schützeichel, 2010: 173). However, expertise can also limit e.g. children's participation and agency, when the term is applied with an assumption of knowing the truth, which sometimes has been called "expertocracy". Therefore, it is of utmost importance and essential to be truly acquainted and familiar with the new knowledge and to continuously question and reflect on it to enable its internalisation and thus evoke directly applicable tacit competencies. Hav-

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[206] I will discuss reflexive and tacit knowledge in chapter 10.

ing said this, the connotations towards and the problem of using the term "experts" nowadays is that many people are claimed to be experts, however, as seen above, what exactly this term's implication is varies according to who is using it and for what purposes. As it is used almost arbitrarily in several contexts, the students who have acquired a high level of self-reflexivity, an expertise in its own right, are sceptical towards this term and may therefore find it inappropriate to define themselves as experts in children's rights. For my purposes, I use the definition of an expert as a person who has much higher than average knowledge of a specific topic and theme, for or against which he or she can argue on a theoretical (and scientific) basis. Even though students are sceptical and cautious in using the term "expert" to describe who or what they are after finishing the programme, after an explanation of what the coordination team defines and means by being an expert, no student placed his or her sticker on the outermost circle of the bull's eye target under this heading. Compared to the other topics raised, the ratings are rather scattered with no agglomeration of stickers in one close spot. This could be an effect of the students' apprehension concerning their future opportunities with the qualification once they have graduated.

My expectations were met

Even though none of the students placed their sticker on the outermost circle of the target, the estimation of their satisfaction with the programme compared with their expectations varies a lot- it is not possible to conclude a general feeling where students stand at the end of the programme. Taking into consideration the answers given in interviews on expectations, motivations and how they were met (refer to previous chapter 7.3), where many research partners claim not to have had clear expectations towards the master's, the scattered stickers may be a result of this indefinite situation at the beginning of the programme.

The group was important for a good learning experience

As can be seen on the bull's eye targets of all three years, the positive contribution of the student group members is one important aspect. It is also evident in the data collected from the direct research partners (interviewees and essayists) that the international and interdisciplinary composition of the student groups is key to the positive and valuable experience of the MACR. The possibility to listen to other students' opinions, to learn from different perspectives, acknowledge them and make use of them for subsequent work and attitude towards children is highly esteemed. This experience is referred to as an eye-opener, especially for those students coming from a different academic system in which more frontal approaches to teaching are employed and input is mainly given by the teachers and students' views are less valued (see following chapter 9).

The modules were appropriate to master the module papers

This theme had been introduced by the group of 2012-14 and taken up by the MACR coordinators and included on the target in the following year. That there are no stickers in the centre towards the bull's eye is not surprising, considering the fact that students would generally introduce topics with which they are less satisfied to express their criticism. However, in the following year, 2013-15, when the theme was included in the target as predefined category by the coordinators, the positive estimation on the appropriateness of the

modules to master the papers increased, with some stickers in the very centre of the target, which could be seen as proof that students are biased in their estimation depending on how the topic to be evaluated is introduced (by the students themselves or by the coordination team). Still, some students placed their stickers on the second circle also in the second year, demonstrating their disagreement to the statement that the seminars and tutorials of the modules were appropriate to master the module papers.

The teacher's knowledge of other modules was good

The coherence between modules was rated very low in 2012-14. In 2013-15 ratings on the topic improved (again, this could be attributed to the coordinators having pre-defined the topic). When explaining the low ratings, students complained about doubling of content in some modules and a lack of obvious coherence between the topics discussed. As a consequence of this estimation, the issue was on the agenda at a teachers' meeting during the discussion of the results of the final evaluation (see field note). Teachers were urged to 1. Listen to colleagues' description of their seminars during the meetings and 2. To engage in reading other teachers' seminar plans to avoid repetition of content or disconnection between modules respectively. In a subsequent feedback round with students, the coherence of modules was not a pressing theme. Whether this is due to other more pressing issues or whether the problematic situation has improved could be a matter of further investigation.

The length of the MACR is adequate

Over all the years, the length of the programme has been evaluated as being too short for the amount of content and learning in the MACR. In addition, most students appreciate the time and are comfortable within their respective groups and are a bit gloomy that the time passes so quickly. The stickers that were placed further in the centre to mark the appropriateness of the length of the master's were placed there by students who had a high workload to master alongside their studies. This was revealed in the later discussions of the bull's eye image.

I can use competencies for work

A great majority of students agree that the MACR is useful for their jobs- there is a concentration on the positive effect the competencies have on and for their work life (specifically the class of 2013-15). Even though a high number of stickers were also placed in the centre ring or one above in the previous year, there are two students who do not agree at all with this statement. In the subsequent discussion it turned out that the explanation for this low rating of how useful the competencies developed in the master's are was the apprehension about how to apply these competencies, as they are perceived as mere theoretical, intangible knowledge. Several students were working or had already worked in areas where children's rights play a predominant role, such as schools, organisations, and youth services while or before enrolling in the MACR. Yet more than a few also engage in work that is not directly or hardly related to children and children's rights. These students question the implementation of the competencies developed in their practical work.

The MACR was good for my (personal) development

All three images show that students judge the personal effect the MACR has had on them positively. Nearly all stickers on the target are placed in the centre of the bull's eye, demonstrating accordance with the statement and that the impact the study programme has had on them is valued highly. This theme was important in the interviews and the writings as well. When asked about the interaction between students and children as well as peers and other members of society after having completed the programme compared with interactions before the MACR, many students express having undergone a mind-shift and change of attitude while being in the programme.

8.2. What is Childhood and What is Your Understanding of Children's Rights?

The second exercise during the last common face-to-face session in the MACR is a continuance of an exercise done at the beginning of the programme. Students' estimations from the beginning about what childhood means and what their understanding of children's rights is, are juxtaposed to those upon completing the programme in order to unravel possible changes that have occurred. As the change in perspective the students undergo during the MACR is a dominating theoretical, reflexive competency students develop in the MACR (see chapter 10.1.), I will analyse student's writings on the opening and closing day of the MACR briefly here.

Generally speaking, students idealise childhood when they start the programme- their view is connected to the normative, Western understanding of an ideal childhood: "Childhood is a sensitive time which has to be filled with successful experiences, memories of good friends, no bullying, trust and loving and supporting family".[207] Childhood should be a phase in life during which no or very little responsibility is placed on children and their doing, which is marked by leisure, love and affection and in which children are ideally protected from the evil of the adult world, as "childhood is (equal to) vulnerability", and shall therefore be characterised by a surrounding of love and care, "a time without responsibilities to others". Almost all students see the time of childhood as "the earliest phase in life where children are still dependent on adults", a stage of development (through education and schooling) which is seen as preparation towards reaching a phase in life (adulthood) in which the children are completely developed. Only when they have reached adulthood have they "formed their personality" and are able to face the full exposure to the world and its downtrodden faces. Very generally speaking, the students' predominant idea is based on a development theory of children as becomings rather than beings in their own right.

Some students, however, in particular those who had been working in child rights organisations before commencing the MACR wrote answers such as "childhood is very individual and part of society. A social construct" that is "special and different to adulthood" and var-

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[207] All quotes are taken from students' written statements of different years (compiled in empirical data- student estimations on childhood and children's rights) if not depicted as statements of research partner from interviews.

ies between countries and cultures.[208] Students who have been working in the context of children's rights before starting the MACR have a more differentiated view on childhood from the beginning and are more likely to see childhood as a stage in life that is always contextualised and is largely constructed.[209]

In their estimations on the definition and significance of children's rights, the great majority emphasised the need for protection and that they "are for me necessary". One particularly conservative North Western view on childhood and children's rights declares that most importantly, children's rights are "the right to have a life without sorrows, that children don't have to worry about the seriousness of life and just can go on to be a child". Several students, however, have a more critical view, which is characterised by a more differentiated notion of children's rights even at the start of the programme. One student claimed that "in reality they are just a pretty theory". Even though the right to life, the "basic needs to be safe- priorities vary from India or Africa to Europe" is recognised, the emphasis still lies on the vulnerability and neediness of children to be protected and safeguarded by adults. Other students do see the problematic issues of children's non-involvement and non-participation when writing: "Usually children have no influence on how their rights look like". Nonetheless in most statements, the thought of children themselves being empowered is almost nowhere to be found.

"Strengthening and giving space to develop to a not yet strong person" and "Protecting the child to grow to be a healthy adult" and "Children's rights: a way of supporting, sustaining and fulfilling what childhood should be about" are examples that show the general atmosphere more clearly, whereas one student did see "it (the right of the child) as a construct of European ideas, spread all over the world, even if not suitable".

The exercise to write one's own perception of childhood and children's rights at the end of the programme is based on the idea of self-reflection about the learning process during the MACR. In the final evaluations, mostly, students do not read both answers (from the beginning and from the end) but rather tell the group how they feel their understanding has changed. Which in most cases is drastic as solidified beliefs have been shaken and completely different viewpoints on childhood emerge. The scanned statements below serve as examples:

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[208] *"Childhood is a concept describing the earlier periods of a human's life. Until when you are a child and what kind of social role/ status this implies differs from country to country"* (student statement, 2013).
[209] See also chapter 7.4.

Childhood: The meaning of childhood is always contextualised, so it's a social construction, in [crossed out] a lot of countries it's defined by age (but not in all) → always subjective → who is perceived as child? → who sees himself/herself as 'child'?

Children's Rights: Human Right → Every child is a subject of children's rights, they have to be guaranteed by duty bearers so that the right's holders (children) can live their rights. Children's Rights are "unveräußerlich" → protection, participat. provision → to live in dignity (main objective of CR)

| Childhood |

Childhood is not a natural phenomen. It's cultural and social affected by history, and locality and time. Childhood is a social structure (Quotrup). Childhood is the time from the sixth till adulthood. It is influenced by adulthood, but also seperated. [crossed out] Childhood is playtime, time with peers, education, parenting, protection,

That childhood is not carved in stone as childhood is often understood to be, but that childhood is a socially constructed category varying from viewpoints to cultures, regions and contexts, that there cannot be only one childhood, is one knowledge students have gained. The understanding that children's rights are not only (or mainly) the CRC and not mainly about protection rights but are also rights to participation in which children ought

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to be able to use their agency is mentioned throughout the years (see field notes). Such an understanding is

> "....very important in order to analyse the problems or events regarding children because we, as adults, are more likely to see the children with stereotype images... cute, small, dependent, vulnerable and so on. Through the master course, I've learnt the other face of children... such as resilience, competence, strength" (Tsukasa, essay: 10-12).

These basic changes in understandings and beliefs have been evoked by the content of the modules and reflect the competencies to be achieved in the individual seminars as described in chapter 5. As the understanding of childhood and children's rights forms the underlying belief of the MACR, it is also a major topic in the interviews and the essays. As such, they will be taken up further in the following chapter, in which I will focus on the various competencies the students develop in the MACR.

Chapter 9 – Interdisciplinarity, Internationality and Academic Cultures

In this chapter I introduce the interdisciplinary nature of higher education programmes in children's (human) rights as an example of highly specialised programmes which draw on several disciplinary approaches. I will explore how such an interdisciplinary field of study can be presented to programme participants. How can teachers, students and alumni make the learning experience a true interdisciplinary one, which enables the development of competencies through critical reflection of several disciplinary approaches to e.g. one same problem, how can these be integrated to a holistic view and subsequent inclusive practical action? Interdisciplinarity is also contiguous to academic cultures of multidisciplinary and international student groups in which participants come from different cultures and types of academic formation. I will draw on the previously introduced heterogeneous composition of the MACR student groups (chapter 7.1.) as an essential ingredient for a successful interdisciplinary and international learning experience, giving examples of research partners' experiences within the group and study setting. Besides referring to in-class learning activities, I will also look at assessment forms and methods and the students' manner of dealing with them.

In higher education, the term "interdisciplinary" is associated with activities, courses or entire curricula organised around the interplay of methods and disciplines. Often, students are challenged to construct knowledge based on a synthesis of perspectives derived from multiple disciplinary positions (Klein, 2012; Lattuca, 2003). In addressing issues of interdisciplinary pedagogy in higher education, emphasis has been placed on the shift in focus from learning content to developing competencies, paying particular attention to experiential and problem-based learning and the extent of students' knowledge on completion of their education as key factors (DeZure, 2012, see Stentoft, 2017: 52, 54).

Childhood and children's rights studies are each in themselves a complex and disciplinary hybrid field of research. They are related inter alia in that both can only be studied and grasped by taking an interdisciplinary approach to their understanding. Although the basis of childhood and children's rights studies can be found primarily in new social sciences: sociology, education, psychology and social anthropology and children's rights mainly in law and political science and to a lesser extent in psychology and sociology, both subjects touch on social policy, history, education, humanities, political science and geography. Both childhood studies and children's rights are multidimensional topics, which are necessarily composed of pluri-disciplinary content (see chapters 4 and 5).

Interdisciplinary teaching, learning and research differs from multidisciplinary approaches by engaging in close cooperation and complimentary work between the individual disciplines and sub-disciplines. Multidisciplinary approaches mostly juxtapose disciplinary approaches and perspectives with the aim to extend knowledge beyond the boundaries of single disciplines. "Transdisciplinarity", a third term for cross-disciplinary education, is often used interchangeably with "interdisciplinarity", the fluid boundaries between the concepts and working methods can best be traced along the lines of joint and separate endeavours, where interdisciplinary approaches aim at taking a joint approach to topics and engage in mutual interaction to complement each other (see e.g. Stentoft, 2017; draft for interdisciplinary learning CREAN, 2014). Consequently, students are faced with the chal-

lenge to integrate knowledge derived from several disciplines to construct new perspectives on a particular problem or scenario. In the process, different disciplines are acknowledged, and their integration may lead to new disciplinary insights (Domik & Fischer, 2010; Ivanitskaya et al., 2002; Petrie, 1992). Alumni of the master's programme in children's rights at the University of Geneva, Switzerland (member of the CREAN), stated that interdisciplinary learning "… is a model which allows learners and teachers alike to transcend disciplinary egos and strive together for the advancement of science" (Hirschi & Volonakis, 2014: 5)

9.1. Ways of Learning- Teaching Methods

"Also MACR made me re-realise that there is no one perfect answer for everything. Our lectures and tutorials were more or less discussion-oriented and I've learnt a lot from other students' perspectives and approaches and importance to respect other people's ideas" (Tsukasa, essay: 17-20).

The MACR aims at involving the students in class by engaging them in many discussions in the plenary and in small groups as well as by students' presentations and moderation of their own topic of interest (which is also linked to the seminar or module subject in which it is presented and discussed with the lecturers and students).

This contrasts (sharply) with a more frontal approach of content delivery, which dominates most academic learning across disciplines and the globe and, in particular in the Global South and the East, where the focus (still) lies more on lecturing structured content. The students' main task is to memorise the information given, and their rhetorical competencies are in the foreground (Kaiser, 2010: 16-18). Voicing one's personal (critical) reflection is diverted to the background or is possibly unwanted as it is often viewed as not polite towards the professors. In particular, students coming from an educational setting in the traditional Confucian learning style of the Far Eastern countries are not used to a participative form of learning. Often, they are perceived as typically passive, as surface learners unwilling to ask questions or participate in discussions, whereas they may simply require more time to adjust to the different learning style (Holliday 1994; Subramaniam, 2008 in Tran, 2013: 57). Participation of students in class is also limited due to temporal constraints for the delivery of knowledge. These constraints in university learning are inter alia a result of the change in approaches to higher education, in which the main focus is put on the market value of education. This neoliberal university vs. the traditional (public) university works under the premise that students are to be qualified within shorter periods of time to make them available for the market as early as possible. This neoliberal (and neo-positivist) approach to education is a phenomenon that has been spreading across the globe, and endangers the quality of teaching, as working conditions of professors and teachers have been worsening at the same time, inter alia through austerity measures and general cutting of public spending (Symeonidis, 2015).

Interdisciplinary learning (in human rights programmes) also breaks with these traditional forms of learning and instead emphasises higher order epistemologies and students' engagement with complex and at times unstructured knowledge domains (Ivanitskaya et al., 2002). The interdisciplinary approach set forward by the teachers in the MACR has been a role as a facilitator and moderator, and as a partner in the critical analysis dialogue, with-

out losing sight of giving (theoretical) input and sharing their knowledge with the students. MACR student groups are composed of many international students who have experienced traditional forms of learning and different teaching styles as well as different styles of communication with the teachers, which Paulo Freire once labelled as "banking education" (Freire, 1972: 52), a term that, in my opinion, still aptly describes this form of knowledge acquisition. For some newly arrived international students, a participative learning surrounding can be disturbing and at times even overwhelming (Sachverständigenrat Deutscher Stiftungen, 2017). Coping with unfamiliar seminar formats with large amounts of group work and discussions as well as critical questioning of input given by the teacher requires not few of the students to have an open mind for adjustment and getting accustomed. This can lead to international students not finding (sufficient) space to voice their opinions compared to students who have already experienced this form of learning in their first degrees, as they have to get used to the lived critical and participative reality in class (see field note; Stemmer, 2013: 150-152; Luo, 2015: 127-129 in Sachverständigenrat Deutscher Stiftungen, 2017: 22). Another advantage of such learning and teaching is that teachers, including those on the MACR have repeatedly confirmed that through these open discussions they continually learn from the students, not only vice versa.

On arrival at the FUB and the MACR specifically, some international students' familiarity with traditional strict hierarchical structures at university in their home countries can be suddenly shaken. A graduate of the first generation from Serbia with a globalised background (by having lived in several European countries) describes the teaching and learning methods at university in her home country. The method of studying and the difference between her background and the way of studying the MACR is to her strikingly interesting and was at first challenging and then appreciated:

> "ähm, e.g. since I haven't studied in Germany before, I noticed a big, big difference between our system and your system. I can compare them, but what I found as a challenge, was this work instead of learning a lot by heart and then go and take an exam and reproduce that. Here we had to choose a subject and do the research and had to write a scientific paper on it. It was a very new way of working for me and I found it at the beginning a bit difficult but perhaps on the other hand very useful because one was able to do this research completely on his or her own and could learn more about this specific topic. So, I think that it advanced my abilities to learn independently" (Branka, I: 83-89).

Dealing with a teacher-student relation based on partnership contrasts with the familiar setting of the teacher having the authority and power over the students' learning process.[210] Teachers, including university teachers, need to familiarise themselves with the culture of their students (any students) and to make the classroom as compatible as possible with the learning that takes place in it (Leavitt, 1994: 183). The mutual preparedness of student and teacher for an intercultural and international learning experience requiring them to come closer to one another is indispensable. Another student, Aziza from Egypt, who had com-

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[210] For a discussion of Authority and Power in different classroom settings, see: Sever & Algan, 2017

pleted the Diploma in Public Policy and Children's Rights (DPPCR) at University of Cairo[211] before coming to Berlin as an Erasmus Mundus[212] student, describes her experience in the classroom and the new experience of the teacher as a knowledge-sharing partner, a facilitator and moderator with whom heated discussions are held, rather than learning with an "all-knowing" professor who delivers content:

> *"So it was here like ehm, they were interrupting the teacher and they were: "I don't agree with you because I have this (...) this..or you have to prove it, like some evidences".. I mean like no way you can say this in Egypt ... " (Aziza, I: 239-242).*

A Ugandan Erasmus Mundus student describes his similar previous experience in higher education with frontal teaching methods and without space for questions or discussions in the classroom. The participative (and individual) learning method in the MACR, working in small groups and discussing the outcome with fellow students is new (and fascinating) for him:

> *"...in Uganda, most times you will find the teacher, or the lecturer, professor comes. He gives you everything. There is no time for you to come in small group and discuss on your own and then present----- there is no time you find students are really contributing, because when the lecturer comes he/they talk for one or two hours- gives you NO time. There you see the professor gives you input--- here you get input and work in small groups and present the outcome---- that is ONE thing, the core thing... If you are given an assignment, you work on that individually at home or when you do an exam, you do it individually." (John, I: 177-184).*

John not only sees the benefit of the teacher's input combined with small group work and plenary presentations and discussions of the results, he also mentions the participatory character of such teaching and learning methods, which to him seems the best way of acquiring knowledge and competencies: "I think that's what it should be like at home. Yes, it was participative here" (John, I:186). Besides getting accustomed to new learning and teaching methods, the MACR students, coming from various international and differing disciplinary backgrounds, are additionally challenged to open up to new disciplines and perspectives and incorporate these with the expectation of expanding them into new constellations where traditional disciplinary and learning boundaries are challenged (Stentoft, 2017: 52).

> *"With a background in Business Administration and almost 20 years of work experience in different fields such as consulting, financial markets and venture capital before I started the MACR (thus coming from a very different field), the program helped me understand that children's rights and the rights based approach should be at the core of each and every discipline – economics, public policy, education, health care etc., thus acting as an interface to these disciplines" (Daniela, E: 2-9).*

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[211] The DPPCR is a program which was developed by two Egyptian and one Jordanian university within a network of European universities in the frame of a TEMPUS curriculum development programme, funded by the European Commission and coordinated by the FU Berlin (see www.enmcr.net, accessed 13.7.2016)
[212] For a brief overview of the Erasmus Mundus scheme see chapter 7.1.2.

I have chosen Daniela as her position is very clear, moving from business administration to children's rights. Nora's career path is similar in that she came from marketing before studying the MACR. Ruth has also changed her career moving from natural sciences (medicine) to social sciences, however, medicine is perceived to be closer to children and their rights than business administration or marketing. All of them have a background which does not but should, in the best case, be inclusive of children's rights and, adding to the internationality and interdisciplinarity of the groups, these heterogeneous professional backgrounds bring distinct practical field experiences into the classroom.

> "....because I hadn't to do with other (professions) much before- yeah, with other teachers, but apart from that it was the first time that there were others- who had their own view of problems- by this I have learned to acknowledge other competencies" (Julia, I: 66-68[213], see also Tobias, I: 299[214])

Heterogeneous groups profit from the validity of a variety of different competencies and opinions. Thus, students develop an understanding that opinions and disciplinary approaches other than one's own perspectives are enriching and widen your horizon. Moreover, the permeable hierarchical structure and participatory method of teaching and learning widens the spectrum of symbolic resources compared to less diverse groups (Meyers et.al.,1997). The participation of students in class as lived reality in the MACR is a new experience for many students. Feedback given on the methods of teaching and learning after having completed the programme reveal that this participatory character of the courses is either valued very highly or highly by most students as it gives space to reflect personal positions and gain lasting knowledge and open-mindedness (see chapter 8.1.3.).

> "I was enjoying a lot because students from different countries (...) they studied in different educational systems than mine? So the _way_ they are participating the _way_ they are thinking- I was impressed by some of the inputs and comments" (Aziza, I: 425- 428).

Assuming that it is true that MACR groups have a broader spectrum to draw from, the argument is that stories often function in group discussion as arguments for a given idea or proposal, or as a way to extend, interpret, or clarify a point of discussion. Some interview partners lament that in student discussions a sort of "story telling" took place, meaning that students spoke about personal issues only distantly related to the topic at hand and with little or no theoretical backing: "People who did not read a lot or not at all, wanted to participate in discussions and sometimes these discussions, in my opinion, turned out to be completely irrelevant, not constructive" (Branka, I: 126-128). In the beginning of the programme, this is seldom valued as a form of academic learning. In retrospect, the ideas and perspec-

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[213] „weil ich nicht so viel mit anderen Disziplinen zu tun hatte- zwar mit anderen Lehrenden aber sonst war es das erste Mal, dass man auch andere- die ne andere Sicht auf Probleme auch haben- würde ich schon sagen grade auch andere Kompetenzen auch anders wertschätzt" (Julia, I: 66-68).

[214] „...dass es so ganz klein war, so grassroots, so ein bisschen out of the box ehm, dass es so ne heterogene Gruppe war- großartig fand ich das und das auch der Raum da war, das fast alle auch immer gesagt haben, was sie anders denken" (Tobias, I: 299-301).

"That it was so small. So grassroots, a little bit out of the box ehm, that it was such a heterogeneous group- I also find fantastic, that there was space that almost everybody always said what they thought" (Tobias, I: 299-301).

tives introduced and verbalised have much more weight and are valued for being a door opener to accept other opinions and approaches and gain valuable insights (Frey & Sunwolf, 2004: 288-289).

> *"...acknowledging that people from different science background approach topics from a very different perspective. Understanding, acknowledging and being able to use this insight has helped me in various situations" (Nora, Essay: 10-12).*

In comparison with the traditional academic culture many international students (mainly non-EU or East European) have been educated in, they describe the differences in learning and refer, for example, to the benefit of experiencing this new and unfamiliar type of academic learning, the valuable insight into other domains through fellow students' contributions during class and in private discussions.

> *"....students came from different sectors- (...) – I think everybody felt that, not only me- hearing from different sides- it was really helpful" (Soo-Ri, I: 90-91).*

According to several research partners, the development of tolerance for deviant beliefs fellow students introduce to the group is a result of the MACR. Also, the various disciplinary backgrounds of lecturers and teachers give a multitude of impulses for thought (see e.g. Zara, Claudia, Essays). Being open to active participation and exchanging viewpoints within the student group with participants from all over the world, from different cultures, perspectives and schools of thought therefore seems paramount to a successful learning experience.

9.1.1. Teaching and Learning Interdisciplinarily

> "Rather than having students absorb knowledge, teachers must encourage students to think problems through, analyse, conceptualise, ask questions, be questioned, and reflect on how their beliefs might affect and compare to others. (...), students must be challenged to apply what they have learned to the real world" (Hirose, 1992).

Competencies such as critical thinking, learning how to learn, integration of theory and practice, and the capability to respond to changing contexts have become central to higher education practices in general and more specifically so in interdisciplinary fields of study (Ramsden, 2003), in contrast to the traditional learning by heart. An effective way to teach interdisciplinary content is to make use of and discuss problems in the field and search for an understanding and possible solution.

As a society, we have reached the point where issues of political and social inequity cannot be ignored. The dichotomy privilege vs. oppression as well as lacking awareness of social justice issues contribute further to a society that is becoming increasingly insensitive and intolerant of disparities (Spencer-Rodgers et.al., 2010). The social science and higher education fields have recognised the need for a pedagogical overhaul that would transform our current educational system to one that is more inclusive of an awareness of social inequities (e.g. Hackman, 2005). With growing recognition of the need to include social justice

pedagogy, of which I understand children's human rights to be one, within higher education, awareness also rises that this need is not likely to be fully met within a traditional classroom setting and, instead, requires creative approaches. A growing body of literature on non-traditional pedagogy calls for students to step back from the normative role as the receivers of knowledge and instead fulfil the role of contributors to, and active participants of, their education (e.g. Butin, 2005; Fenwick, 2001; Gough, 2004; Prentice & Garcia, 2000). Educators are likewise challenged with creating opportunities that offer an integration of both discursive and didactic pedagogy, such that students can experience social justice learning in a transformative way (e.g. Butin, 2008; Carrington & Iyer, 2011; LeGrange, 2007). The process of consultations can be an avenue for students to engage in social justice causes and can also serve as a valuable learning experience. As consultants, students work with an interested community (Chapter 11) to identify areas in need of change and are active participants in the development of methods to address the community's needs. This process also helps students:

- expand their own cultural competencies,
- increase awareness of other cultures and perspectives,
- gain knowledge about different approaches to issues at stake and
- understand and develop other disciplinary skills

(see American Psychological Association, 2003; Goodman et al., 2004; Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004; Sue & Sue, 2013 in Flores et.al, 2014).

As a form of interdisciplinary learning I will turn to learning by means of real-world problems, which proposes to render knowledge and competencies in (theoretically) applying them to the problem at hand.

9.1.2. Problem Based Learning (PBL)

„All the discussions, thinking out of the box, and dealing with such questions as: „should children vote from age 0", I don't know what all we discussed, yet it lead me to question my own beliefs---- ehm, in my work with other people, especially now in Ethiopia it has clearly opened my mind" (Sabrina, I: 206-210).[215]

The question whether children should be allowed to vote from a very early age could be one issue that is discussed via the concept of Problem-Based Learning (PBL). PBL can be used as a tool for successful interdisciplinary learning (Stentoft, 2017). It has its roots in medicine, where it was introduced in response to students' difficulties and often inability to transfer the acquired theoretical, abstract university knowledge into practice. By engaging in solving (fictitious and subsequently real) problems, theory-based practical competencies can be developed. Problems in societies and their solutions can rarely be contained within the boundaries of one single discipline (Petrie, 1992). "Learning, teaching and education

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[215] *„...die ganzen Diskussionen, das out of the box denken und sich mit solchen Fragen wie „Sollten Kinder ab 0 wählen" keine Ahnung was wir alles diskutiert haben das das schon dazu geführt hat , das man denkst nee auf keinen Fall und dann fängt man an das zu hinterfragen--- ehm in der Arbeit mit anderen Menschen gerade jetzt in Äthiopien mir doch eine deutlichere Offenheit" (Sabrina, I: 206-210).*

departing in real-world problems rather than being confined to predefined disciplinary boundaries is a recurring characteristic of interdisciplinary education as also noted in several papers on interdisciplinary learning in higher education" (e.g. DeZure, 2012; Domik & Fischer, 2010; Fraser and Greenhalgh, 2001; Ivanitskaya et al., 2002; Klein, 2006; Little & Hoel, 2011; Petrie, 1976, 1992. Stentoft, 2017: 54). Without being explicitly mentioned in descriptions of MACR seminars, in which, besides content of the sessions, required readings for preparation and learning objectives with guiding questions for the seminars are named, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is used e.g. in discussing case studies in seminars or analysing testimonies of children, using images of children's rights issues and others. Not only in discussions in the plenary and small group work, many readings are also based on real-world problems, in which cases e.g. of children's rights violations are described and discussed as backing for theoretical assumptions made. According to Stentoft, 2017: 54 (with reference to Barrett & Moore, 2011; Barrows, 1986, 1996; Hmelo & Evensen, 2008; Savery, 2006; Savin-Baden & Major, 2004), Problem-Based Learning has several characteristics of which I will relate some here to concrete teaching and learning forms experienced in the MACR. I will demonstrate that many of the PBL criteria listed here are fulfilled in the MACR within its delivery, which underlines the argument that this type of interdisciplinary learning can and does serve as a model for explanations and possibly applicable methods of teaching in the complex interdisciplinary field of children's rights and childhood studies.

By what criteria is PBL defined and how can the characteristics be applied to children's rights studies and in particular addressed in the MACR? Here I apply that Problem- Based-Learning:

- has complex and real-life problems at the centre of the learning process;
- is anchored in a constructivist paradigm where knowledge is constructed by the learner through his or her active engagement with a particular problem;
- is student-centred and assuming students to be self-directed and active;
- supports students in critical thinking; requiring a shift in the role of the teacher towards one of a supervisor and facilitator of the learning process;
- is based on students working and learning in teams – this requires development of team and communication competencies;

Working with real-life problems via cases and testimonies takes place mainly in the second semester of the MACR, where focus is placed on specific subjects related to children's rights studies- e.g. testimonies of working children and documents of working children's movements (module 4; chapter 5.2.3.1), OR: when discussing and working with the term "Children Out of Place", putting meaning to it by describing and analysing the situation of children and their childhood e.g. in refugee camps or on the streets, where possible solutions are discussed and elaborated and different perspectives concerning the contemporary situation are reflected (module 5, chapter: 5.2.3.2.).

The MACR takes a constructivist approach in persistently challenging our North Western, European and Eurocentric concepts of childhood and children's rights making students aware of them being socially constructed by beliefs that have been handed down from one

generation to the next. These normative beliefs are shaken and often deconstructed by students being exposed to various disciplinary approaches to a specific problem that in turn trigger questions about long- standing certainties, dissolving and rearranging them, giving way to the construction of new knowledge based on critical reflection and generated in line with real-life problems.

Students have a central position in the above-mentioned relatively innovative and highly participative teaching methods and forms of learning used in the MACR (inter alia input from teacher and colleagues, discussions, in small groups and in the plenary). They develop knowledge on their own and learn through mutual inspiration and understandings of specific problems. This way of "learning how to learn", being in the centre and experiencing that their contributed knowledge is accepted and valued, is applied to demonstrate and experience a way of learning that can be transferred to later interaction with children by consequently putting them at the centre, for them to experience such a learning and living surrounding (see e.g. Jelena, I: 47-52). [216]

In many seminars, teachers thus take on a role of a moderator- some student groups more than others appreciate this learning method, valuing other students' input as beneficial to developing new competencies. Feedback during the course of the MACR (jour fixes and meetings with mentors mainly- see field notes) tends towards demanding more input from teachers, as their knowledge is frequently deemed more valuable than that of fellow students or the added value of discussions. According to my research data and analysis this is levelled after having completed the programme, where the perspectives and opinions especially of those students coming from other disciplines and other geographical regions are prized highly (see above and several quotes from interviews, e.g. Lulu, I: 231-233[217] and Aziza, I: 428-430[218] ; essays). When asked about group work activities, a similar picture can be depicted: group work is valued higher after graduation than during the course. By having to engage in discussions and communicate with fellow students about particular problems or readings, it is assumed that communication competencies improve. Research partners do not refer to such an improvement, they mainly mentioned the value of the newly developed competency of being able to argue in favour of problem solutions or solutions to difficult situations with scientific backing (see e.g. Moritz, I: 312-317[219], Katerina, I: 25-26[220] and on communication patterns below).

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[216] *"And it was exactly what I expected because, ähm. Because I found here the staff… in very close and in partnership with students which in Romania …(is still) a power relationship with the students. And the students, we are talking about rights, children's rights but. We are students. We students are not being voiced. (…..) it's not about having our own arguments" (Jelena, I: 47-52).*

[217] *"…being active in the class- telling/sharing your opinion and I think I learned from that a lot very different from my experience I made in Macedonia in the uni" (Lulu, I: 231-233).*

[218] *"….and there I decided yeah I have a lot to share because I (..) am from the field but then when I, I just listened to the comments I said no they have* <u>more</u>*, I need to listen to gain more and so then I can really collaborate or share the knowledge that I have" (Aziza, I: 428-430).*

[219] *"..what was really important to me actually was what about is the all the texts that we for on the course I have them all on my computer and I use them now and then and that is why I think important to give all the exstudents with a cd with all the texts ordered in different categories ehm for the to use in later life because like when I talk to professionals about these topics- I usually underline my statement with: Oh, there is a nice text on ehm governmentality and children's playgrounds- do you want that I can send it to you" (Moritz, I:312-317)*

Conveying and delivering knowledge based on real-life problems is not only attitude forming, it also implies acquiring knowledge of a particular problematic situation and developing competencies to handle it. It is assumed that ways of searching and finding (theoretical) solutions to this specific situation can be analogously used for other, similar problems. The most promising way to find problem solutions is by opening and widening the view beyond one's own knowledge and learning from other disciplines to grasp the issue in an as encompassing manner as possible and come to a holistic conclusion from which action can be taken. Interdisciplinary learning processes are complex, and students must therefore be offered possibilities to develop skills and competencies necessary to become self-directed life-long and not least interdisciplinary learners (Stentoft, 2017:56).

An example of a problem that has been introduced and discussed in a seminar on children's work is the Bolivian Child and Youth Code (2014). Despite the two International Labour Organization Conventions no.138 and no.182 on Child Labour and the Worst Forms of Child Labour[221], in which minimum age for employed work is set at 14 years, it foresees, in exceptional cases with individual permission by state organs the right to engage in paid employment for children from age 12 under certain circumstances. These include the child's own will to work, the parents' permission, a health check, limited work time, no exploitative or dangerous work while ensuring the right to education, health etc. Children from 10 years of age may work on their own account. The argument is that children engage in work no matter what the law says, as the reality in many parts of the world requires children's (monetary) contribution to the family household income. By working illegally (in Bolivia before the new code entered into force) children are faced being exploited by their employers and criminalised by the police, in addition to the fact that they are working in the first place. The new law was developed in close cooperation with young working people and is being celebrated by the Bolivian community as a great step towards justice for the younger generation (Cussiánovich, 2017: 104-106). For Westerners, in particular members of the European Union, the new code breaks with children's rights and potentially opens doors to a life of children filled with hardship and work- as it is apparently very difficult to grasp the reality of life in Bolivia from a, say German or Dutch, or Polish view (see Liebel, 2015a). Although the regulations set out in this new code are difficult to employ as state organs and administration are not staffed or qualified to establish the necessary conditions and the process, there have been efforts in certain regions to alleviate the procedure of obtaining such a permit. The development and reception of the code as an example of a problem by which learning takes place is necessarily a combination of disciplinary understandings of the situation and its change:

- It is necessary to grasp the legal aspect and form of written codes.
- The sociological view on concepts of childhood(s) requires consideration.

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[220] *"I know writing and write what I want but then in the more scientific way I get more answers that I trust because they are written by scientists or ----" (Katerina, I: 25-26)*
[221] See: http://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm (accessed 18.1.2018)

- The question of "unwritten" rights- or rights in need of being codified has to be addressed and
- The international political stage, and also the dominant, global form of institutionalised schooling and its implications for children and youth in particular in the Global South are to be considered.[222]

A PBL approach to the delivery of an interdisciplinary, international master's in children's rights and childhood studies can be very fruitful, especially when the aim of studying the programme is to work in practice after graduation where real-world problems are waiting to be dealt with. In order to discuss real-world problems not only by analysing testimonies, reports, political action, case studies, but to bring first-hand, real, current and pressing problems to the classroom, teachers have the possibility of inviting guest lecturers working on such problems directly. These come either from other educational contexts (such as European partner universities or other universities in Germany), however, most frequently from organisations and other practical fields. Mainly, the guest lecturers give the students an insight into their work and give them information about the tools and ways of working with specific situations that are related to children and their rights.

Over the past years, e.g. a representative of the inclusive Freie Waldorfschule Kreuzberg-Berlin came to module 4's seminar on "Children's Right to Education" (see chapter 5.3.2.1.) to present the pedagogical concept of the school, describe its approach to inclusion[223] and give the students insight into everyday life at school. In the frame of the tutorial of module 5 "Children Out of Place" (see chapter 5.2.3.2.), in several years, a judge explained the problematic procedures of age determination and court decisions on the status of minor refugees. Excursions to organisations and institutions working with issues concerning children and their rights are also a regular (practical) component in the delivery of the MACR. Moreover, students have visited free schools as examples of educational surroundings which are "outside the box" of the public school curricula in Germany. Another exemplary excursion in the frame of module 6: "Children and Media" (see chapter 5.2.3.3.) has been a visit to the Unterhaltungssoftware Selbstkontrolle (USK) (entertainment software self-control) [224]. Here, computer games are tested, their content is evaluated to assess the suitability for children and youth and determine age thresholds for their use.

Students have emphasised the benefit of these excursions and guest lectures (see e.g. Julia, I: 212). [225] Not only is the input from different angles and fields of work important for a good learning experience, students must also engage actively in these activities drawing on their own prior experiences, and thus create their own learning processes (Hmelo- Silver, 2004).

Thus, connecting theory and practice is one major issue of the MACR, not only with the aim to get direct insight into practical fields (and problems) but also to demonstrate to students how they can apply and make use of their skills after graduation. Students and alumni urge a more hybrid type of knowledge and competence located somewhere at the

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[222] On the issue of institutionalised schooling and its scope of a global system of schooling see chapter 4.1.3.
[223] On intercultural and inclusive education see e.g. Gundara (2000); Portera (2008)
[224] http://www.usk.de/en/ (accessed 17.1.2018)
[225] "*I really liked the guest lecturers- that was really uplifting" (Julia, I: 212).*

boundary between theory and practice. The meeting of practitioners and intellectual scholars is an encounter between two different kinds of knowledge and an invitation to overcome the still often prevalent binary opposition between academic and practical knowledge. The image of intellectual scholars and researchers in their "ivory tower" is still prevalent, even though "evidence-based" knowledge based on real, practical issues is on the rise. Several academics, who work on real problems often feel they should reverse this trend and draw back from practice, producing knowledge on a higher theoretical, abstract level. In particular concerning the question how policy can be influenced by research, there have been voices that call for a (semi) withdrawal of academia from such practice-oriented research, as often research in the field is overshadowed by interests of the practitioners the research is done for who may not take the research into account at all if results do not serve their purposes, or the results of the study are set before research has been completed and need only be corroborated by the researcher, which can lead to a self-censorship within research (Vandenhole, 2018). In the interdisciplinary field of children's rights, with an orientation towards practice, the ivory tower is shrinking nonetheless.

Despite the recognition of academics and practitioners of the need for higher reflexivity, genuine dialogue between different disciplines and between theory and practice remains difficult to establish and in the setting of an interdisciplinary and international study programme it is up to the students to integrate them.

9.2. Communication and Atmosphere within the Group (Group Dynamics)

In such diverse groups as the student groups in the MACR, the different ways of communication are at times not easy to integrate. This can lead to a discomforting atmosphere within the group. It is the task of the group and the teachers to overcome these obstacles. Communication patterns describe the flow of information within the group and they are typically described as either centralised or decentralised. With a centralised pattern, communications tend to flow from one source to all group members. Centralised communications allow consistent, standardised information but they may restrict the free flow of information (input given by the teacher, or one student taking all the space for communicating his or her thought). Decentralised communications make it easier to share information directly between group members. When decentralised, communications tend to flow more freely, but the delivery of information may not be as fast or accurate as with centralised communications (e.g. Andrews, 1985; Hazel, Keaten, & Kelly, 2014, Scherer & Scherer, 1981). A graduate describes how she judged the quality of her fellow students' speech. She admits that she was judgemental about students being disrespectful towards fellow students and teachers on account of their questioning and interrupting other's commentaries and explanations, and she concludes that these must have roots in cultural differences. "I tried to learn to be more tolerant. And I also learned that people sometimes think and speak at the same time" (Branka, I: 144-145). Branka's impression, however, remained and she started reflecting that this way of learning must perhaps be understood more as forming through thinking and talking and living children's rights. The salience of the team's culture relative to the members' respective local cultures (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002) leads to important re-

search questions related to how members negotiate their personality, expression, norms and cues between cultural contexts.

Time orientation, for example, has been linked to cultural differences and personality (Todd, 2009), and such differences may be reflected in team-relevant behaviours associated with deadlines and multi-tasking (Voorveld et.al. 2014). Even a seemingly simple issue of how to provide feedback to teammates can become fraught if the wrong situational cues are applied (Diamant, Fussell, & Lo, 2008; Ruhleder & Jordan, 2001 in Liu et.al., 2015: 563). Abiding by time rules and regulations is an important topic for the students. Many students who drop in late for classes AND have not prepared the required readings yet want to give input just as the other students are felt to be disrespectful and bothersome by those students who are punctual and have prepared the readings and tasks (field note, teachers' meeting). Several research partners mentioned this disturbing fact during interviews, and the topic is also found frequently in individual course evaluations (see main evaluation of several years[226], in jour fixe meetings and several interviews: Branka, Tobias, Lisa). At the same time, the well-prepared and punctual students are those who submit examination papers and other tasks on time, where others either ask for an extension or simply submit papers late. This can lead to resentment and can disrupt the group cohesion and harmony. Not all students are affected in the same way- there are always several students who stay out of these kinds of conflicts and concentrate on their own needs and tasks.

„ ... The consequences (for submitting papers late) were very random (...) if you were stressed to complete something, and those who didn't manage in time, then that wasn't such a problem either if they submitted later- whereas I <u>never</u> had the impression that something is missing for me and that I had an advantage so (that wasn't a problem). But I know that that took up a lot of space (during discussions) over and over again- what happens if I don't submit in time, etc." (Lisa, I: 309-314).[227]

9.3. Assessment Forms and Style

Another issue in an international student group, besides perceptions of time abidance, are the actual forms and methods of assessing student's study performance as they are highly diverse across academic cultures and academic programmes. A good overview of advantages and disadvantages of certain assessment forms and student's evaluation of these is given by members of the CREAN network from Universitatea Babes-Bolayi, Cluj-Napoca, Romania (Iovu & Roth, 2017). They found out, that, interestingly, students appreciate writing essays as examination the most, even though they achieve the lowest grades for this form of assessing their learning performance. Open question centralised tests at university are according to the students the least valuable for their learning progress, albeit they re-

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[226] The questionnaire can be found in the annex (no.7).

[227] *„ ....sehr wechselhafte Konsequenz ehm – wenn man z.B. Stress hat um irgendwas fertig zu kriegen und die die es nicht fertig hatten dann war das irgendwie auch nicht schlimm war wenn sie es später abgegeben haben- wobei ich <u>nie</u> den Eindruck hatte- mir fehlt irgendwas und ich einen Vorteil hatte von dem her aber ich weiß aber dass es viel Raum immer wieder eingenommen hat, immer wieder. Ehm, so wann, bis wann soll was einge- reicht werden- und was wenn nicht.." (Lisa, I: 309-314)*

ceive the highest scores here. Working with an unfamiliar exam format can be challenging and it may require considerable motivation and endurance to succeed. Hardly any student at FUB withdrew from the course or did not pass all exams eventually. This clearly demonstrates the motivation to complete the programme and learning as much as possible in the one and a half years of studying (whereas most students extend their studies by one semester).

At FUB/University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, instead of learning for a specific temporary time which ends with the completion of centralised exams, students must fulfil three tasks to successfully pass the individual modules: It is mandatory to attend classes. Students must participate actively by discussing, being prepared, giving a presentation as the introduction to a theme of their choice which is related to the respective module and they conclude the modules with a final assessment by writing a paper of approximately 5,000 (FUB)/7,000 (Potsdam) words on a topic of their choice related to the seminar for which they are writing the paper. Only the module paper is graded. Most research partners who have studied in a different university system recall this being a challenging experience. To write an individual paper on a topic of choice and abide by the structure of such an academic approach of clearly analysing a topic, having clear text structures and a transparent dealing with sources and references is new and often not easy to master (Sachverständigenrat, 2017: 22).

In the first years, group work was not yet used to the extent it has been in more recent years. In the first years of the MACR, it was mandatory to give three presentations every semester (one in each module) as a form of active participation, which is one part of the student performance assessment. With nearly 20-30 students, much time in seminars was spent on listening to presentations. Even though in the third year the number of the "loads and loads" of presentations (Moritz, Interview: 83-86)[228] was cut to one presentation per semester, there are still programme participants who deny student colleagues' competencies to deliver "…..real input. I don't really remember anything from the presentations that I was exposed to by my colleagues because it was just like the activity of giving presentations" (Aziza, I: 276-279). In addition, students often do not abide by the timing of seven to ten minutes of introducing a theme and teachers often do not interrupt the flow of speech. Due to this, a certain reluctance towards the presentations is expressed by several students (field notes, jour fixes). Other students state that the quality of presentations varies a lot, i.e. not all experienced them as a "waste of time" but as a possibility to learn from peers. The coordination team has repeatedly suggested that students send a structure of their presentation to the lecturer in advance (field notes, several teachers' meetings). In order to counteract the laissez-faire way of dealing with the presentations, students have suggested that teachers give (detailed) feedback and if students write their module papers with them, the form, style and professionality of the presentation should be considered in the grading of the paper (field notes).

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[228] *"I think we didn't do much teamwork if I remember correctly in the first year- I think that was introduced later, too- I remember we had to do loads and loads of presentations, papers and I think you also went down with the presentations and they well all individual perspective" (Moritz, Interview: 83-86).*

Also, the first groups were not as international as the more recent groups making intercultural teamwork rare. As groups grew to be more international and teaching methods were changed, group work in an international and intercultural setting became a regular activity.

> *".....I felt learning from the whole group- but also in smaller group teams- I always used to learn something from it- nothing concrete about topics- it was on the way the person thinks – that this person brings into the discussion or the different experience that this person brings, which is a totally new experience for me" (Lulu, I: 218-222).*

Students have made suggestions to introduce varying forms of examinations instead of completing presentations, attending class regularly and most importantly writing a module paper. Ideas varied from adding at least one central test with open questions to topics treated in the seminars- this proposal came from international students, some German students agreed to this idea.[229] In order to introduce other assessment forms besides the presentation and papers, a recent suggestion has been to keep a reflective research journal following a specific question of the seminar/module. Additionally, there have been suggestions for students to write comments for example on specific General Comments to the CRC. Another consideration has been to ask students to prepare short essays in between the two seminar blocks as follow up of the first and preparation for the second block. These could be interesting possibilities to introduce other forms of testing knowledge acquisition and academic performance, they have however not yet been applied.

One issue that has not been mentioned too often, yet merits space here as it is an observation that is not only true to the MACR but to many university programmes that apply individual homework/writing of papers as an assessment form is the possible and very real subjective grading. Although the MACR has guidelines for the teachers for the assessment of module papers and the MA Thesis (that are also known by the students)[230] these can still be evaluated differently from teacher to teacher. In standardised tests, students are measured by exactly the same criteria- notwithstanding that the difficulty of the tests is of course subjective to the teachers, also.

Nonetheless, one research partner claimed:

> *"...regarding content of the topic – there are no certain like criteria. Because it was mentioned or it was raised by several students in this year that ehm, that assessment is mainly subjective? That eh, they were, that they are sure that if this paper was corrected by a different, ah, a teacher, I will receive a <u>higher</u> grade" (Aziza, I: 473-476).*

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[229] The MACR team did not take up this suggestion, as with such a field of democracy/tolerance, standardised tests do not seem to be constructive for forming human rights attitudes. Nonetheless there have been negotiations to grade presentations as part of the overall module grade.

[230] The guidelines for the assessment of written papers in the MACR can be found in the annex (no.6)

9.4. Making Use of Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning

The need for epistemological, conceptual and methodological resources for the implementation of interdisciplinarity is apparent. Both lecturers in their teaching methods when delivering content and students as the integrative body for disciplinary knowledge need a secured approach to these resources. However, there are also obstacles in the delivery, perception and acquisition of interdisciplinarity from both angles. "The constant change of disciplines, teachings, methods and teachers can certainly seem intimidating, but will enable the students to discover another learning atmosphere, characterized by the variety of courses but also by the presence of students coming from a broad spectrum, of disciplines and geographical regions of the world" (draft for CREAN handbook).

It does not suffice, however, for a holistic learning experience to juxtapose disciplinary knowledge and foster exchange. If interdisciplinary teaching and learning is taken seriously, scholars, in this case the teachers, from different disciplines should get together in a joint endeavour to convey the interdisciplinary content in childhood studies and children's rights. To exchange approaches and teaching methods as well as content of modules and classes within the MACR, regular teachers' meetings take place in which the lecturers engage in evaluating and cross-referencing their own classes to other modules and discuss how to mutually benefit from disciplinary knowledge from one another and take on a role of facilitator not only in one's own but also others' disciplines (see field notes, teacher's meetings). Even though attendance of these meeting varies as some lecturers do not take the necessary time, most understand the importance of the issue and attempt to include the approach in their seminars. With the move of the MACR from FUB to University of Applied Sciences, Potsdam, the MACR team (coordination, teachers, directors, advisory committee) has made a significant step towards new interdisciplinary insights through an intensification of teacher's cooperation across disciplines and a mutual understanding of a main theoretical backing of the programme (see chapter 4). Rights philosophical questions which transcend the master are to be approached with a similar value system, albeit in different disciplines.

This -necessary- interdisciplinary learning in children's rights is one essential element for students and graduates to make successful use of the competencies achieved in the master's. Teaching, even though there is some cross-referencing between disciplines, is still mostly informed by the lecturer's background in his or her discipline (sociology, political science, anthropology, research methods, pedagogy, law amongst others). By engaging in teaching in an interdisciplinary master's programme, first steps toward interdisciplinary teaching are made, however, it is up to the new generation of child rights scholars who have integrated the disciplines in their learning who will be the personalities to go on this cross-disciplinary voyage.

It seems that for the students (in Berlin/Potsdam) the interdisciplinarity of the MACR is manifested not only in the lecturers' approaches and input to childhood and children's rights but even more so in the composition of the student groups and them sharing their own disciplinal knowledge. Opinions, views, perspectives that are informed by students' disciplinary backgrounds are essential for the learning process and for critical reflection of

(traditional) beliefs and values. Mostly unquestioned concepts are deconstructed by the interdisciplinary, international, intercultural and inclusive framework of the MACR. Not only do the teachers deliver content, being a student has become a learning act of paying particular attention to experiential learning to develop competencies not only by listening to input or learning content. As key factors to assess the learning progress students have made on completion of the master's, importance is placed on the extent of students' knowledge on completion of their education rather than on formal grades (DeZure, 2012). In all this, everybody participating in class engages and learns something new, even if it is only e.g. one very detailed and minor shift in the accentuation of a theory, or the inclusion of a small aspect in thinking and critically reflecting a problem at hand.

> *"I think I have never experienced that before because (...) this is right and it can be only right or this is wrong – white or black so you only see the one perspective – maybe the sun shines- maybe it will be grey- (...) this is what I experienced in the master is learning skills ehm were very important to me and I think this is what I still use- and I always eh come to the moment when I discuss any issue with people – doesn't have to be on CR: You can't like that if there is one way or thinking- it has to be either like that or like that I think it's for me still difficult to argue about rights and wrongs but on the other hand I am sure in a way I am happy that I learned it can be only another opinion" (Lulu, I: 237-248).*

Not only do students learn disciplinary content from lecturers and practice-oriented skills from practitioners who are regularly invited to give insight into their fields of work. Ideally, students integrate these competencies into a complex, holistic body of interdisciplinary knowledge. Teachers themselves also confirm having learned from the students in the classroom as well as in reading assignments, finding themselves being pulled out of their own (solid) theoretical knowledge and research on specific topics, which is also often still challenged only rudimentarily.

> *"...before joining the EMCR I completed a Master in Economics. Thus, I was very familiar with arguing from the rational, economic point of view. The EMCR opened a different perspective for me – arguing and thinking from a sociologist perspective acknowledging that it is not only about the "objective, rational cost benefit" but how to take various social and human factors into account. This has broadened my perspective" (Nora, Essay: 4-11).*

Having said this, with demands and intentions for interdisciplinary education made explicit, it is necessary to consider how pedagogy may be adapted to bring these intentions into practice. If it is true that "it is almost impossible to conceive of a future where learning at the intersections and boundaries of disciplines is not considered a key competency for university graduates" (Stentoft, 2017: 58), the importance and value of having read an interdisciplinary master's programme in children's rights and childhood studies must be recognised by future employers as evidence of key skills when hiring a graduate with such a degree. Even though the following assumption is based mainly on random observations and information that has come without me being in search of it, it can be clearly seen, that a qualification in this interdisciplinary field is becoming more and more accepted, valued

and asked for by employers (see e.g. statements of Aziza, Zara, John, Sabrina). This is also manifested in the amount of new job positions in the field of children's rights that are specifically tailored to holders of a higher degree.[231] A reason for this rise in jobs in the field is surely and undeniably the number of refugee children who have come to Germany over the past three years and the obvious need for action towards improving their situation amongst others by working towards implementing their rights and approaching them with an attitude based not only on set concepts of what children may need to become "happy" again and to give them back their "lost" childhood and integrate them into society, but with a critical reflective approach. Without a doubt the interdisciplinary knowledge and critical, holistic competencies and team-working skills in a (possibly) international environment of highly qualified child rights experts will become known and widely accepted and lead to more job profiles tailored to such a qualification. In the first years the graduates struggled to have their degree recognised; in the meantime, child rights expertise and critical approaches to the field are highly valued competencies in particular in NGO work. Last, but not least, to make the learning experience a truly international and interdisciplinary one, the diversity of teachers and their international and interdisciplinary research is of utmost importance.

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[231] see e.g. Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk, where four positions for child rights coordination and children's rights an media have opened recently or Save the Children, Germany: https://www.savethechildren.de/wer-wir-sind/jobs/ (accessed 26.5.2017).

Chapter 10 – Competencies

In more recent sociological discussions, the difficulty of grasping the broadband term "competence" or "competency" requires some consideration. Competencies are being named in their relation to knowledge acquisition and qualification as well as learning (for and about something) and are frequently used to describe all of them in a "one covers all" manner (Pfadenhauer, 2010: 149; Schützeichel, 2010). To approximate an integrative and inclusive understanding of the term, this chapter is dedicated to the complex topic of competencies with reference to their nature and the process in which students develop these during the MACR. As such, the objective of this chapter is to analyse, discuss and interpret what knowledge and expertise students attain. Core processes of learning and developing competencies occur in several areas and different contexts. Knowledge acquisition and construction of knowledge result by working through learning resources, which are connected with the inclusion of new professional work experiences made in the learning process. Transformation of knowledge forms an equally significant factor for the development of competencies and is characterised inter alia by writing one's own discussion papers and applying as well as integrating theoretical knowledge in professional practice etc. Reflection on the learning process is indispensable to evidence skills and competencies learned, which then allows theories to be critically commented and assessed (Herget, Mader & Krems, 2010: 61). On the one hand, in this chapter, I will refer to the learning objectives of the modules listed in chapter 5 and demonstrate as well as reflect whether and how the envisaged competencies have been achieved. On the other hand, I will discuss additional competencies that have been revealed while analysing the research data I collected over the past ten years (see chapter 6.2.4.).

As a theoretical framing, I follow Pierre Bourdieu's definition of theoretical knowledge or competencies, qualification and the acquisition of social skills and awareness, as well as changes in attitude as a form of *reflexive knowledge* compared to *practical competencies*. Practical know-how is internalised knowledge or competency which can be retrieved at any time without having to be reflected as it has been incorporated in a person's habitus.[232] (Shirato, 2002: 258). Reflexive knowledge, on the other hand, is continuously working against a person's habitus, as it challenges solidly memorised evaluations of the external world (i.e. attitudes) and is in constant breach with limitations of the habitus' narrowness (ibd.: 260).

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[232] "Bourdieu writes that habitus is expressed through durable ways "of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking" (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 70). He continues to argue that "habitus becomes active in relation to a field, and the same habitus can lead to very different practices and stances depending on the state of the field" (Bourdieu (1990b, p. 116 in Reay, 2004: 432). For a more detailed critical discussion of Bourdieu's notion of habitus, refer e.g. to Diane Reay (2004): It's all becoming a habitus: Beyond the habitual use of habitus in educational research in: *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 25, No. 4, September 2004: 431-444.

I argue that in the MACR both forms of competencies are acquired, which respectively lead to:

Theoretical, reflexive knowledge (reflections of one's own positions based on theories and studies in children rights and childhood) leading to:
- Change in beliefs, values and attitudes concerning children and their rights and obligations.
- Increased self-esteem and self-value.
- Recognition of children's competencies and children's agency.
- Respect in interactions with children and general surroundings.

And lead to:

Tacit knowledge and practical competencies (for different fields of work) enabling students and graduates to:

- Work directly with children and young people (in teaching mainly, but also e.g. in empowerment projects).
- Advocate for and with children and young people for their rights.
- Do participatory research with children and young people and enable child-led research.
- Acquire scientific writing skills and teaching methods.

Both the theoretical knowledge and the practical qualification enable MACR students to stand up against social injustice and contribute to higher levels of tolerance (in general), to holding up (and/or reviving) democratic structures and advancing (children's) human rights.

In the data analysis process, I first deducted the research partners' reports of change they have undergone during the MACR concerning their understanding of childhood, children and their human rights. This was followed by the research partners' appraisals of the main competencies achieved during the MACR and their application in practice. The most important shift research partners agree to have experienced is a change in their personal and professional attitude towards children based both on reflexive and practical competencies they have developed in the master's. This is reflected, for example, by Daniela's statement, in which she claims that the manner of conveying knowledge in the MACR, namely in a "respectful and passionate way" and the low hierarchies in "teacher/student-relationship have strongly influenced my approach to my students" (Daniela, E: 27-29). Likewise, Tobias values "…being in contact, to speak with the teachers at eye level, that has- I am not sure whether I can call this a 'skill', that has allowed me to develop self-efficacy" (Tobias, I: 253-

255).[233] The experience of learning in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance as well as acknowledgement of different opinions and their worth, and the opportunity to be in direct contact with the lecturers compared to other broader study programmes where professors are inaccessible due to the large number of students, allows for students to understand the importance such a learning environment has for the development of practical skills based on reflexive knowledge. As a second step in this chapter, I reflect on the change in attitudes and re-think the research partners' altered system of affective reactions based on the reflexive knowledge they acquired in the master's:

> *"Maybe the most important impact the MA had on my professional and also personal life is a shift and change in how I perceive the world. I have gained a new perspective which is looking at social, economic and cultural issues from a Child Rights perspective. A perspective which I never had before or never thought of and which has now become a constant point of view when looking, analysing and acting in life" (Didier, E: 16-18).*

Didier describes how he positions himself in his surroundings and the world in general. He had not expected to take a child rights perspective to all areas after the master's, including economic and cultural fields that seem(ed) more remote to children's rights.

That said, I will begin by discussing the theoretical knowledge which triggers a change of value systems and attitudes in the students.

10. 1. Theory-Based Competencies- Reflexive Knowledge

The theoretical competencies students develop during their study of the MACR can be seen as the ultimate of forming their (children's) human rights thinking. "Thinking human rights" is a new quality for many students. As a starting point to demonstrate how students experience and assess the value of the theories they are introduced to in the master's I will lend voice to one of the research partners:

> *"The theories that inspire me most are the construction of childhood, the approaches to child poverty and social injustice from children´s perspectives, children´s agency, the scholarisation theories, intersectional approaches to structure and agency, children as researchers" (Daniela, E: 30-34).*

Taking up Daniela's quote, the first section of this chapter gives an account of the theory-based competencies, the (new) reflexive knowledge the graduates have gained in the MACR and the transformed view of childhood, children and their rights (see also 8.2.). The knowledge of understanding childhood as a concept, as a social construct that has been conceived in the confines of the North Western on-going historical belief system we live in (e.g. James & Prout, 1997; Qvortrup, 1993; Boyden, 1997; Gaitán, L. 2014; Morrow & Pells,

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[233] „...überhaupt Kontakt zu haben auf Augenhöhe mit den Dozenten reden zu können, das hat mir- ich weiß nicht ob ich das jetzt einen 'skill' nennen soll, das hat mir viel Selbstwirksamkeit gegeben, so" (Tobias, I: 253-255). On self-efficacy see 10.1.1.3., below.

2017; Montgomery, 2017), is one of the competencies to be achieved in module 1 of the MACR (see chapter 4 and 5). Students are introduced to theoretical concepts and develop an understanding of them. In particular for students who have a background in inter alia natural sciences or business, medicine or journalism, these new approaches and perspectives "…open a different perspective for arguing and thinking from a sociological perspective acknowledging that it is not only about the 'objective, rational cost benefit' (…) understanding, acknowledging and being able to use this insight (that) has helped me in various situations" (Nora, E: 6-12).

However, the usefulness of such "intangible" approaches, such reflexive knowledge seems unclear in the beginning of several graduates' post-MACR career: "this theoretical background, regarding childhood studies and this system and this sociology part, it was fine I gained a lot of information about it but, ah, ahm, I don't know really how to <u>use</u> it" (Aziza, I: 285-287). Generally, our deeply rooted belief system and the resulting attitudes we have are not questioned on a daily basis. In the MACR (in module 1 and others, see 5.2.2.), students are encouraged to reflect their behaviour within this system. Having been sensitised regarding set social belief structures and having reflected upon these, students can make use of them. I will take up the value the research partners place on the theoretical knowledge they gain in the following subchapter, discussing beliefs, values and attitudes and how they undergo change.

10.1.1. Beliefs, Values, (Self) Value, Attitudes and Attitude Change

The analysis of the interviews and essays revealed that with the introduction to childhood and children's rights theories, many students' long-standing thought patterns are challenged, their value and belief systems are shaken, leading them to a change in their attitudes. Beliefs as well as individual value systems have been widely discussed in the mid-1960s, with a peak during the mid-end 1970s to early 1990s, most of which draws from Rokeach's theory of change in value systems (Rokeach, 1968, 1979; Williams Jr., 1979; Kamakura & Mazzon, 1991). Since then, not many scholars have dedicated research to this complex topic. In this study, a belief is understood both as value and attitude and as personal knowledge, experiences, opinions, prejudices, morals and other interpretive perceptions of the social world. All these factors are influenced by social interactions and institutions, as well as cultural and religious affiliations.[234] The first main component of a belief about something (values) is understood as the importance we put on ourselves (self-value) or another person, thing or idea (Saldaña, 2016). An attitude, in contrast, is the product of meaningful evaluations of the external world (Bodenhausen & Grawonski, 2013: 1). Accordingly, attitudes and their proneness to change are akin to their manifestations. People have implicit attitudes that endure, stable memory structures, which are difficult to change. Others have more malleable attitudes, which can be changed much more easily. Such changes,

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[234] I discuss the issue of membership within a specific group to enhance certain attitudes and beliefs in chapter 11.1., in the framework of defining the student's "sense of belonging" to the larger child rights community.

however, do not happen without strong and convincing factors and influences (Bodenhausen & Grawonski, 2013: 4). It is assumed here that the MACR has such an influence on its participants.[235]

> *"Attitudes are part of a relatively enduring system of evaluative, affective reactions based upon and reflecting evaluative concepts or beliefs, which have been learned" (Shaw & Wright 1967: 3, in Saldaña 2016: 132).*

Attitudes and attitude changes have been a subject of research mainly in psychology and more recently especially in social psychology (Bohner & Dickel, 2010). For better understanding, I will deal with specific determinants of how attitudes and processes of change in attitudes have been explained. Herbert C. Kelman has placed himself at the centre of scientific discussions on such processes by introducing three forms of attitude change already in 1958 on which further analysis over the following years has been built (Kelman, 1958).

1. *Superficial attitude changes* that are only enacted as lip-service towards the social surroundings in which the change has taken place. Not surprisingly, this attitude change is not enduring and is easily adapted to new surroundings and contexts. Or processes of attitude change can occur in compliance with society and in particular with the players and subject of the respective field a person is working or living in. The objective of this attitude change is "to achieve a favourable reaction from another person or group" (ibd: 53), i.e. being accepted by others is the incentive to change the attitude (which is, however, only superficial).

2. *Longer lasting attitude changes* on the other hand are manifested in a wide range of situations and are integrated in a person's value system (ibd: 51). The argument is that attitudes can change by identification with the respective field that triggered the change in the first place. In this context, the desire to "establish or maintain a satisfying self-defining relationship to another person or group" (ibd: 54.) is the driving force.

3. *Internalised attitude changes* are characterised by persons identifying and internalising newly introduced beliefs and behaviour patterns leading to an enduring and lasting approach to "the way we think and feel about ourselves, another person, or thing" (Shaw & Wright, 1967: 3).

With reference to the MACR students, we can observe that the acceptance of the MACR content and learning is, or can be, intrinsically rewarding and is congruent with the person's (changed) value system and system of understanding some problems connected with values in different societies and cultures. This form of attitude change is the most useful for

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[235] Similar to research on value systems and their change, there has not been much research with respect to attitude changes. I believe, in particular in the frame of human rights qualifications, value and attitude changes in society are significantly important to enable social change- therefore, in my opinion, researchers in the field of (children's) human rights should be apt to take up and re-vive research on value and belief systems as well as attitude changes.

problem-solving as it is part of genuine reflection processes concerning practical actions that are suited to the person's respective needs. Attitudes that have changed in a process of compliance are characterised by being enacted only under surveillance of other players in the area concerned, whereas identification with the subject or field in which the attitude change has taken place is performed only under conditions of salience. The most genuine changes occur when new belief systems and behavioural patterns that are based on long-lasting value systems are challenged. Consequentially, an internalisation of the new value system occurs, resulting in "living" the new attitude under any condition of relevance regardless of being observed or finding oneself in salient situations (Kelman, 1958: 54; Rokeach, 1979). Assuming that the research partners' claims made during the interviews and in the written essays can be taken (almost) at face value, the change they have undergone in the MACR is genuine. However, I am aware that some research partners may have expressed such a genuine attitude change to "comfort" me in my hypothesis that this change has actually occurred. Whereas most research partners have referred to their claims in their descriptions of their post-MACR professional activities, which clearly reflect such changes. Bodenhausen & Grawonski (2013: 4) detect further forms of attitude, reasoning that they can be a provision of means for connecting with others, a means of self-expression, maintenance (or enhancement) of self-esteem (see e.g. Femi, John below). Attitudes can also change e.g. through learning (and or social circumstances and influence) (Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953). Learning and manners of knowledge acquisition are diverse: They can be propositional on the one hand (Hirose, 1992), in contrast to learning through conditioning or manipulation on the other (Kaiser, 2010; chapter 9.1.), i.e. they can provoke either thoughtful (conscious) changes or thoughtless and unconscious changes in attitude (Chaiken et al., 1989; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The teachers (or facilitators) of the MACR are the persons who give the first impulse for a change in attitude, therefore great responsibility lies on them (Bodenhausen, 2013: 7).

> *"...what I can say is it really really depends on the intentions of the teachers I think and it's really important to have good teachers and I think you (the MACR) do have good teachers but I don't know the new ones I must say- but then, in the first year they were all really good (...) well anyway, I think it's really important to have teachers with the right incentives"* (Moritz, I: 329-334).

Moritz confirms that teachers and facilitators of the seminars and their attitude and intentions to be on the course are most important for a true learning experience- teachers, and other persons of reference, must live an attitude that students are to develop with such integrity that the learning process becomes most fruitful and lasting.

In the MACR, the theoretical input given by the lecturers, the discussions and classroom debates as well as the atmosphere in the classroom and beyond are convincing factors to evoke change. The literature and readings for the seminars and papers, the analysis of (practical) case studies as a form of problem-based learning makes assumptions and theories of children's rights and childhood explicit (see Stentoft, 2017; chapter 9.1.2.). The reflexive knowledge gained in the MACR is e.g. used in students' own research with, on and about children. While planning, conducting and following up on the process, children are involved and are met as equals (see competency to be achieved in module 3: chapter 5.2.2.).

Closely related to attitude changes and altering value systems is an unmasking of solidified beliefs and their challenging critical reflection.

> *"No discussion about children and childhood is ever identical to the lived reality, but is always fil-tered by the views and value systems of those who speak about children and childhood" (Liebel, 2017b: 11, own translation).*

Deducted from the research data, generally speaking, MACR students and graduates be-lieve they have undergone a change in their view of children. And mainly, they see a differ-ence in their relation to children after having read the MACR. They no longer understand childhood only as a (significant) phase in life for learning, protection and development; they likewise understand that childhood and children's rights are (also) socially made con-structs (see chapter 8.2. and above). Students also discuss such concepts of childhood and contrast them with their beliefs about social relations between generations. Some students found their implicit beliefs confirmed, others "....started to think about childhood as social-ly constructed, and children as a social group..." through the master's (quote from online survey).

10.1.2. Increase in Self-Value (Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy)

> *"The programme had a positive effect on my self-confidence" (online survey).*

Contextualising the definition of self-value (Saldaña, 2016), as argued in the introduction to this chapter, with the expressions and statements of the research partners, we can make out the significance students place on themselves and others. "Socially it has boosted my self-esteem, confidence, self-love and respect from others in the form of recognition, success, and admiration" (Femi, E: 5-6). As per Kelman's definition of attitude change (1958, above), by experiencing favourable reactions of other persons one would assume that the change Femi has experienced is not as enduring as other changes, which are independent of other persons' or groups' opinions. Nonetheless, Femi expresses an increased respect for herself as a person and her qualification in her surroundings since she graduated from the MACR due to the reflexive and practical knowledge she developed about children and their rights that she now uses in her work. This pride in being respected by others due to competencies developed in the MACR is implicitly mentioned by other research partners, too, even though with reference to different circumstances (e.g. Tobias, Moritz, John, Aziza). For Az-iza, it is the fact that the degree she holds has a significant impact on her being hired for the job she is working in which creates a sense of pride for the successful graduation from the master's and her research done.

> *"....after I got appointed* (job at UNICEF), *my direct supervisor informed me that holding an MA in this field (children's rights) was a vital factor in the panel's decision and that gave a credit compared to other candidates who were interviewed, especially that my MA thesis was assessing the detention cen-ter facilities and their human resources and how to improve their conditions" (Aziza, E: 34-38; see also: 47-53).*

Not only do graduates experience appreciation of their qualification and take pride in their newly developed knowledge, they have also learned to give credit to other people's achievements, views, perspectives and opinions. Valuing other people, accepting and respecting other opinions and theoretical approaches to specific topics concerning children's rights, which had not been questioned before, arise and are manifested over the course of the master's. The increased value attributed to new and previously unknown approaches leads to open-mindedness and acceptance of others' perspectives and approaches as a first ingredient for possible (more enduring) changes in attitude and an increase in personal knowledge. The experience of studying the master's with the specific heterogeneous group and lecturers from different disciplines, enables overcoming prejudices and stereotypes, and triggers change in moral values and attitudes as well as other interpretive perceptions of the (outer, external) social world.[236]

10.1.3. Understanding Children's Competencies, Agency and Participation Correlative to their (Paternalist) Protection

In chapter 7, I have recapitulated students' motivation to study the master programme, understanding their motivation and expectation towards the programme as the "initial condition" of the second stage of this study, after having developed the curriculum and established the MACR in the first stage. In chapter 8.2., I have reflected on the general understanding of childhood and children's rights students have with reference to the exercise of estimating understandings of childhood and children's rights at the beginning and at the end of the master's, with a focus on the original belief and thought patterns of students when enrolling in the programme. In order to grasp the process of changing views and belief patterns, I have started this chapter with general assumptions on attitude change and the transformation of values and beliefs. In this sub-chapter I will review changes (in attitude) the students have undergone, focusing on the "outcome" of having read the MACR. In line with the overall heading to this chapter "theory-based competencies- reflexive knowledge" (10.1.), I emphasise the theoretical knowledge students have gained considering several research partners' assessment of the benefit the theoretical backing of the master has given them.

The concept of children's competencies and their agency is key to the transformation of understanding what childhood(s) and children's rights are and what they (can) entail or what they do not entail. Recognising and acknowledging children's (special) competencies is described here as a consequence of the learning process undergone in the MACR. Considering dignity, the core determinant and basis for all human rights, hence also children's rights (see chapter 4.3.1. and chapter 5.2.2.) and having been sensitised about paternalist and adultist behaviour and approaches to children (and other socially marginalised or vulnerable groups) evokes a certitude for respectful interaction not only with children, but others

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[236] On the interdisciplinarity of the MACR and the task of students to make the course a true interdisciplinary learning experience, see e.g. Hirschi & Volonakis, 2014 and chapter 9.

in the graduates' surroundings. The previously discussed interdisciplinary learning experience and acceptance as well as appreciation of many views moving beyond the traditional black vs. white or right vs. wrong of issues, actions, policies, behaviours, views and opinions, conjures a general respectful attitude guided by tolerance and respect.

Having said this, a tentative generalisation deducted from the information given in the interviews, essays and the survey is that most graduates feel a shift has taken place from viewing children mainly as dependents of adults and in need of (paternalist) protection to an understanding of children's strengths and powers as well as their agency, under the premise that these are acknowledged and respected by other members of society. Whether this change is long lasting, enduring and has been evoked by a process of internalisation is shown in the descriptions of the behaviour of research partners towards children (e.g. Nora, Lulu, Daniela, Didier).[237] This behaviour is related to the concept of children's agency as demonstrative for children's competencies, and reflect on the interrelatedness between children's paternalist protection, understood here as preventive measures against children harming themselves (Claasen, 2014), and children's participation.

> *"I had this really developmental attitude to children. So that is how I went through the school system. That's how it all functions (....) I don't have to mention school, because school was a completely unparticipative institution. Teacher was always right and so on and so forth"* (Branka, I: 199-203).

Participation is a matter of daily life, beyond any kind of pedagogical or legal considerations. As social beings, people of all ages participate in social life at any given time. The notion of children's agency, their participation rather than their paternalist protection, has formed the basis of sociological studies in childhood since the late 1980s and early 1990s (see chapters 3.2. and 4.2.2.) and is still key to theoretical thoughts about childhood (and children's rights) today. How do students view the concept of agency? In final evaluations (chapter 8) and in several interviews and essays, graduates express having a theoretical idea of the concept of agency (understood as children's active – and autonomous - participation) and that, again theoretically, it is the best rights-based approach to children to ameliorate their situation by forming their lived realities in adult- guided yet self-led activities, moving away from a top-down approach to taking a bottom-up approach between children and adults based on mutual agreement. Research partners have revealed different facets of dealing with this new (reflexive) knowledge:

Marlies states that the programme has "enabled (her) a change of perspectives. No matter in which area (she) works, (she) judge(s) differently and tries not to "decide for people" but

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[237] I am aware that by solely analysing the material here, it is hardly possible to determine whether this change is a consequence of studying the MACR. Other factors may also play a role for graduates' perception of having undergone change in the 1.5 years and subsequent years of professional working. Due to the intangible nature of such competencies concerning value, tolerance and respect (Hirseland et.al., 2004), I have to rely on the categorised statements of the research partners and my interpretation of them.

to work with the people, to empower" (Marlies, E: 34-37).[238] Many students, however, also express the difficulties they have in imagining how "to live children's agency in reality (in the real) world" (student comment at final evaluation day, 2016; field note). Or:

> *".. the agency of the child and how (..) the child is* (an agent) *from a really early age and we have to take his or her (...) opinion into account (...) and not to decide upon him, on his or her behalf. This is really beneficial but also (...) it's just maybe (..) it was really some concept that I really learnt, that was really new to me but still I am not really sure how to implement this in reality"* (Aziza, I: 303-311).

Some graduates can make better sense of how children's agency can be lived after having graduated and started working with or for children, others however, continue struggling with the theoretical concept and its application in real-life situations compared to the MACR classroom setting as

> *"the most difficultly applicable right (....). Finding the balance between involving children in processes or deciding what is good for them in things they cannot decide for themselves yet - taking the best decision for them - are a field of exercise and care"* (Taléia, E: 17-21).

Ruth, paediatrician and former director of the neonatological ward at Berlin's university hospital had felt uncomfortable during bedside teaching in front of incubators talking about the infants as if they were objects, desiring to find a way of talking with them, or to give them at least some more respect in their very early life. Even though her intuition and unease about these student classes has been confirmed as being disrespectful of human beings, and that they are prone to violate children's human dignity, she has still not found a way how to change the admittedly necessary bedside teaching (Ruth, I: 87-97).[239]
Notwithstanding these difficulties in transforming theory to practice, it is a double-sided coin. On the one side, there are the difficulties of thinking from theory to practice, on the

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[238] „...eher um einen Perspektivenwechsel den mir der Studiengang ermöglicht hat. In welchem Bereich auch immer ich arbeite, ich bewerte anders und versuche nicht "für Menschen zu entscheiden", sondern mit Menschen gemeinsam zu arbeiten, zu empowern." (Marlies, essay: 34-37)
[239] „... also ich war ja leitende Oberärztin hier an der Neonatologie und hatte in dem Zusammenhang ein Symposium gemacht das hatte die Überschrift. „Lasst uns mit den Kindern reden statt über die Kinder". (...) Also diese Situation, dass wir alle große Runden mit Studenten, Assistenten, Professoren, alle morgens von Inkubator zu Inkubator gelaufen sind und alle um das Kind rumstanden und natürlich im Interesse des Kindes diskutiert haben alle möglichen Sachen (..) aber irgendwann hab ich gedacht: ‚das ist nicht gut, da stimmt irgendetwas nicht- wir können nicht. Wir können nicht um das Kind rumstehen und alle möglichen Sachen über das Kind diskutieren'- das hat mir irgendwann nicht mehr gefallen. Dann habe ich ein 2-tägiges Symposium gemacht – wenn ich jetzt daran denke, war das wahnsinnig mutig mit dem Titel: „Lasst uns mit den Kindern reden, nicht über die Kinder" (Ruth, I: 87-97).
„....well, I was the directing chief doctor at the neonatological station , and had organised a symposium that was titled: „ Let's talk with children, not about them". Well these situations that we all, a big round of people with students, assistants, professors, went from incubator to incubator and stood around the child and of course we discussed in the interest of the child, all different kind of things (..) but at some point I thought: , That is not good, something is wrong- we cannot.. we cannot stand around the child and discuss about the child' at some point I didn't like this anymore. Then I did that 2 -day symposium- when I think of it now, that was pretty courageous with the title. Let's talk with children, not about them (Ruth, I: 87-97).

other, theory underlines the practical activities of graduates. Students have gained theoretical knowledge and through this have a scientific basis from which they can argue for an agency- and rights-based approach to children. This scientifically grounded knowledge internalised, colleagues and further audiences are more likely to be convinced of the worth of a rights- based approach, rather than applying (only) protective measures to children, as "…it makes a huge difference if you have words for it- instead of describing it" (Tobias, I: 330). Another statement about how the understanding of children's rights has shifted during the programme underlines this:

> *"Having a better understanding of children's rights was useful in rethinking about the current child protection intervention which is mostly paternalistic and gives more priority to children and humans entitled to full human rights" (answer, online survey).*

The engrained belief that children need to be protected in a paternalistic manner, preventing them from harming themselves and arguing from a conception of adult's superiority and children's inferiority (Liebel, 2017b) is turned around to concentrate on children's agency and protagonism. Children's participation is an expression of their competencies and we, the adults, have to accept that children are "knowers", perhaps of different knowledge than adults, but they have knowledge and may be understood as knowledge brokers (Lundy, 2018). [240] One of the basic beliefs of CREAN's members is based exactly on children's agency and protagonism, focusing on children's value in the here and now and not only on their value for society in the future (as producers and consumers).

But what is participation? In the meantime, participation has become an "en vogue" theme- in combination with children and their rights, it seems participation is being discussed everywhere.[241] The understanding of participation however varies and often lacks definition and functions almost as a label, the word itself downgraded to an empty signifier. Nonetheless, participation of children (in all matters affecting them), as one form of counteracting paternalism, which I associate with adult "control" over them, is a significant ingredient for the genuine respect children (and any other human being) merit.[242]

Participation as understood here (of all members of society, including children) takes place at all times and everywhere and is not constrained to specific areas of life that are opened up to children to participate in. Mostly, MACR graduates have an understanding of participation as a tool for the empowerment of children by supporting them to enact their agency

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[240] Comment at CREAN Conference: *The impact of children's rights education and research on policy development*: 18.-19.1.2018; Geneva.
[241] UNICEF has issued several manuals and guides on children's participation; World Vision International and Save the Children have also published guidelines on children's participation- there are several day care facilities brochures on participation etc.
[242] The difference between paternalism and adultism has been discussed (see Liebel, 2014) and the boundaries are blurred, as both paternalist behaviour comes (mainly) from more powerful persons towards the less powerful and in most cases from adults towards children- in any case within the discussions on children's rights and childhood which reflects the approach adults take. At the same time, paternalism is an action which is enacted more explicitly- persons justify paternalist approaches with protective measures, whereas adultist behaviour is much more implicit and not necessary related to protection but rather to solidified social structures (Liebel, 2017b and unpublished lectures)

and live their rights "from below"- children themselves, as subjects of rights, should hold power over their rights and be able to work towards enforcing them. Due to the above described power imbalance, without adults' advocating children, they will not reach a position to enforce their rights.[243] Advocacy for children, however, is, similar to advocacy for other socially disadvantaged groups, not free of paternalistic ideas, for we believe that we need to advocate for children because they are either unable to do so themselves (why this is so, we will leave aside for the moment) nor do they know how to do so. The same can be said "....when we talk about participation. It does not necessarily mean that it is free of paternalistic concepts and intentions – especially when it comes to the child participation that adults intend" (Liebel, 2017b: 14). The intention of the MACR team and the CREAN network is to convey an understanding of participation that (can) also be child initiated.[244] Nonetheless, especially when students experience a drastic mind shift and change of thought patterns, a breaking of high walls of knowledge that have been built up, they may lean towards participation of children and believe they are on the last rung already, as they

> *"... give them a voice now, too- I wouldn't have done that before. E.g. that we ask children and young people whether they want to say something at any kind of (public) celebration or ceremony- because it's about them, and I didn't do that at all before"* (Annette, I: 253-259).[245]

Annette's statement shows that she believes her attitude has changed (and I believe this as well), nonetheless *she* remains the one who *gives* the children the opportunity to participate, i.e. she is still the person who grants children a voice and this only in specific circumstances. From her statement, we cannot see that children are empowered to raise their voices themselves, they are still in a position in which they depend on adults to provide opportunities. Neither can we read that children themselves claim to voice their opinion, adults remain the guarantors of such opportunities in certain circumstances. Following Barnett's description of paternalism, Annette's "lending" a voice to the young people is based on the paternalistic belief that she knows what is best for them, although she herself may not feel this way (Barnett, 2017): "...we ask children and young people whether they want to say something at any kind of (public) celebration or ceremony". Nonetheless, Annette has changed her way of interaction with children by offering them a way and form to participate at all which, as she claims, she wouldn't have, done before having read the MACR "I didn't do that at all before" (ibd.: 259). On the other hand, Annette claims that children should be seen as humans who do not necessarily think "wrong" but merely differently and that we can profit from their views and understandings as our experiences

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[243] Analogous to women's and persons with disabilities' rights- without advocacy it is hardly possible to achieve change.

[244] With reference to Roger Hart's ladder of participation (1992), stepping up to the two last rungs: child-led initiatives and children and adults sharing decision-making; see chapter 4.4.2..

[245] „Ja, total. Früher dachte ich immer die Erwachsenen müssten den Kindern erzählen wies läuft und das hat sich total verändert ehm also auch tatsächlich das merke ich auch bei unseren Kindern im Verein- dass ich denen einfach auch ne Stimme gebe, das hätte ich früher so nicht gemacht. Also dass wir z.B. bei Auszeichnungen jeglicher Art die Kinder fragen wollt ihr was sagen? Weil um die geht es ja so, und das habe ich vorher überhaupt nicht gemacht" (Annette, I: 253-259).

have shadowed certain views on the world and interrelations that children are still able to see (Annette, I: 262-266).[246]

Another competency students should achieve in the master's programme is to have a "critical understanding of the difficulties that result from discrepancies in policy- and law-making on the one hand and the transformation of cultural practices on the other" (module 2; chapter 5.2.2.). Sabrina, who worked as child protection officer in the Global South, when referring to children's agency in this context, says that she has understood the concept of different cultural practices and "universal" children's rights yet still asks herself:

> "...how do you want to apply this (children's agency)? When I think of my work in Ethiopia then the emergency work and then you can ask yourself, child agency- that is fulfilled 130%- the children do a lot (they don't have a choice) well is it child participation when they contribute to the household income? (...) The form of child agency we discussed ehm seems like a privilege that that is not really useful or applicable in emergency situations- this doesn't mean it does not have any relevance..." (Sabrina, I: 180-88).[247]

In such circumstances, the question does not arise whether children are to be protected or enabled to participate, participation is seen here as a sort of privilege that is afforded to them by adults- they can be protected only by means of outside help, so it seems.

With one last example of children's participation, I intend to demonstrate the potentials of reflexive knowledge on children's competencies, demonstrating the ability to find a solution to a challenging situation by sharing a bit of Julia's description of how she and her colleagues come to a mutual understanding about how to deal with children playing with toy weapons on the school grounds of the international school where she works.

> *Julia: how do we react when children want to play with weapons- how do we do that now?*
> *Rebecca: so how do you react?*
> *J: It's really difficult because we have children from countries like Cambodia – for them it's really upsetting they have seen real guns – we've got children from those countries of course you don't want to do that, so it's way more than in a traditional German school where you don't, whereas we recently don't have children who have seen – initially we read a lot of literature about it – we allowed them to*

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[246] *Also, dass man sie als Mensch auch wahrnimmt das man sie nicht unbedingt falsch denken, sondern vielleicht anders denken, und das ist gut so, denn dass sie anders denken, dass wir davon total viel lernen und das wir einfach schon durch unsere Erfahrung Dinge vielleicht auch gar nicht mehr so sehen können, wie Kinder sie sehen können. Ja* (Annette, I: 262-266):
This view is lent from Korczak, who, in his book *How to Love a* Child stated, that "The child cannot 'think like an adult', but in a childlike way he/she can reflect on serious problems of adults; the lack of knowledge and experience imposes another way of thinking" in: Korczak, 1919-20 (1999:101).

[247] *"...wenn ich an meine Arbeit in Ethiopia denke dann ist Emergency Work und da kann man sich fragen wie child agency – das ist zu 130% erfüllt- die Kinder machen ganz viel (bleibt ihnen auch gar nichts anderes übrig. Also ist es child participation wenn sie zum Household income beitragen- (...) die Form von child agency die wir besprochen haben ehm würd ich schon sagen dagegen ist auch ein ein ein Privileg schon etwas was was in Emergency situation nicht wirklich anwendbar ist. Das heißt nicht, dass es keine Rolle spielt- es ist erstaunlich wie innerhalb ein paar Wochen es überall in consult child child participation- how you want the child ......inform children on non-food items they want to receive. Dass das überall ausgehängt wird"* (Sabrina, I: 180-191).

make their own weapons- we don't really allow a presentation of them though – a proper gun- for example if someone brings a rifle – that is a toy rifle that looks really real we say no, but if it is created – if you make your own, say if you get a stick- that is completely fine (...) its not allowed inside– but outside its fine when the teachers talks with them about it – to the extent that they can also apply for a weapons license with us- so ok, you want to have a weapon's license you know the rules- if I see you using it in a different way your license might get revoked because that is what the police do
R: ok
J: or we also talk with them, we sensitize oh whew you just shot someone in play – ok, when was that? Let's write it all down- because of course that is what the police have to do- of course they don't shoot people every day
R: what do you think, do children who haven't experienced real weapons- do they really understand what they are doing?
J: I think it is power I think basically it's the idea of: you are able to play, but you have to respect other's rights – I definitely think it's imaginative power- they can take anything and pretend it to be something- a stick, the imaginative power – I also think it's crazy for children that we don't understand their play – like hey, I made you a pizza, you want to try it- oh yeah let me try it- I think it's crazy for them that all of a sudden there are restraints- how doesn't she get it? I am just playing! It's ok with everything else and that gets –because for them there is no difference—but that took a while – it's also funny because we bought lots of weapons – just to talk about it" (Julia, I: 285-313)

Talking with the children in such a critical situation and approaching them from a child's view (playful, yet serious) is a way of dealing with such challenging situations. Negotiating with children and young people, rather than imposing one's understanding of their "best interests" from above (even if well-meant), is an example of a child's rights-based approach to children. By this, children and adults share decision-making (have reached the highest rung on Hart's ladder of participation, 1992) and thus create a space of acknowledging and respecting children's competencies and agency. After having elaborated on the theoretical knowledge students acquire during the masters, I will next turn to direct practical know-how and skills, the tacit knowledge achieved in the MACR.

10.2. Practical Competencies - Tacit Knowledge

Whoever talks about practice (practical know-how) must also think the other side: The necessary knowledge (or competency) to develop such know-how. Traditionally, in societies, as nowadays, knowledge is the pre-condition to engage in social practice (Stehr, 2000: 81). When lacking (theoretical) knowledge, only instinctive, automated action takes place and the intention behind the action is not explicated (Kurtz, 2006 in: Kurtz & Pfadenhauer, 2010: 14). At times, this practical knowledge can be arbitrary and can lead to random solutions of problems or difficult situations. However, in moving from stable and concrete practical knowledge by having acquired reflexive knowledge (see above), the change in attitude *is* explicated. In this second part of the chapter, I will demonstrate how theoretical, reflexive knowledge informs graduates' practical know-how and action and in what areas re-

search partners have been working since having graduated.[248] The theoretical approaches based on different disciplines brought forth in the programme modules, have, for the graduates, become a paradigm, which they aim to transfer to practice. As I will show, some graduates have acquired practical know-how, understood as internalised knowledge that can be applied easily at any given time without (much) reflection (Shirato, 2002, with reference to Bourdieu, 1990a), where others continue to reflect on their qualification and practical action. I will demonstrate these two practical approaches with a number of quotes on the research partners' everyday professional practice. I am aware that there are limitations to my arguments and a clear differentiation between reflexive knowledge and practical know-how is difficult to assume as the questions I asked the research partners "forced" them to reflect on their competencies. On the basis of their descriptions of the use of their competencies and their interpretation, it is possible to deduct a tendency whether the graduates have internalised the knowledge or not. Again, there may be more than one shade of internalisation.

Along with several alumni who answered the question what value children's rights study programmes have for society, I maintain that the MACR is important for societies. The students are the ones expected to apply the undergone change and acquired competencies in practice in all kinds of different activities, occupations and vocations they participate in. Even though the fields are vast in which such highly qualified personalities are working, job positions with direct reference to children's rights are scarce. Since the beginning of this long-term research in 2006, the situation on the job market has however changed. In the past two to three years until today, in 2018, many organisations have begun recruiting children's rights experts and have started creating specific positions for them.[249] After graduating, several students remain in their former working field, most of them as teachers or pedagogues, where they interact and meet pupils differently with their changed attitude(s), putting them (more) at the centre and interacting with them on eye-level. A number of graduates have created, founded or established their own organisations in which they apply their children's rights knowledge. In order to categorise the different sectors or areas the graduates work in, I depict four spaces and places referring each to a form of combining the theoretical knowledge with practical know-how MACR graduates use in their fields of work.

- Direct work with children and young people.
- Advocacy work for (and with) children and young people.
- Research with children (participatory).
- Scientific writing.

The boundaries of these areas of work can appear indistinct at times, as many of the fields transcend each other.

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[248] See annex (no.10) for an exemplary list where alumni are working.
[249] E.g. the child rights unit at the German Children's Help Association (Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk) or, child rights representatives at small(er) NGOs.

10.2.1. Direct work with children and young people

The first space and place where graduates work is the (physically) closest to children and young people: working directly (in personal contact) with them. To show how research partners work in this field and employ their newly developed practical knowledge, I will draw on some quotes that I have subsequently analysed and interpreted.

Didier got into contact with a small youth empowerment organisation[250] and is now, according to him, " ...implementing the knowledge (he) gained from the MA on a daily basis" (Didier, E: 14-15), he has incorporated the knowledge gained in his mind and applies it practically without having to reflect on it. As he doesn't explicate how he employs the knowledge exactly e.g. by giving an example of his work, this statement has to be treated with some caution. For the moment, I want to give him the credit of telling the truth, in any case he is convinced that he is using the knowledge gained in his work.

Eileen, as another example of a research partner working directly with children, had wished to work in the children's rights sector, but couldn't find a job in the field. She went into teaching, as she felt it was the best terrain to bring forth children's rights. "I ended up taking teaching because I felt at that moment I could accomplish more for children in that realm" (Eileen, E: 8-9). Now, she approaches the children with "topics we discussed during our MA and I believe I have a different perspective/approach than I did before" (Eileen, E: 16-17). Eileen is teaching English at a Hutterite Colony (see chapter 7.2.2). The main challenge she faces every day is finding methods and ways to overcome unjust behavioural patterns that are framed by a solid, paternalistic belief system and thought patterns that have been learnt and constructed over a long period of time. The value system is dominated by a robust hierarchic and paternalistic structure, placing men in a higher position than women and giving older males dominance over the younger. This phenomenon is also represented within the young generation where school children dominate their younger schoolmates.[251] Experiencing such discriminatory social power imbalance has confirmed Eileen's using the theoretical knowledge she gained in the MACR. Her objective is to place children at the centre, similar to the approach Janusz Korczak took (see chapter 4.5.). Her work and attitude are driven by critically reflecting her own position and meeting her pupils as equals, on eye level, an approach of living with each other and respecting each other. She writes that sometimes she asks herself whether she is doing the children justice in treating them in this way, as these respectful encounters with her may evoke a desire to leave the colony and live in another community with other, less dominating and discouraging structures. Another fear is that the children might be discredited by people outside the remote and alienated colony (see Eileen, E: 63-74). This example, amongst others, reveals that it is possible albeit not easy to stick to the knowledge gained in the MACR and work towards transferring it to such a challenging work setting. Still, Eileen has doubts and keeps reflecting on her competencies.

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[250] Through contacts from the children's rights community- see chapter 11.
[251] Consequentially, the youngest girls are at the very bottom of the hierarchy.

Lulu's case is another example of a research partner working directly with children in a school as a mediator for Roma children in a Willkommensklasse[252] (see chapter 7.2.1.) and faces difficulties in applying a child-rights approach throughout the whole day she spends with the children and teachers in the school. As she says, she doesn't feel insecure about it and does not have difficulties with meeting children with dignity and humanness. The difficulties she encounters are relationships with older colleagues who have been teaching in the school for many years and who hold on to long-lasting, solidly engrained traditional pedagogical concepts and who do not see a necessity for re-thinking these concepts and practices.[253] This is particularly so when such change is proposed by a young, new and non-German teacher (Lulu, I: 298-302). Not only did Lulu experience an unwillingness of the older staff to let themselves in on the new thoughts and concepts Lulu introduced, experiencing adultist behaviour by the teachers not only towards the school children, but also towards her as a younger staff member:

"...everybody is older than you so you will have to listen to them, what they have to say (...) I think it's not that you come with a knowledge but you come with an attitude to work and it makes a big difference, the stereotype of the age it's unbelievable, you're younger, you just started working so nobody asks you about your work before or your experience" (Lulu, I: 314-318).

So, how can Lulu confront such a difficult standing in the school and take a child rights-based, non-adultist and discriminative approach to teaching in this school? How can she apply the practical know-how she has developed in the MACR? I will give Lulu space here to describe a situation in which she had to decide how to react to a situation in which a pupil of hers was treated in a highly discriminatory way.

Rebecca: "Do you have the feeling that you have reached that with teachers at the school, argue for children's rights?"
Lulu: "Well with some teachers in a way, yeah. On the other hand, I didn't feel now, totally satisfied with what happened in a situation. (...)I came to the hallway in the school, without the teacher seeing me- I entered the hallway in the moment she was screaming on the child- I thought that she would hit the child and the child was standing like this- shivering and I was just I was actually behind her back and I thought this is my job, I need to help, there is a problem... it was a child from one of these welcome classes so I'm almost only working in those classes, and she looked at me and I think the moment she saw me- I think she got shocked- immediately she reduced her voice and said to the child to enter the classroom (..) She was so annoyed and that she was screaming so much and I said 'ok, I will try to talk to her later about that'. Before she went into the classroom she came out of the classroom and she called after me and she said 'Lulu, don't take this as bad- you haven't been in the situation or have ac-

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[252] "Willkommensklassen" were introduced in Germany shortly after the first large number of refugees came and children had to be integrated into schools. In the Willkommensklassen, children are taught German (albeit together with only other non-German speaking children) to prepare them to meet requirements in the regular schools.
[253] On the discriminative tendency towards Roma children in schools see: (Lundy, 2012; Quennerstedt, 2015; O'Nions, 2010). And their disproportionate segregation from mainstream education, either within mainstream schools or by being placed in special schools (Roth & Moisa, 2011; Murray, 2012).

tually seen it'- I said 'ok'. 'please don't tell that the school director'. 'I would like to talk about it later' and she said 'yeah, I would also like to talk about it later'. So that day in the moment what was that reaction. In my opinion it was a reaction of fear, that I will tell the director, the school direction. On the other hand the reaction was ok (...) this is a school where I can do a lot. She knows what I am doing so from that perspective I thought maybe she doesn't want me to see her as a bad teacher or something so I don't know but of course you have also a lot of nice teachers that do everything and try to use me, my being there as a support in order to achieve better education for the children or for the parents as well, try to help with the language is something difficult for them and they don't know what to do (Lulu, I: 323-348).

Lulu did not tell me whether the planned meeting and conversation between her and the teacher took place, what I could deduct from this story though is that Lulu, even though not completely satisfied with how the situation was solved at that moment, still sees the potential of her being at the school and assisting the children in their arrival to Germany and with learning the language. She feels a sense of self-efficacy and from her expression, I could see some pride about what she can achieve with having learned to apply a child rights approach in the MACR.

Daniela and Julia are both working in schools as well. Contrary to Lulu's experience, they do not face such difficulties. Their colleagues are very open to children's rights approaches and meet children with respect, which enables a completely different teaching method and approach to children, as it is not necessary to overcome barriers and obstacles with other teachers first. I.e. schools and learning concepts have changed and these are good examples of children's rights-based school teaching, however, as seen in Lulu's case, old ideas and understanding remain fixed and enduring in many educational settings. Just recently, one student spoke about his experience in a school and afternoon care centre for children in a district of Berlin with high unemployment rates and a high percentage of non-German speaking households. The school is for children with special needs, from grade 4-10. The situation at this school was "terrifying". The teachers he experienced in class (apart from one teacher) yelled at the children, shamed them in front of classmates if they did not comply with orders immediately (according to the student regardless of the reasons: e.g. shyness, difficulties, verbal or oral limitations, whatever). At first, he was inclined to leave this setting immediately, but then decided to share this reality with the children during a two-week internship (see field notes and internship report). Even though he is sure that his two-week presence does not have any long-term effect for the children, he is sure that the children got a glimpse at how a teacher or caregiver-pupil relationship can also be- not based on adultist and discriminative behaviour marked by stark feelings of superiority (of the adults) and inferiority (of the children and young people). Yet who knows? Perhaps there have been changes. As far as I know, he hasn't gone back to the school.

10.2.2. Advocacy work for (and with) children

Some graduates work as children's rights advocates. Amongst them, some as members of the children's rights lobby that fights for justice for children on all levels - municipal, regional, national and international. Graduates who are working on this meta-level draw mainly on theoretical knowledge of children's legal studies (see chapter 4.1.4.). They rely mainly on the practical, internalised knowledge of the CRC and its juridical implications.

Claudia, for example, is a school principal and uses children's rights approaches within her role as principal, teacher and coordinator of school projects, where she has organised projects in which children themselves discussed their rights with politicians and e.g. produced a documentary film for further public awareness raising (see chapter 7.2.2.). She has included children's rights in her school concept in subjects such as "responsibility", "challenges", "learning office" and in relationships with the students by including them in the daily school routine etc. (Claudia, E: 8-16[254]).

Pedro, another children's advocate, works for the Paraguayan government- as the general director in national service working with adolescents faced with criminal trial (see chapter 7.2.1.). In Paraguay, youth delinquency, according to law, is widespread and sanctions are harsh and generally in violation of basic children's rights (to protection, their best interests, participation). To take a child rights-based approach in measures of sanctioning children who have become delinquent[255], Pedro has been promoting and coordinating state centres for youth re-socialisation, leaning towards restorative justice measures (Pedro, I: 83-86).[256]

Aziza and Zoë both work for UN organisations in positions developing methods and strategies to alleviate the situation of "Children Out of Place".[257] Aziza is working for (and with) children in street situations in Egypt, co-authoring a procedural manual to raise the childcare quality standards of the detention centres for juveniles and delivering on-the-job training to caregivers working in these centres. Zoë has been engaged in setting up a network of help organisations in Ugandan refugee camps in an effort to bring actors (organisations) together who work for the refugees to achieve coordination and cooperation between the different actors' activities with the aim of ensuring the best possible "service" to the "residents" of the camps.[258]

John, whom I also see as an advocate for children's rights, works as journalist where he can share knowledge he has gained in particular on the legal issues of children's rights within

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[254] „In project: one of these was e.g. a children's rights project at my school, for which we won several prizes and which ended with a TV production of the second German public channel including interviews with leading politicians in the German parliament and an audience with the German president in Schloß Bellevue. In the school conception: Anchoring of subjects just as "responsibility", challenges" and learning offices based on the CRC. In interaction with the pupils: design of daily relation; participation in school life etc. (Claudia, E: 8-16).
„in Projekten: Dies umfasste beispielsweise ein Kinderrechteprojekt an meiner Schule, das zahlreiche Auszeichnungen erhielt und mit einem Fernsehdreh des ZDF und unserer Schüler in unserer Schule und im Deutschen Bundestag mit Interviews mit führenden Politikern sowie mit einem Empfang beim Bundespräsidenten im Schloss Bellevue endete.- in der Schulkonzeption: Verankerung von Fächern wie "Verantwortung", "Herausforderung", "Lernbüro" -> Grundlage: CRC; - im Umgang mit den Schülern: Beziehungsgestaltung; - Partizipation im Schul- u. Unterrichtsalltag usw." (Claudia, E: 8-16).
[255] The definition of being or having become "delinquent" is far-reaching. A person who is delinquent can have robbed another person, perhaps even murdered him or her, yet stealing food and selling goods on the street can also be defined as delinquency. To discuss the dichotomy of delinquent actions would go beyond the scope of this study. See e.g. Institute of Medicine and National Research Council (2001): *Juvenile Crime, Juvenile Justice*. Washington, D.C.: The National Aacademics Press (child and youth delinquency according to risk factors).
[256] On the concept of restorative justice see e.g.: http://restorativejustice.org/#sthash.7WSaCa1R.dpbs
[257] On the concept of Children Out of Place, see chapter 4, 5 and e.g. Invernizzi et.al. (2017)
[258] When I met Zoë in early 2017, she had just changed jobs to work as child emergency officer for UNICEF in Myanmar (field notes).

the international human rights system and in particular with reference to the national Ugandan children's act, which, he argues, hardly anybody knows.[259]

> *"The competencies gained are used in advocating for children's rights by writing articles about children's rights in newspapers and on radio talk shows. This has helped to change the society attitudes towards children and their rights" (John, E: 69-71)*

John sees his role as an educator for other members of society by informing them about the importance of children's rights which is, according to him, a blind spot in Ugandan society and politics. "Many people in our society are ignorant about the laws governing the rights of children" (John, E: 72-74). The situation in Uganda has been dire, many children find themselves being "Out of Place", having worked as child soldiers and in need of re-socialization. They have rights which merit respect and the Ugandan government is required to offer assistance, yet it does not comply. John says he contributes to this by raising awareness through the different channels he has access to. On the one hand, he is in a position and has the competence to advocate for children (mainly in print and audio media) on the other, he is also working directly with children as a teacher. In John's opinion, the children's rights' situation in Uganda is grim, especially due to the large number of displaced people in the country and refugees in the above-mentioned (Zoë) vast refugee camps on the borders to South Sudan (John, E: 72-74, 83-88).[260]

Graduates of the master's mention that they have learned to view their surroundings through a "children's rights lens". Almost all the research partners describe their daily interactions (mainly at work) and continuously refer to the different view on children they have now by having been exposed to the childhood and children's rights theories during their studies compared to their approaches to children before the master's (Lisa, Sabrina, Lulu, basically all). In their implementation, however, difficulties do arise, as not all surrounding persons are willing to look through the same lens (see e.g. Lulu above). One graduate experiences situations at work in which she feels put in a position where she is pressed and expected to put on a children's rights "lens" and is made responsible for considering aspects of children's rights, as other staff members and colleagues do not have the same competency and, in addition, are also unwilling to "try on the lens" themselves, she argues. She has the impression that her colleagues are not interested in including a child rights-based approach in their work. In their view Lisa is the expert, it suffices that she ensures that actions are in line with children's rights, the need to apply a child rights-

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[259] *"It also enabled me to gain some skills which I use now to guide my collogues especially in the implementation of the Children Act here in Uganda. The skills in interpreting the law and how it should be implemented in relation to the beneficiaries have been improved and many people have appreciated the importance of the course"* (John, E: 34-37).

[260] „...by educating them about the importance of children rights. Many people in our society were ignorant about the laws governing the rights of children" (John, E. 72-74). "This is especially in rehabilitating the war affected children and re uniting them with their families in case of displaced children. Feeding of children especially in refugee camps has also been done because of the competencies acquired. Educating the society about the right of children to have food has made this possible since there is shortage of food here in Uganda and most especially in places where displaced people live" (John, E: 83-88).

based approach in all actions is, according to Lisa, beyond their consideration or ideas on needs and requirements in working with children and young people:

„I'd say yeah- it is part of discussions in the team- like we[261] have the stamp (....) BUT I believe that the master's has strengthened my child rights view massively and that I carry it with me everywhere, also to work. Yeah and I have the impression that this view is forgotten and they count, really on me/us that we add this perspective to the debates" (Lisa, I: 47-48; 50-53).[262]

A contrasting example is Sabrina's case: Colleagues do not merely rely on her as the child rights expert in the team, on the contrary, Sabrina describes her colleagues' interest in learning about a child rights approach from her and are open to a critical reflection of their North Western image of childhood in the context of their work in countries of the Global South (in their case in Ethiopia). She states that it is:

"...good to see and now in my job it is also nice, that my colleagues, all of them child protection colleagues, support that (child rights approach) even when you go to Africa – that we are also here and have an image of childhood- encountering a completely different one. (...) We do have to defer safeguarding minimum standards- e.g. corporal punishment is not okay just because it is done in this culture" (Sabrina, I: 175-178, see also: 191-199).[263]

There are several other research partners who work as advocates for children and their rights, Paula e.g. promotes the rights of children in editing the largest quarterly newsletter of the German protection services, or Moritz who works as a child rights representative in a small NGO in Berlin. He uses the practical competencies, as he says, with much self-confidence as he can now place arguments for specific practical actions within a broader, scientifically "proven" or "validated" framework. This results in an increased acceptance of his knowledge among his colleagues and in practice outside the work place (Moritz, I: 133-135).

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[261] Another EMCR alumna, thanks to whom Lisa got the job at ISS and now another student of the last generation at FUB is working in Lisa's place during her maternity leave.

[262] *„Ja, ich mein ein bisschen schon – ja zum Teil ja ich mein ein bisschen geht es dann schon in die Diskussion mit rein, so im Team – so dass wir auch so ein bisschen den Stempel haben (...)ABER ich glaube der Kinderrechtsblick auf- durchs Studium bei mir ehm massiv verstärkt hat und dass ich den immer dabei hab auch in der Arbeit- ja, und ich immer den Eindruck hab, das wird total vergessen oder es wird sich drauf verlassen, dass wir diese Aspekte reinbringen" (Lisa, I: 47-48; 50-53).*

[263] *„...schön zu sehen und jetzt in meinem Beruf auch schön, dass meine Kollegen eh alle Child Protection Kollegen das unterstützen also selbst wenn man nach Afrika geht- dass wir auch da ein Bild von Kindheit- ein ganz anderes Bild vorfinden. wir also schon den Anspruch haben, also die Minimum Standards zu wahren- so z.B. corporal punishment ist nicht okay nur weil es in dieser Kultur gemacht wird" (Sabrina, I: 175-178).*
„Wenn die Entwicklungshelfer da reingehen und was verändern wollen- man will ja gar nichts zerstören. es ist schon gut, dass man sich die Situation kritisch ansieht und auch kulturelle Praktiken hinterfragt und es besteht kein Widerspruch, zumindest meistens nicht, Kinder zu Entwicklung nicht negativ beeinträchtigt- natürlich sieht Kindheit ganz anders aus, wenn sie heiraten sieht das ganz anders aus. (.....).. frühe Heirat ist nicht akzeptabel bzw. würde man wenigstens schauen was es bedeutet was geht einher mit Rollen etc. Bewusstsein einfach geht ja nicht darum abzuschaffen, dass Kinder Wasser tragen" (Sabrina, I: 175-178).

10.2.3. Research with children (participatory approaches)

"On a professional level, the programme has definitely changed the way I deal and work with children or for children. I have gained many skills on doing research with children in participatory ways" (Zara, E: 9-11).

Another field of practice graduates engage in is doing research with and about children, employing skills they have obtained in the MACR, mainly in the frame of module 3 and during their final theses. They use participatory research methods either in writing PhDs or in the context of their work with children. Often, they work in organisations whose projects lack scientific data to justify the manner in which they are implemented and by what means they are carried out. MACR graduates therefore set up diagnoses about the needs of the specific group of children by negotiating and determining their needs together *with* them (Zara, E: 32-35). To gather such information, ideally, participatory research methods are applied, in which children are included in a central position in the decision-making process, in line with Art.12-15, and Art. 3, CRC (see chapter 2.2.) Most research partners assert having learnt the methods of research in the master's, as it was not part of their former study curricula.[264] Several research partners use these methods in their daily work (e.g. Zara), others maintain that the methods module was very interesting, yet that they would have needed more to feel able to do scientifically sound research themselves (e.g. Branka). Critical reflection and research about children and childhood images as well as childhood constructs in other cultures as scientific subject was a novelty to research partners. That children themselves can be research partners or in fact conduct and head research themselves, which is accepted as being scientifically sound, is very new to them and had an "Aha" effect on them.

"Searching for varying cultural images of childhood, that also others are dealing with this issue and that it is also scientific. (...) Or that children can do research themselves but that one can also research with children and that is also science- I think that was an Aha effect and it-the whole programme really confirmed me that children- well to engage for the rights of children" (Sabrina, I: 257-261 [265]).

Sabrina's main professional activities, working as an emergency child protectionist, do not include many research activities, she, however, includes children's views that she hears and sees from children themselves in her work.[266] She acknowledges that research about children need not necessarily be research by adults, which was her opinion before having completed the MACR. On the contrary: research about children must include children and their views, too, turning it into research *with* children, not only about them. This underlines the assertion that it is not possible to make valid claims on behalf of children or any

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[264] See chapters 4.4. and 5.2.2.3.

[265] „*(Die) Suche nach verschiedenen kulturellen Bildern von Kindheit, dass sich auch andere damit beschäftigen und dass es auch was Wissenschaftliches ist (..). Oder eben das Kinder research leisten können selber aber das man auch mit Kindern researchen kann und dass auch Wissenschaft ist- ich denke das war ein bisschen ein Aha Effekt und es hat mich- ich glaube das ganze Studium hat mich extrem darin bestätigt, die Kinder – also sich für Kinderrechte einzusetzen*" (Sabrina, I: 257-261).

[266] It is possible to define this as research, when using it in the sense Sabrina mentions above.

other social group without giving this group a voice and asking their opinions on the respective subject (see e.g. Ennew, 2004; 2009; Liebel, 2007b; Alderson, 2008; Christensen & James, 2008). Children are the last group whom society hasn't granted such participation in research, let alone accept research children conduct themselves as scientifically valid.[267] Claudia, who wrote a PhD after graduation and is now working on her post-doc has used the research methods she was introduced to in the master's, and Zara, e.g. has been working with adolescent girls and early marriage in Lebanon researching with the girls themselves about their situation:

> *"After the master's program, I worked with an international NGO as a consultant to conduct research with married adolescent girls in Lebanon on their perspectives on the reasons of marriage and the needs of married girls. The research was in an effort to build the program and create services based on the needs of the girls. As a consultant, I planned the research, implemented it, analyzed the results and created the program tailored for married girls based on the research results. My previous experience in the thesis for the master's and research project of the master's program are what helped me build the skills I used in my one year consultancy, especially in creating research proposals/plans, designing the research and mostly creating participatory tools and using participatory methods with children while reflecting on my role as a researcher" (Zara, E: 32-41, see also 65-69 on participatory approaches she takes in research).*

Learning research methods is in most years the most difficult module for students. Without having done such research before, it is hard to imagine how to go about using these methods. Few have done qualitative research before. This knowledge or practical skill develops beyond the MACR. This novel field they are introduced to is valued highly after completing the programme. Connected to research methods that have emerged from Western methodologists, (Flick, 2009; Mayring, 2002), including ethical aspects of research, are the (Western) scientific writing standards, which students learn to work with (chapter 4, module 3).

10.2.4. Scientific writing skills, teaching methods

The value of scientific literature and scientific writing skills, having been enabled to write theoretically founded papers, essays and master's theses is a highly valued hands-on practical skill especially for those research partners who hadn't ever written such an individual academic paper before. Being able to understand and find useful scientific literature allows the students to advance from mere instinctive practice to informed action (Kurtz, 2006). In the previous chapter (9), I have touched on the topic of scientific writing and forms of teaching and testing of students' knowledge, how this is perceived by international students with different academic backgrounds and how use can be made of these methods. Learning how to write a scientific, a theoretically founded paper is relatively easy for students who have studied in such an open setting as the MACR offers, compared to other students to whom this form of learning is unfamiliar. Over the years, the coordination and

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[267] See Lisa and her PhD proposal which included children as researchers and that was rejected by a professor (of children's rights) who did not accept the proposal claiming that it would not meet the scientific standards of "true" research, (see chapter 7.2.1.).

direction of the MACR have realised that the ability to write such module papers is an important skill. For some students, it is highly demanding to acquire such skills, which has led the MACR team to introduce a tutorial specifically on academic writing, in which competencies for basic forms, the structure and methods of a paper are conveyed (see chapter 4, chapter 9). This tutorial was received very positively, however, several research partners still see a need for more such tutorials. Up to now, students have been guided by mentors when they still have difficulties after having taken the tutorial. Such individual supervision and guidance seems the best way to give support, as many students who have written academic papers before, feel such learning (the tutorial) is a "waste" of time (see jour fixe, field notes). The resources needed for such intensive mentoring are not easy to find, yet efforts are being made to assist the students as best as possible.

Katerina, Aziza, Branka, all non-North Western students, likewise, speak of this auto-didactism and research as well as writing skills as one subject they would have needed more guidance on, even on what may seem "simple" knowledge: e.g. how to cite, what the structure of such a paper should look like, what it should and what it can contain, etc.:

> *"what are the resources for citation and how to write a good piece of paper in terms of the language that you are using and ehm not use too many adjectives or names but more verbs and do it in this sense, you know this and how to do everything to one paragraph if you deleted something- all this was delivered in one tutorial of about 3 or 4 hours, by going through examples – I got a lot from that seminar but I needed more in terms of scientific writing- writing scientifically correctly a piece of paper"* (Aziza, I: 589-598).[268]

The competency to write academically sound papers on Western terms, including policy papers based on academic research is valued highly for practical work (during the MACR, yet also in the various jobs students engage in). Due to Western academic norms at German universities and the requirement to accredit study programmes (see chapter 1), it is hardly possible to accept other forms of writing academically, which could be a possibility for diversification of the MACR, moving away from the critiqued Eurocentric approaches to research in general and children's rights in particular. Not only in writing, but also verbally, the authority of scholarly backing to argumentations, advocacy, recommendations and information is a competency research partners see as a great asset gained from the MACR for their professional (and, to a lesser extent, their personal) activities. This knowledge increases their trustworthiness among colleagues. The theoretical reflexive knowledge awards them self-confidence, enabling them to give their argument more substantiated grounds (Katerina, I:13, Moritz, I: 87-88, Aziza, I: 71-76, Ellen: field note). Moritz, graduate of the first year, is now teaching the tutorial on academic writing in module 3 of the MACR (see chapter 7.2.1.) For him, scientific writing was not comparable to what he had done in his previous studies (social pedagogy) and he appreciates having learned this necessary skill, with which he is set to be successful in academic learning and research.

Having said this, the most important component for a successful transmission of critical approaches and reflexive action competencies is the teacher and his or her expertise and

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[268] This is often also true for German students, especially those who are at the beginning of their studies.

teaching methods. Several graduates call on these teaching methods e.g. when they are lecturing or holding workshops themselves.[269]

> *„... (...) all these participative methods with US- I mean how we were taught, lead to a pool of things (from which I can draw) how I now treat my other colleagues in workshops (I give) (Sabrina, I: 222-223).[270] "... I gained much from the methods- that I now apply - well, I have moderated workshops- in kindergarten and I taught in Stendal[271] once or twice" (Tobias, I: 191-193).[272]*

10.2.5. The significance of practical know-how

Theory-based practical skills can lead to purposeful action for situations and problems which is not only reliant on intuition.[273] In his "Promise of Education", in which an education or qualification to counteract social injustice is reflected and discussed, Ross (2012) makes a distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge - I have used the notion of tacit[274] or practical knowledge as a competence to understand specific "ways of how the world functions" and to understand how specific characteristics of such knowledge can be used to advance social justice. I have also demonstrated practical know-how students have acquired through the MACR by relating them to practical, real settings the students face, either in their direct work with children, their advocacy for children, in research with children and with reference to academic writing skills they have developed. The practical knowledge described in this chapter should ideally evoke automatic reactions to and actions on specific issues as it has been internalised (Deary, 2010). In the case of the MACR alumni, the practical competencies I chose to discuss in this section may not have been fully internalised yet. There are alumni who still require some reflective knowledge to be assured that they are taking the best action for a specific situation being dealt with at any given time. However, the process of internalising the knowledge and being able to retrieve it automatically seems to have set in. Recently, in a meeting of the advisory committee, however, the director of a large children's organisation, where several students have found student jobs and later also "real" jobs, disappointedly mentioned that some of the graduates do not have enough self-confidence to apply the knowledge and skills attained. He made it sound like this is not an individual issue for one of the MACR graduates but that he has had this impression of more than one graduate having little tacit knowledge, which leads to

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[269] A number of MACR graduates are working as lecturers at other universities. Four graduates e.g. use methods for human rights education they were introduced to in the master's for children's rights education courses they offer.

[270] *„... (..) diese ganzen partizipativen Methoden mit UNS- also wie wir unterrichtet wurden schon auch zu meinem Pool an Dingen führt wie ich jetzt in Seminare mit anderen Kollegen in Workshops umgehe" (Sabrina, I: 222-223).*

[271] The University of Applied Sciences in Magdeburg-Stendal offers a German BA and MA in Childhood Studies and Children's Rights.

[272] *Methoden habe ich viel mitgenommen- wo ich selbst jetzt auch viel darauf zurückgreifen kann- also ich hab' auch Workshops moderiert- in Fröbelkindergärten mal an Stendal war ich jetzt auch zweimal (Tobias, I: 191-193).*

[273] I acknowledge that there are not few people who have a very good sense of intuition and do chose appropriate methods and competencies to meet specific circumstances.

[274] On tacit knowledge see also: Busch, Peter (2008): *Tacit Knowledge in Organizational Learning*. IGI Pubishing: New York.

a lack of confidence albeit the competencies are fully there (field notes, protocol of advisory committee meeting). Below, in the conclusion of this chapter on different competencies students achieve in the master's, I will juxtapose both reflexive and practical knowledge and briefly discuss attitude changes that have occurred in the process.

10.3. Assessment of Realising the Knowledge Acquisition

After having discussed competencies students develop in the MACR in this chapter, I will review the aims of the study programme, the motivation the initiators and executors of the programme have had. To this end, I will recapitulate the learning objectives listed in the different modules of the master's to assess whether they have been met, considering the above-deducted themes. To conclude this chapter, I will briefly reflect how and in what context the acquired knowledge can be effectively applied to trigger change in students and graduates in their own personal and professional environment.

Module 1 conveys theoretical knowledge on concepts of childhood and aims at enabling students to reflect these critically as well as handle them and link them to children's rights. The widespread belief that children are (mainly) becomings for the future- "childhood is the future…" is to be critically reflected. This competency is one that has been internalised by most students, arguably because it is a breach with familiar understandings and beliefs and opens eyes more than other competencies, which do not have such a novel character.

Module 2 aims to convey students' knowledge on the international human rights system, to identify core actors, to understand social realities of children and understand difficulties resulting from discrepancies between policy and law-making on the one hand and cultural practices on the other. Viewing the CRC as a milestone document and understanding its special status within the human rights system seems to be tacit knowledge students either already had or acquired. The new aspect of the Convention declaring children as actors and independent rights-holders is understood, yet students have difficulties in imagining the practical implementation thereof. This knowledge would be categorised as reflexive knowledge, as, in every situation, students reflect and weigh their options against the theoretical knowledge on children's agency they have gained.

Understanding the concept of the best interests of the child is another objective in module 2- there have been uncounted discussions on the meaning of the best interests principle and about who is to decide in what way and whether at all specific actions are in the best interests of the child or not. Even though this has also qualified students to reflect, they, as others, do not have a clearly manifested opinion about the best interests principle.

> *"In my context the best interest (for me) means to give my students a learning environment where they know they are respected, where they can feel safe to discuss their ideas, and where I give them as much opportunity as I possibly can to give them all they might need to excel, whether they stay on the colony or decide to leave. My worst fear is that one day outside people will laugh at them because they just don't know…so to me it is teaching addition etc.(.) but it is also helping them respect themselves and believe that they are capable of doing whatever they set their mind to… (Eileen, E: 90-96)*

Module 3 aims at students developing the competence to conduct qualitative research with and for children. The approaches taken are participatory. Those graduates who are engaged in research are applying the methods learned, i.e. the learning objective has been met. Even though this module is the most difficult for students, even more so do they develop a sense of self- efficacy when conducting research.

Module 4 aims at giving students' insight into the right to education, about concepts of inclusive education, an overview of different learning theories and most importantly the competency to reflect on their own role as educators. Even though it was not an outcome of the data analysis that graduates work with inclusive learning theories, many of the research partners are in teaching. The main knowledge gained, which several do confirm having attained, is the capacity and understanding of the necessity to reflect on one's own role when teaching. The teaching methods applied in this module and the teaching on the MACR in general are also used- this effect is not a competency envisaged by the module lecturers/developers.

Module 5, Children Out of Place, aims at sensitising students for different conditions, environments and situations of children across the globe and the competency to weigh approaches to these children critically, in particular concerning best and worst practice cases. The attendant tutorial aims at conveying hands-on practical skills to apply in work with refugees and other marginalised groups. This knowledge is closely related to theoretical approaches of module 1 in which questions on how childhood(s) can be, are raised.

Module 6 on children and media has not been referred to above, however several alumni have engaged in media work (they have not been directly involved in the research but have e.g. written e-mails or posted information on the student network facebook site).

Module 7 is the only module in which students can choose between a practical task (doing a children's rights related internship or conceptualising and in the best case implementing a practical project) or writing up a theoretical research project proposal. Students who choose to write a research proposal (numbers of students who are choosing such a theoretical work in module 7 have been drastically decreasing with about three or four out of twenty-five to twenty-seven students) have either been working in practice before or have ambitions to work on a PhD after graduating from the MACR. Students who do an internship get an insight into different work fields and can estimate whether the respective work could be an attractive possibility and form of work to engage in after graduation- it can also serve as a plus point to future employers. Practical projects have ranged from conceptualising lecture series and symposia (together with the MACR team) or individual projects such as exhibitions on children's rights, creating children's city maps to help them to move around independently of adults amongst others.

This overview has shown, that in the end, competencies are more than just the capability of one person. Competencies are relevant for persons, for organisations, as well as for society as a whole. As such, the term competency would be useful to define the concurrence of persons and organisations or institutions, organisations and society (Kurtz & Pfadenhauer, 2010: 17).

Chapter 11 - Children's Rights Community

"For me, the most important part of the academic programme was the introduction of a professional and academic network of childhood studies focused individuals - the bringing together of an international and culturally diverse group. While I haven't personally seen any research on the impact, the fact that I am now in touch with researchers/professionals from all over the world, in all types of organizations, means that ideas can be shared in an instant - for me, that's awareness" (answer, online survey).

This quote of an alumna referring to the contribution a master's study programme in children's rights and childhood studies can have on raising awareness on children's rights (in general) demonstrates the difficulty of estimating the value and impact of such a specialised programme. The alumna instead refers to the value and benefit the international and interdisciplinary children's rights network has for her.

In this chapter, I will introduce and discuss what I call the "Children's Rights Community". I use the term "community" here to describe a wide association of personalities and social groups, activists and organisations as well as universities and research institutes who dedicate their work to children's rights and childhood issues. The approaches taken to childhood and children's rights are diverse, depending on the community members' specific focus and varying working methods, both practical, academically and ideologically. However, all the members of the community have the common goal of advancing children's rights. In particular, I will discuss the meaning and value of this community for the graduates of the MACR, whom I (and they themselves) understand as members of the community.

During their studies, the MACR students become members of this community; they develop a sense of belonging to the community and engage in an identification process towards membership. A sense of belonging as an important motivator has been identified as one trigger responsible for many positive emotional and cognitive processes for individuals (Baumeister & Leary, 1995 in: Amit & Bar-Lev, 2015: 947). A sense of belonging, according to Strayhorn (2012b) likewise in reference to Baumeister & Leary (1995), typically refers to the extent to which individuals feel connected to others, feel that they matter, or feel important for the common effort of advancing a cause or issue or any other common effort, here the exertion to advance children's rights. Being a member of an entity (group, community, society, party, clique) is a basic human need; after all, we humans are gregarious animals. It influences, and in some cases determines, identification processes that are closely related to the concept and theoretical frame of the sense of belonging as understood here (Strayhorn, 2012a).[275]

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[275] Identification processes have been largely discussed and researched in the frame of intercultural university settings. These occur mostly in the scope of immigration and immigrant students' perceptions. Processes of becoming a member and feeling a belonging to the local majority student group as well as intercultural competencies to be achieved by becoming a member and identifying with the student group are in the foreground of these studies (see Amit & Bar-Lev, 2015; with reference to Burgat, 2003: 21 "identity is the result of the encounter with otherness"; Hannerz, 1990: 239-240: a sense of belonging should be thought of as a "willingness to become involved with the other, and the concern with achieving competence in cultures").

The students' development of a sense of belonging leading to the process of identification with the child rights cause, starts by becoming a member of the respective immediate student group. After the group has developed by working themselves through four different group finding and group action stages (Tuckman, 1965, see below 11.1.), students start to appreciate each other and a feeling of mattering to others develops, manifesting the sense of belonging (Johnson, 2012). Experience has shown that in most years, MACR students formed a tight group of individual persons who have a common purpose in the same domain (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Orange & Mishra, 2016). The approaches and ways of working in the domain vary according to their focus.[276] The CREAN network e.g. offers many possibilities for students to advance their knowledge in the field of children's rights and childhood studies. As a member of CREAN, MACR students have access to events and activities on specific topics related to children's rights at other network member universities, such as inter alia "Children and Justice" (lecture series at FUB, 2010), "Children's Right to Non-Discrimination" (summer school at Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal, 2012) or "Children's Participation, from Theory to Practice" (conference at Universidad Complutense, Madrid, Spain, 2011).[277] Through this, students are able to connect to other researchers (and practitioners) in the field, with whom they exchange thoughts and research practices beyond their graduation from the programme (see field notes, personal conversations). On other occasions, students and graduates also meet with further community members to exchange their knowledge and experiences and with whom they are able to discuss pressing issues on their mind and with which they are dealing professionally (and/or personally). I will demonstrate how several graduates of the EMCR/MACR have found jobs not only on the basis of their children's rights degree but also through connections built up during the master's. This allows me to affirm that the vision of creating new jobs for children's rights experts has been fulfilled.[278] Offering the MACR has created an extensive pool of highly qualified interdisciplinary-thinking professionals. New and extant positions in children's rights have been strengthened over the past decade, which was one of the initiators' hypotheses during the development of the EMCR/MACR. The benefits of belonging to this network of child rights actors as a tool for powerful, fundamental and extremely pervasive motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995: 497) are depicted in order to demonstrate the power the child rights community has or can have. Finally, this chapter concludes with a reflection on the initiators' motivation and expectations to establish the master's programme.

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[276] Some focus on e.g. refugee children, separated children, others focus on violence against children or on children's participation and their agency inter alia in schools, children and young people's clubs and centers.

[277] These opportunities are mainly possible in the frame of EU-funded projects and symposia or events funded by other bodies, such as foundations working in the field.

[278] As described in chapter 5.1.2 within the development process of the curriculum and the visions about outcomes of the study programme. The difficulties and pitfalls with the terminus "expert" have been discussed in chapter 9.1.1.

11.1. Sense of Belonging

The need to belong refers to the way in which individuals view themselves in relation to others in their society. It is considered an important motivator responsible for many positive emotional and cognitive processes for individuals (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Most students develop a stronger sense of belonging to the continuously growing wider network of child rights actors when they perceive an affiliation and have identified with their own study group (Eunyong & Irwin, 2013). Identity, manifested in the sense of belonging, and feeling "at home" are concepts used interchangeably to capture the same subjective and dynamic sense of being part of a social group (Black, 2002). Further along in their studies, students realise what importance and benefits membership in the child rights community has for them on a personal and professional level. Several interview partners spoke about their perception of the respective student group and the dynamics within the group.[279]

In his article: "Developmental sequence in small groups", Tuckman (1965), one of the first and most referred to researchers on group development practices differentiated four subsequent development stages of small groups: 1. "forming", (getting together for the first time(s)); 2. "storming" (abandoning the initial politeness and group endeavours to embark on the issue), followed by 3. "norming" (group members get acquainted and gain (further) trust in the group) and, through having undergone the previous stages, the group engages in 4. "performing", (cooperating towards a common goal) (Tuckman, 1965; Tuckman & Jensen, 1977).[280] Although not all student groups at FUB moved through these stages straightforwardly and smoothly or equally intensely in their interaction, the concept of group development is relevant in order to understand the sense of belonging students develop during the MACR. Particularly considering the fact that the group is the first small entity of the wider children's rights community the students (gradually) get connected with.

Lisa describes the process of group-finding in her group in stages. She describes how it would have been beneficial to get to know each other before or immediately after beginning the master's in meetings outside of the formal classroom. Then, soon after the first group- finding stage ("forming") had been completed, there were several members who decided to move away from the group- there was some shouting going on about specific issues- politeness had been cast aside for a moment ("storming"), however through the many discussions in class, the group came together and found a basis to work on the com-

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[279]An in-depth analysis of the student groups and the dynamics requires more systematic observation in the classroom than was possible within this study. The documentation of personal conversations with students as well as group discussions such as the jour fixes once every semester, however, furnish a good glimpse at how international and interdisciplinary small student groups in specialised master's programmes form by getting together for the first time, in the MACR at the general Opening Day and in the following two days during the Introductory Workshop on Critical Reflections of Adulthood (see chapter 5.2.1.).

[280]Several scholars have built upon this model of group development stages and advanced them with more detailed and differentiated aspects (Wheelan et al., 2003 and Wheelan, 2005; see also Ann Gilley and Steven J. Kerno Jr., 2010; Elisabeth Raes et.al., 2015).

mon cause (Lisa: I: 251-257 and 265).[281] After the group is formed and has gone through storms to develop a norm, it engages in its positioning in a greater whole by developing relations to other similarly structured groups that persist in the same course of action, by which the students grow into the child rights community (of practice) and start performing (Frey & Sunwolf, 2004: 293-95). In some groups, the majority of students were very close and are still in contact with each other or even work together professionally. For example, two graduates have established a small team organisation offering short courses and workshops on human rights education for children to organisations, individuals and anyone who is interested in human rights and children's rights. Even though some of the research partners mentioned difficulties within the group and discussed difficult dynamics (see e.g. Tobias, I: 190-209[282]), most research partners explicitly praised the asset of having been able to work with a group of such diverse people, which is the quintessence of the MACR student groups' functioning and effective and successful learning, as will be shown further down. Nonetheless, the statements about the sometimes disturbing group dynamics merit mentioning here. During their studies, the students spend many hours together and engage in common learning exercises, which enables the group to form a stable community. However, some students, e.g. Tobias, feel that the group was together very intensively in the first year of the programme, however, continuous guidance did not continue in the course of the master's. Tobias alleges that the rotation of lecturers, of whom most are external to the university, is a great factor for the group's potential instability. According to Tobias, most of the lecturers are basically not accessible personally outside the classroom, only via e-mail, which creates a distance to these members of the child rights community and has a potential to alienate the students from the community as well (Tobias, I: 208-210).

If students have been members of the community before studying the MACR, this sense of belonging generally increases. When speaking about positioning within a wider framework of groups and communities, I refer to the increasing relations of some students to other student groups at European universities, e.g. through attendance in summer schools, or in conferences. Other students also begin to position themselves as (young) researchers within the wider community by making their knowledge available to practitioners.

Unsurprisingly, not all interview partners demonstrated equal levels of commitment, three interview partners described their experience with the MACR and fellow students quite

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[281] *„well I have, I can't express it really, well we had, generally speaking, I think we were a good group- at least from what I remember (she was interviewed in 2017 and graduated in 2013). There were a few who took themselves out after a while, I also know that some weren't really happy with the master and their expectations (...) I don't know (..) there are things that many really like and others shout against them, especially with work and teambuilding- it would have been great to have gotten to know the others BEFORE. Of course we got to know each other over time and through the many, many discussions we also changed and got to know each other better" (Lisa, I: 251-257 and 265).*

[282] *„the method within the group and the group dynamic, intercultural issues played a role here"* (Tobias, I: 190).
R: „because of what issues? Because of things teachers or other students said or did?"
„also, because of intercultural sensitivity, ehm, just because there are people who are difficult in how they communicate, and there are others who went along with it- I never argued with anybody, I thought: leave me alone with that. But it was sad because there was no room to discuss and solve these issues. But with time, it got better and we as students found our own way in dealing with theses issue and this is due to group finding issues etc". (*Tobias, I: 193-209; abbreviated*).

matter-of-factly and declared no intensive connection to the course members, as "the intersections of various social identities produce unique experiences of belonging in various contexts, such that not all students experience belonging in the same way in the same context" (Johnson, 2013: 662). These research partners did not explicitly refer to fellow students in their comments, they seem to have neither a positive nor negative, close or distant relationship with their peers (Didier, Eileen, Femi).

Wiltrud, Ruth and Annette on the other hand, explicitly mention their aloofness to the rest of the group they studied with, albeit with different arguments. Wiltrud and Annette felt uncomfortable within the group, they didn't belong because they did "their own thing". Annette disliked the on-going complaints of some of her fellow students and kept herself out of these dynamics (Annette, I: 418-427). Wiltrud studied hard, in her opinion much harder than the rest, and felt she was not part because it was such an effort for her and because she felt like the "grandma" of the course (Wiltrud, I: 214-217 and 380f). Similar to Wiltrud, Ruth found herself disconnected from the group, also because of her age and responsibility of taking care of her very old mother and living on the outskirts of Berlin. However, contrary to Wiltrud and Annette, who willingly excluded themselves to a certain extent, Ruth expressed her wish to belong to the group and to have spent more time with the other group members (Ruth, I: 144-148). Possibly this is related to Berlin having been their home and studying at a German university was not new to them and they had social contacts before studying. International students are often unfamiliar with local aspects of life and general ways of living in Germany, the language and culture, the study system as well as the different teaching and learning methods, all of which draw them closer to the student group as it is often their first contact in Germany.[283]

The student groups have been increasingly international, bringing with them views and perspectives from other regions of the world as part of the education and learning process. Notwithstanding all the differences amongst the group members mentioned several times before, the students and graduates develop a sense of belonging to the child rights community through the course of the programme- within the nucleus of the specific group of child rights advocates, experts, lobbyists, etc. with whom they have spent an intensive 1.5 years in class, working together on presentations and papers and not least personally by privately having fun together and sharing issues of concern.[284] After having discussed the group formation and identification processes in this first section, I will now turn to the performing stage of the students within their group and the wider community of children's rights defenders, advocates, practitioners etc. within a community of practice.

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[283] On the different teaching and learning methods and academic cultures see also chapter 9.

[284] On the challenges of international students and their "cultural shock" experiences when arriving in the host country to study and the processes of adaptation see e.g. Baier, 2015 and https://medium.com/global-perspectives/the-4-stages-of-culture-shock-a79957726164 (accessed 3.1.2018).

II.2. Children's Rights Community as Community of Practice

"A Community of Practice is a group of people who have a common interest or who confront a common problem and who collaborate over an extended period of time to share knowledge, find solutions to difficulties, and generate innovations" (Heery and Noon, 2008: 23).

With reference to the work of Lave & Wenger (1991), who first described the concept[285], it is feasible and valid to understand the group of students and the wider network of child rights actors as a Community of Practice (CoP). A CoP is a community of people who have the same objective and work towards this goal. Following Heery and Noon (2008) and their definition of a CoP, all children's rights actors[286] form a group of people who have a common interest (furthering children's rights) or are confronted with a common problem (lack of children's rights- implementation, awareness-raising). The members of the CoP collaborate over an extended period of time (during the MACR and beyond) to share knowledge, find solutions to difficulties, and generate innovations such as new study programmes in children's rights (at CREAN partner universities and e.g. the German language MA Kindheitswissenschaften und Kinderrechte at University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal). Furthermore, a CoP is characterised by the creation of measures to further its cause. In the children's rights community of practice this is inter alia, to create new professional profiles for children's rights graduates such as children's rights ombudsmen in small local NGOs or programme sections of larger NGOs with explicit reference to children's rights. The creation of new jobs in the field, e.g. by graduates themselves, is another form of advancing the cause of children's rights in practice.[287] According to Orange & Mishra in discussing Lave & Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998), CoPs are also groups of people who share a concern about a "domain" of knowledge, such as basic know-how or highly differentiated expertise which they use in critically reflecting a set of problems. Having defined this foremost important element of a CoP, there must be an actual "community", a group of people who share a passion for the knowledge domain and strive to deepen this knowledge and expertise by interacting on an on-going basis. This is the shared "practice" which they are developing to be effective in their domain, and which is made up of a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, styles, languages, stories, and documents that the community members share (Orange, 2016: 708; Mishra et.al, 2016: 65).

The MACR student groups share the concern about a set of problems in the "domain" of knowledge they have appropriated during the master's and they share with each other a

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[285] Notwithstanding the pre-historical forms of such communities of practice that are not considered here- see Mishra et al., 2016: 69.

[286] Here I non-exclusively refer to scholars, researchers, staff members of local, regional, national and international children's and children's rights organisations, children's rights advocates and people promoting children's rights on a personal level and in their respective jobs, as i.a. teachers, social workers or lawyers.

[287] For example Nora: After graduation she set up a NGO in South Africa, Younitiate – *"and here the EMCR lens played a major contribution. Younitiate's vision is to spark the flames of self-responsibility, ambition, and initiative, especially among the young generations in communities. Younitiate facilitates a unique systemic community approach that always places children and young people at the center of every decision, thereby creating an environment within which they can achieve self-initiated and sustainable lives" (Nora, E: 19-24).* (See also chapter 7.2.2.)

passion for this domain (childhood and children's rights). They continuously deepen their knowledge and expertise by applying the competencies attained in the master's to establish new norms that are strengthened and shared amongst the student groups and beyond with the wider children's rights community (Orange, 2016: 708). This is demonstrated in the use of the competencies within work settings and in interchanges with other alumni about the childhood and children's rights practices they engage in. Actors in the Children's Rights Community live and act across the globe. Members of the CoP often do not work together on a daily basis and they may be active in a specific children's rights area different from another member with whom they communicate to find another perspective on a specific problem they are facing personally or professionally. There is much value placed on such exchanges, as they are useful for advice and insight when members of the CoP discuss their immediate situation, their aspirations and their needs (Orange, 2016: 711).

"We (..) have Skype meetings on a monthly or bi-monthly basis and have a group on social media where we share articles, knowledge and information from our fields of work. This has been a great opportunity to offer a continuation of the master's program especially that each of us (the students who meet) are working with children from a different angle (legal, humanitarian, empowerment and protection)" (Zara, E: 21-26[288]).

According to research partners' claims, such on-going interaction within the child rights community by sharing knowledge in the domain amongst each other and with other children's rights actors and activists has a significant impact on their personal and professional lives.

Figure 8 displays the different members of the Children's Rights Community placed around their common domain or objective, the advancement of children's rights (and childhood studies). The four basic member categories depicted here are academics and researchers from a variety of disciplines who engage in research and its publication as well as teaching children's rights courses and who cooperate in child rights events, such as conferences, intensive summer schools for students, exploratory workshops, research projects. Next, practitioners are identified as members of the children's rights community. In this category I have subsumed individuals and different governmental and non-governmental institutions who work on a practical level with children, engaging in inter alia advocacy, policy-making, teaching and care-taking. The students, as new members of the community, come from various disciplines and ethnic and national backgrounds (see chapter 7, figures 6. and 7.). They are the new "experts" in children's rights and with their newly developed competencies engage in any of the before-mentioned activities (research or practice).

Children are also included as members of the children's rights community here. They are an inherent part of the community as the community's domain of action is children and their rights. Ideally, they are participants and agents in their own lives and in their surroundings and society more generally. Children are often not in a position to fight for their

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[288] Zara works as a consultant researcher in an international NGO in Lebanon and applies participative research methods in her work with adolescent girls about their perspectives on the reasons for early marriage and the needs of married girls.

rights themselves but have to rely on adults' advocacy and support (as discussed in several sections of this study, see also Miljeteig, 2000). Nonetheless, as the MACR aims at qualifying personalities with the goal to enable, empower children, to become advocates of their own rights, they merit this position here. And, having said this, we must acknowledge that there certainly are children's movements who do stand up for their rights themselves- many of whom are located in the Global South (e.g. NATS), yet increasingly there are also movements and child-led organisations in the Global North. First movements have been active in the UK and Wales (e.g Young People's Rights Network (UK) or Funky Dragon and Young Voice (both Wales), who stand up for their rights in their communities.[289] This is merely one example of children's (possible) role in the children's rights community; in academia, there have been movements to accompany child-led research (see chapter 5.2.2. and 10.2.3.). Several research partners have also mentioned their endeavours for children in which they place the children in a position of empowerment and give way to the possibility for their self-directed activities (e.g. Nora, chapter 7.2.2.).

The members of the children's rights community in cooperating with each other by exchanging knowledge and expertise in the field of children's human rights and their advancement aim at achieving the largest benefits possible to meet this objective. Research informs students and practitioners and vice versa- students engage in direct work with children and practitioners in diverse fields (empowerment, teaching, advocacy, knowledge distribution: see previous chapter 10.2.). So do teachers and caretakers in schools and daycare centres. Ideally, politicians and policy makers also exchange knowledge and expertise directly with children, whereas this is still not (yet) common practice. Academics and students equally, share knowledge with children during research and impart knowledge teaching students in higher education.

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[289] See Simeunovic Frick, 2011: 205-210 and 221-232.

Figure 8- Children's Rights Community
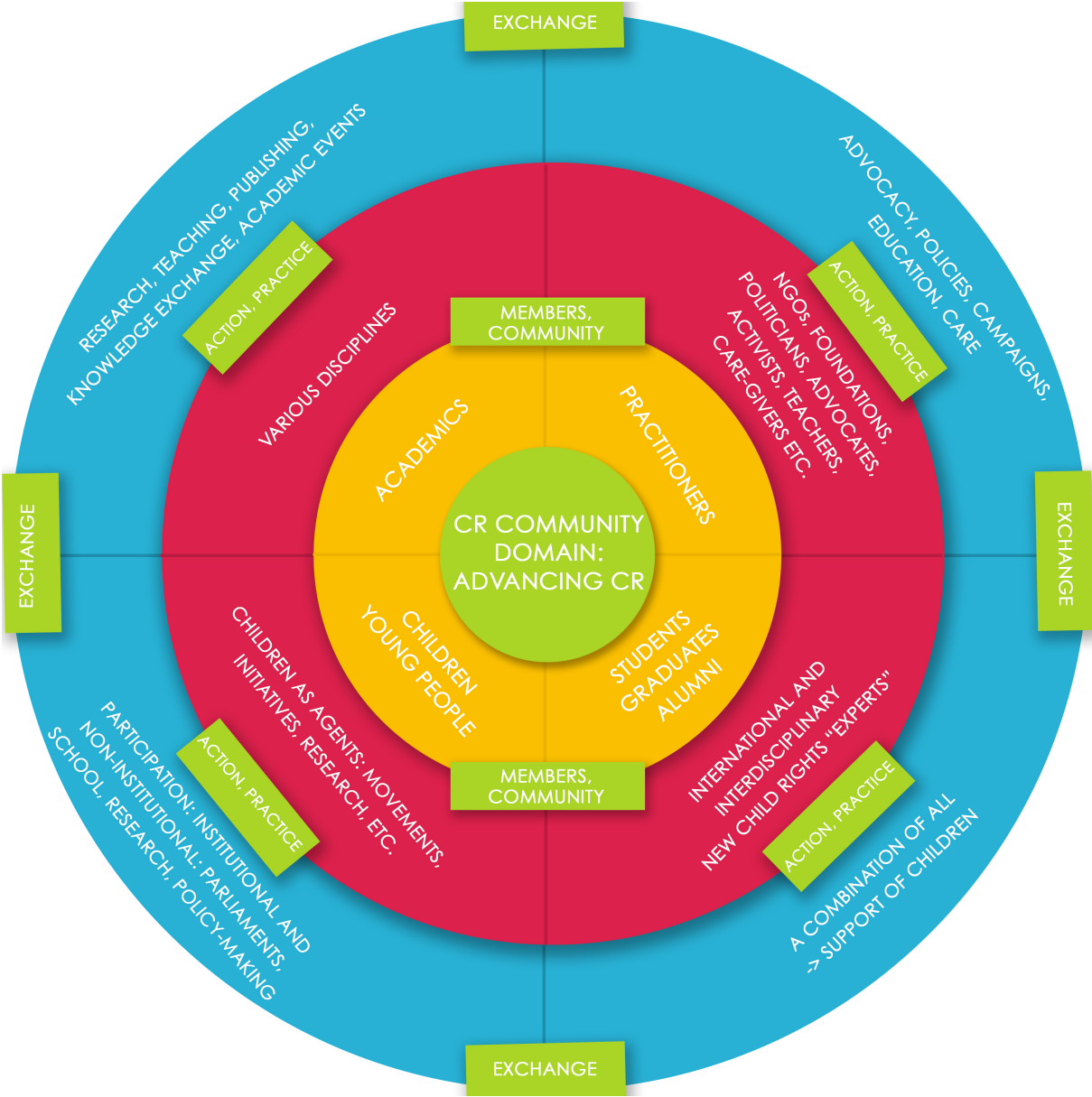
I will now take a closer look at the community of children's rights with a focus on the students and graduates of the MACR and their access to and role in the community, the benefits of being a member as well as the value they place on their membership and participation in the network.

11.3. Characteristics of the Children's Rights Community with Reference to MACR Students, Graduates and Alumni

In a next step, I will discuss the students' and graduates' common activities within the children's rights community, depicting eight characteristic clusters deducted from the semi – structured guideline interviews with the research partners and the essays they wrote as well as some answers given in the online survey:

1. Developing a sense of belonging to the community.
2. Exchanging knowledge amongst each other.
3. Connecting to other alumni who are members of the community.
4. Receiving information on children's rights activities.
5. Being a member of the childhood and children's rights research(ers) community.
6. Finding jobs.
7. Having an increased self- esteem and feeling of self-efficacy.
8. Friendships (personal and professional)

Developing and acquiring a sense of belonging to the community

Students develop a sense of belonging, a feeling of being a member of the (immediate students) children's rights community and being proud of this affiliation during the course of the study programme as described above. From what alumni have written, often this sense of belonging continues beyond the programme's duration:

> *"I'm proud of us all, of our group and also to have had this unique opportunity to enter in the field of children's rights, which is now ours", "I think we all liked this Tuesday so much because we felt once more the inspiring energy and good vibes that accompanied us during this master. Wow, I'm so happy that I see most of you again" (e-mail by alumna after graduate meeting).*

One group (2013-15) organised a meeting with all the members of their individual group about nine months after graduation. Thereinafter several graduates expressed their joy in having had the possibility to meet again and confirmed their interest in meeting on a regular basis. The following quotes from e-mails were sent after the meeting:

> *"It was a wonderful and inspiring time with you all and I really hope that we can stay in touch and support each other wherever each one of us will be".*

> *"I would like to thank all of you who made the last 1-½ years so unique. All of our discussions, conversations and hugs ;-) helped me to widen my perspectives, to be more brave and become stronger and more convinced that I am in the right field of research and study"*

Not only have students bonded during the MACR, they also express the value they place on having been with the multicultural and interdisciplinary group of students as significant ingredient for the positive learning experience in the master's. Even though these quotes refer to a meeting which did not take place very long after the programme had ended, several research partners revealed that they are still in contact with some fellow

students after many years of graduating. Julia, who graduated in 2011 and whom I interviewed in mid 2016, mentioned in the interview that she is definitely interested in the current activities of her fellow colleagues of the MACR, even though she is not in contact with all of them. One significant connection has been to cooperate professionally with two other alumni by inviting them as guest teachers to the school she is teaching at to give an account of their current work in the field of children's rights.

> "*Yes I am* (in contact with others from the course) *and its really interesting to know what they did--- one is teaching in Palestine education with women teachers- so we invite teachers from there- or I ask... so we send teachers from our school there --- its exchange----"* (Julia, I: 223-225).

Exchanging knowledge, personal issues, work experiences

Graduates also exchange knowledge of practical work experiences to reach a better understanding and to confirm that the professional activities they are engaged in are in accordance with children's rights. This exchange (also of personal issues) fosters the sense and strength of being united through the interest and knowledge in the field of children's rights as well as the alumni's passion for children's rights (e.g. Zara, E: 21-26, see above).

Connecting to alumni (as members of the CoP)

The third cluster describes the connection amongst alumni from the FUB not only specifically to their own inner group, but also to alumni of former years and alumni of other children's rights courses. The most prominent connection is the facebook student network created during the implementation of the CREAN project.[290] Every group member can post information, which varies from calls for papers or posters for conferences and other academic events to job advertisements in the field and personal inquiries. The group page is used extensively. One vision to connect students has been that students (and graduates) of different European universities engage in cooperative research and exchange their findings to build up a further connection amongst research activities. Up to now, this is unfortunately only a vision.

Receiving information on children's rights activities

As mentioned before (chapter 7), over the past ten years, approximately 250 students have graduated from FUB. As another tool to provide information, the coordination team has set up an alumni mailing list to share interesting and useful information on children's rights activities such as conferences, job openings and child rights-relevant events. Alumni have repeatedly voiced how valuable this information is.

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[290] https://www.facebook.com/groups/167417743452404/ (accessed 30.8.2017) membership in the group on acceptance of the administrator.

"I'm really happy I feel good that you are sending so soo much information not only about the master's here but also relevant events at FU and different universities which I really like" (Aziza, I: 554-556).[291]

This information flow is one-directional and moderated by the MACR coordination team. Nonetheless, alumni can send information asking for dissemination through the list. Generally, this is done. Another provision of knowledge through the child rights community is the monthly electronic information service of CREAN: CRnews. It was edited and distributed from FUB from 2008 until 2015. At the moment, with the move of the coordination office to University of Geneva, CRnews has not been released yet. Here, information on activities of CREAN members, common research projects, calls for research project proposals and other issues of interest are published. Anyone who is interested in this information can subscribe to the newsletter.

Membership in the children's rights research community

The introduction to many researchers in children's rights with different backgrounds and from different disciplines, from Germany and other European and Latin American universities (RMI, chapter 3.1.2.) is another practice of the child rights community and its cooperation in the domain of children's rights. This takes place i.a. through inviting guest lecturers and participating in conferences via the CREAN network and directly through the master's and organisations working in the field. Students appreciate these opportunities as being beneficial and eye-opening for their further engagement with children's rights.

"I mean here I can, here I can, I have so many ehm seminars, conferences to even participate and opportunities I have here to do presentations" (Aziza, I: 178-179)[292].

Another benefit of being a member of the child rights community is the advice of researchers on possibilities for PhD studies and recommendations for mentors. Especially if the topic is one that is not easily accepted by professors. Lisa was looking to engage in child-led research, which was not deemed academically valid by the first supervisor she approached, ".. and then Manfred (Liebel) recommended to apply somewhere else and then I changed to Prof. Dr. Doris Bühler-Niederberger, to Wuppertal, this is great" (Lisa, I: 186-188). [293] Julia underlines this positive effect the network of researchers has:

"I think in terms of knowing professors- to have someone for the PhD- Manfred- Lohrenscheit- references- you can approach people, you know what field they work in- the literature, you know who wrote it- (..) I can follow people on facebook and follow what they are doing" (Julia, I: 96-102).

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[291] See also field notes.

[292] Aziza was one of the students who participated in a moot court on children's rights by which she gained insight into formal judicial proceedings that assist her in her work today.

[293] „... und dann hatte Manfred mir empfohlen, mich anderweitig zu bewerben und dann bin ich gewechselt zu Doris Bühler-Niederberger – nach Wuppertal- find ich auch nach wie vor Klasse" (Lisa, I: 186-188).

Finding work

Another aspect of students' affiliation with the community is the introduction to practitioners working in the field while in the programme. This happens mainly during the Praxistag[294] or when practitioners come to class as guest lecturers and most importantly during the internship done in the frame of module 7. Events related to children's rights, such as panel discussions on specific themes in foundations or organisations, congresses and conferences as well as symposia, are also places for developing connections and finding access to possible jobs.

> „Well that came about through training- because we were at the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung- on unaccompanied minor refugees, there was an event and there I started conversing with a staff member at Save the Children- and by that I got to know the organization better; through the person whom I got to know there I learned about the job opening and applied. (..) I worked on a trial basis first and then I was hired"(Miriam, I: 94-100)[295].

> "I think that was in Christina Ayazi's module- where my boss was a guest lecturer and he was talking about the Roma school – and also RAA. So this is how we got in contact and I applied for the job position and internship. I got this so this is how it started" (Lulu, I: 290-293).

Other research partners also described how their job is related to the MACR in terms of having been introduced to the employers through community connections.[296] Tobias states that he found his job at a children's rights organisation by coincidence, not through the MACR, even though the information about the job opening came from two members of the immediate community (Tobias, I: 85-93).[297]

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[294] See chapter 5.1.2.1. and 5.2.3.

[295] „Also das ist auch Training- entstanden, weil wir da mal bei der FES waren- zu unbegleiteten minderjährigen Flüchtlingen gab es eine Veranstaltung und da bin ich mit jemandem von Save the Children ins Gespräch bekommen- und habe so die Organisation besser kennengelernt und deren Arbeit und hab dadurch; durch die Person, die ich da kennengelernt habe, von der Stelle erfahren auf die ich mich dann beworben hab. Genau, und ähm und hab mich dann aber ganz normal darauf beworben und hab Probe gearbeitet bei Save the Children und bin dann letztendlich dort gelandet" (Miriam, I: 94-100)

[296] R: So, I would like to come to the present- to hear a little bit about what you do with your degree? Or did you remain in your old job?
Moritz: No! of course my aim was to change my work position (...) basically one of the board member of (the small youth welfare organization).- was the same person as the (chuckling) director of the EMCR(...)- The organization was looking for someone who could fill in a position of a children's rights representative and they came to the (graduation ceremony of the master's) (..) (the director) I think was (..)and he was invited to the graduation to get to know the students/graduates and perhaps have someone to fill in this position and yeah- Manfred Liebel introduced me to him. So, I spoke to him and I think there weren't that many- I think there were two applications of graduates who applied for this position children's rights representative - so we were invited to an interview and ehm yeah I got the job! (Moritz, I: 103-116)

[297] „ that was a coincidence that Claudia Kittel, who had supervised my thesis, told me that Save the Children is starting a project in the field of refugee children- so I thought that I would write an application. And I heard about it already, because Miriam had told me about the job position- she had called me and told me, that I had already worked on the topic, master's thesis (...) so I didn't assume that to be relevant for me (..) and then we had the conversation two months later and then they told Claudia about it and then the position wasn't on the internet anymore and then that worked out"(Tobias, I: 85-93)

These described six characteristic clusters show tangible outcomes on the performance of practices which afford the students and alumni legitimacy to share their knowledge effectively, within the group itself and the outer communities (e.g. John, Claudia, E: 14-16).[298]

Increased self-esteem and self-efficacy

Closely related to belonging to the child rights community, as a special group, is an increase in self-esteem as well as self-efficacy. Hitherto, the concept of belonging becomes the key to a person's sense of self and the feeling that his or her efforts are valued (Strayhorn, 2012). Students and graduates who draw from the multifaceted benefits of being a member of the child rights community have a strong sense of belonging, which typically refers to the extent to which individuals feel connected to others, feel that they matter, or feel important to others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995):

> *"Socially it has boosted my self-esteem, confidence, self-love and respect from others in the form of recognition, success, and admiration"* (Femi, E: 5-6).

So, the concept of such a sense of belonging "...promotes a variety of positive and/or prosocial outcomes such as engagement, achievement, well-being, happiness, and optimal functioning" (Strayhorn, 2012a: 22 in Johnson, 2012, review). Aziza is proud of her success, which she ascribes to the knowledge gained in the MACR:

> *"Through my current employment, I have utilized the knowledge and know-how acquainted during my MA studies through sharing it with national counterparts. This was consolidated by co-authoring a procedural manual to raise the childcare quality standards of the detention centers for juveniles and delivering on-job training to caregivers working in these centers. This manual is the first of its kind in the Middle East Region and I am the first one to undertake a scientific research assessing the current case management practices in Egypt that are followed by governmental and non-governmental residential care institutions. Based on my study's results, I have developed a robust case management system with procedural steps and guidelines"* (Aziza, E: 39-47).

Tobias sees the asset of the MACR in the nearly inexistent hierarchical structures, allowing students to be treated as equals, which in consequence establishes the wish and understanding of the necessity to encounter other people in the same way. This has improved his self-efficacy, as reactions to this altered behaviour are positive.

„ ... das war Zufall, dass Claudia Kittel, die ja meine Masterarbeit betreut hat, mir erzählt hat, Save the Children starte ein Projekt im Bereich Flüchtlingskinder – dann habe ich gedacht, dass ich auch da eine Initiativbewerbung schreibe. Und ich hatte schon davon gehört, weil Miriam mir schon mal von einer Ausschreibung erzählt hat- sie hatte mich angerufen und mir gesagt, dass ich ja in dem Bereich schon mal was gemacht habe Masterarbeit- (...). Das habe ich als nicht so relevant für mich gesehen (...) und dann hatten wir das Gespräch zwei Monate später und dann haben sie das Claudia erzählt und dann war die Stelle auch nicht mehr im Internet ausgeschrieben und dann hat das geklappt" (Tobias, I: 85-93)

[298] Besides directing the school, Claudia is also teaching concepts of participation, inclusion and children's rights at university to students of education and social work (see Claudia, E: 14-16).

„(...) to be in contact at all and to be able to speak on a par with the teachers, that has,- I don't know if
I can call this a ‚skill', that has given me a lot of self-efficacy" (Tobias, I: 238-240)[299].

Studying the MACR has not only brought students together in a community of practice on a professional level. The community is also a personal one of friendships and trust.

Friendships- Personal and Professional

Although not explicitly mentioned by the cited authors of theories on the sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2012a and 2012b; Johnson, 2013 and Eunyoung & Irwin, 2013) or the concept of Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger et.al, 2002) and group development (Tuckman, 1965, Tuckman & Jensen, 1977, Wheelan et al., 2003; Wheelan, 2005; Gilley & Kerno Jr., 2010), friendships are an important factor for MACR graduates when positioning themselves in the children's rights community. Several research partners have expressed that one outcome and impact the programme has had on them is the creation and establishment of lasting friendships. The understanding of what friendship is, varies across cultures- the extent to which confidence to share personal, private issues plays different roles and has varying significance for the understanding and subjective meaning of "friendship". [300] Therefore, the following statements should be taken with some caution. However, it is not my task here to define friendship in different cultures and regions of the world; what counts here, is the emotional importance and weight the friendships have for graduates. The friendships are mentioned in the frame of speaking about the network of people who fight for children's rights and the outreach of the network into practice with NGOs and public institutions and within academia.

"The network of the M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights is super far-reaching: everywhere
engaged, motivated and socially interested people, who care for children's issues (either theoretical or
practical, directly or indirectly). And: I have found life-long friends" (Marlies, Essay, 3-5).

"I have made amazing friends with whom I have established a network of support and knowledge.
Specifically, with three of the students in the master's programme, we have established a profound

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[299] *„(…) überhaupt Kontakt zu haben auf Augenhöhe mit den Dozenten reden zu können, das hat mir- ich weiß nicht, ob ich das jetzt einen 'skill' nennen soll, das hat mir viel Selbstwirksamkeit gegeben, so." (Tobias, I: 238-240)*

[300] During my first studies (in cultural sciences), I did a study comparing German and US American students' understanding of friendship- questions varied from how many friends students had, what they do with their friends, what personal issues they share with their friends. The outcome of this small-scale research was that German students have far fewer friends than their American counterparts. Trust-building is a process which plays a great role in who is understood as a friend, compared to the US, where the meaning of friendship was much more casual and what Germans may define as "acquaintances" seem to be friends to US Americans. Concerning statements of research partners in the frame of this study, John, e.g. wrote: *"I made friends including you. This promoted socialisation and through social networks, I have been able to link up with different people in different countries. This gave some chances of interacting with different races and hence better living" (John, E: 6-8).* I hadn't heard from him for seven years and did not correspond with him very much while he was in Berlin. In Germany, this would probably not suffice to call another person a friend.

network where we aim to meet once or twice a year in person in one country which is closest to where we all are" (Zara, essay: 18-21).

11.4. Una Masa Crítica- a Critical Mass (of Children's Rights Experts)

In this chapter on the community of children's rights and in particular the students as community members, I have discussed the effect the network(s), has on the successful application of competencies developed during the study programme. The network, understood as community (of practice), of which the MACR and its students are a member[301], has been introduced as an association of people with the visions and missions in a particular domain (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Orange, 2016; Mishra, 2016): the promotion of the rights of children. The players in the community have varying access points to approach the common mission, varying by background and profession. Here I am referring to geographic and academic disciplinary variety, as well as practical child rights-based approaches on all levels (direct, indirect, local, regional, national and international). The sense of belonging, as the process of identification with a common purpose, strengthens the feeling about the subject and helps sustain the motivation to continue fighting for the common aim, the improvement of children's rights (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2015). Becoming a member of the Children's Rights Community of Practice evokes a change in values, beliefs and attitude as intangible effects. It is likely that this is the most important outcome of the MACR (for the students, and for the realisation of children's rights) as by qualifying individuals and groups in childhood studies and children's rights a contribution is made to the critical mass of experts in the field that is needed to evoke change (see also Juan Enrique Bazán's comment in the development process of the master's- footnote 3).

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[301] ENMCR/CREAN and also on a German national level through membership in the National Coalition of associations, organisations and institutions to implement the UN Child Rights Convention.

Conclusion: Children's Rights and Academia- A Way to Go Ahead

"Academic programmes may increase awareness of children's rights, but that is not their main objective. They should principally enhance the capacity of students to think critically about how certain ways of promoting children's rights may impact people".[302]

Throughout this study, I have challenged the measurability of the impact the international and interdisciplinary *M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights* (MACR) can have on social change through the perception of childhood and children's rights practices. The first step in "changing human rights practices (...) involves changes in individual and community identities. It is clear that along with legal guarantees, changes to behavioral norms and practices are needed in order to realize human rights in everyday lives" (Orange, 2016: 707). Both the quote of the MACR alumni placed at the beginning of this long-term (2006-2018) evaluation research: *"Children's rights are a matter of daily practice"*, that which I call *"children's rights thinking"*, and Orange's claim regarding the conditions for changes in human rights practices[303] mirror the findings of assessing the impact the MACR has on its participants and subsequently on society.

This research has had the objective to describe, analyse and discuss the process of developing and establishing the MACR within the framework of the *Children's Rights European Academic Network* (CREAN), to draw a picture of the enrolled students and to evaluate its significance with regards to three main areas of impact:

1. Concerning children's rights: How they are conceptualised in the MACR and how they may be employed and implemented to improve the situation and social position of children by awareness-raising and offering services.

2. With respect to the students and graduates: How they use the competencies achieved in the MACR both in their professional activities and their personal and private surroundings as critically thinking individuals with changed attitudes as members of a community of children's rights actors.[304]

3. In view of the potential contribution the master's can have on society to trigger social change.

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[302] Answer to alumni online survey question on the (social and personal) impact of academic programmes.

[303] - being a member of a community with equal aims and goals (advancing children's rights),
 - living through a change in behaviour and attitude challenging set beliefs and altering thought patterns), and
 - knowledge of juridical instruments to legally claim them (knowing and being capable of using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, European and national legislation concerning children's rights)

[304] I have followed the concept of a "Community of Practice (CoP)" introduced first by Lave & Wenger in 1991 and having been taken up by several researchers since (e.g. Orange, 2016; Mishra, Mohammed & Fiadhi, 2016).

Due to the nature of human rights study programmes they are not evaluable with traditional assessment methods that are based on output measurements (Hirseland et al., 2004). The competencies[305] developed in human rights programmes, are expressed in increased levels of tolerance, a strengthened sense for democracy, an understanding of the necessity of critical reflection of society and oneself, respect for society in general and, in the case of the MACR for children in particular. Such theoretical, intangible knowledge leads to practical action, which can be measured more easily. I have argued with Pierre Bourdieu's approach to practical and reflexive knowledge (Bourdieu, 1990a and 1990b) as a basis for comprehending the seemingly dichotomous relationship between both forms of knowledge. On closer reflection, this dichotomy between theoretical knowledge, understood here as a form of intangible competency, increased level of tolerance, respect etc. and the practical competencies MACR students and graduates gain, can be resolved. The assessment of reflexive competencies is not merely an interpretation of how activities are informed through newer theories of childhood and children's rights based on social sciences.[306] Rather, the assessment of their impact must always be based within the practical knowledge, the tangible outcomes with regard to children's human rights action of MACR students, graduates and alumni.[307] The other side of the coin is, conversely, that the practical know-how must be based on reflexive, theoretical knowledge, otherwise it would be pure instinctive action (refer to chapter 10.2.; Kurtz & Pfadenhauer, 2010).

In order to demonstrate the praxis of this theoretical knowledge and practical competencies, I have gathered statements, narrations and personal stories from graduates and alumni of the MACR on the application and impact of the acquired qualification. The impact on their personal behaviour, thought patterns and (changed) attitude has been assessed as well as the manner by which the newly developed competencies inform students' professional activities. In this context, another issue is in what way students find and make use of knowledge- sharing among members of the children's rights community, composite of governmental and non-governmental organisations, activists, teachers, caretakers, policy-makers, doctors, nurses and children themselves (Hopple & Orhun, 2008; see also chapter 11.2.).

Furthermore, I have aimed at corroborating the hypothesis that the master's programme itself and the findings of this study serve as a contribution from academia to further conceptualise and define a childhood and children's rights theory and to implement children's rights on a practical level based on scientifically "validated" knowledge. Within a traditional understanding it is society's task to prepare children for their future adulthood when they can and must, attributable to their legal majority, take on complete responsibility for their actions. Researchers of the community of children's rights however, have (long) advanced from understanding children's rights mainly as protection rights enacted by adults on their behalf (Miljeteig, 2000). This has led to a concentration on the implementation of

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[305] The word "competencies" has been used recently as a "one covers-all"- term standing for knowledge; know-how, qualification; learning outcome (Kurtz & Pfadenhauer 2010; Schützeichel, 2010, see chapter 10).
[306] Anthropology, Sociology, Education, Philosophy, Psychology, Law (refer to chapter 4).
[307] See random sample of where alumni are working in the annex (no.10
); see also research partners' professional activities (chapter 10.2.).

the CRC, which endows children participation rights alongside provision and protection rights (CRC, Art.12 and Art.13-15). Yet, this approach has been contested by researchers to be "too legal" (Cordero-Arce, 2015). Hence, researchers have proceeded from children's legal studies towards a holistic view and study of children's rights; at FUB also by challenging the rights-philosophical approaches on which children's human rights are (supposed to be) grounded. Dignity as the basis for moral rights, and ideally also codified law has become a central part of the MACR's curriculum in the last two years. For one, this allows for an approximation to juridical aspects of the human rights system which students have been demanding to be included in the curriculum for years. Furthermore, the MACR team has set the goal to integrate issues of moral duties and to place respect in the centre and ensure that students' activities are dignity-based.

Concentration on the rights to participation introduced with the CRC, the power imbalance between children and adults, manifest in age-based discrimination against children, and often referred to as adultism (Flasher, 1978; Ritz, 2008; LeFrançois, 2014; Liebel, 2014) is the underlying current of the MACR and what graduates name the most as theory that has impacted them and their behaviour. Keeping this power balance in mind, scholars have dedicated much of their children's rights research to children's agency, e.g. by pointing to "unwritten" rights of children (Ennew, 2002; Cussiánovich, 2017), or rights in the waiting (Sen, 2004) which may be articulated and enacted "from below" (Liebel, 2012) by children themselves, allowing for the children to understand themselves as subjects of rights *they* can claim and take forward themselves as protagonists in their own lives (and in society) (Liebel, 1994; Gaitán, 2009; Cussiánovich, 2001a & 2001b).

Students are set the task to critically reflect on these inherently North Western, Eurocentric approaches, to challenge society's and their own understanding of childhood and children's rights. In this study, I have offered a grounded conjecture that programmes in children's rights leading to highly qualified individuals evoke personal changes in perceptions, attitudes and beliefs. Moreover, I have proposed that MACR graduates consequentially, when behaving and acting in accordance with these changes, contribute to a broader social change. After recapitulating the research process in a next step and having put it in context (for change in society can only be measured in the specific surroundings and context and cannot be generally applied) (Lee, 2004), I will undertake to formulate an answer to the overarching question whether the MACR, within the context of the CREAN network and in cooperation with the wider network of children's rights actors and the teachers as transmitters of knowledge and the students and graduates, contributes to social change, and if so, in what way.

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Recapitulating the Research Process and Limitations

Having stated this ambitious endeavour, I will briefly review the research process I have sustained over the past twelve years, to contextualise the placement of the study programme and have a frame by which an approximation to a resolution concerning the challenging inquiry into the possibilities of social change via the implementation and further conceptualisation of children's rights and via higher qualification in childhood and children's rights is possible.

Using qualitative research methods, I engaged in a descriptive documentation of development processes both of the ENMCR Network (subsequently CREAN) and the master's (MACR) itself. I employed a combination of methods, collecting oral and verbal as well as observational data. Semi-structured (expert[308])- guideline interviews with recent graduates and alumni who had obtained their degree years before the interview took place constitute the main data corpus, alongside several written essays by a random selection of alumni from all the study years. Both the interview and the essays concentrate on competencies students have achieved in the master's and their value and use in the everyday lives of the research partners.[309] The essays and the literally transcribed interviews were analysed by employing a coding system based on values (Gable & Wolf, 1993; Le Compte & Preissle, 1993; Saldaña, 2016), concentrating on the explication of research partners' reflections on their values and belief system and their alteration through the master's. Subsequently, the extracted content was examined according to Mayring's (2002) content analysis scheme and interpreted following suggestions to engage in a reflective procedure placing myself in my role as researcher within the data (Silverman, 2015; Mason, 2002). Through the gathered students' and graduates' narrations and their subsequent analysis and interpretation in this qualitative evaluation research, I have let the voices of students and graduates speak, as they are the experts, not only in their own lives but also in the (subjective) reality they live in (just as children are the best connoisseurs of their lives and lived reality).

Before continuing, I would like to point out the limitations, yet also the advantages involved in this study. First, it may have a projective mark of a (subjective) report, due to my

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[308] I have included "expert" here, notwithstanding the difficulties this term implies (see chapter 6.1.2. and 8.1.1.), because I see the graduates of the MACR as experts in the field of children's rights. "Expert" is also set in parentheses because I have adopted some of the method of "expert interviews" (see Liebold & Trincek, 2009; e.g.; for an overview of several interview forms, see e.g. Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2010).

[309] I also conducted an online survey with alumni from several courses in children's rights at member universities of the CREAN network. The number of responses was too small to make any significant statement about the quantitative data I had hoped to retrieve (approximate number of alumni of all participating universities; their academic and national background; how many years of work experience they have before enrolling in the programme; tendencies for work placements after graduation; significance of master's degree to get hired). Three open questions were also asked:

> How has studying children's rights impacted your personality? Has your mindset changed, and if so, how would you describe this change? In your view, what contribution have academic children's rights programmes made to raise awareness of children's rights and realising children's rights for children in general?.

Some respondents wrote about their interesting opinions. I have added some of these statements to the research material I based my investigation on. Field notes of personal encounters with students and protocols of the regular evaluation meetings with teachers and advisory committee meetings are also a rich source of information.

extensive knowledge in the investigated field in my role as coordinator of the master's (refer to chapter 6.1.1.). The research partners, even though selected randomly, all know me, which could have led them to speak about the subject addressed with some caution. As all of them had graduated and their participation in this study did in no way affect their degree, I believe there was also a great deal of potential of being close to the field of study, facilitating access and encountering a trust basis between myself and the research partners, which allowed for more detailed and possibly more confidential information. A further limitation is the time frame in which this study was conducted- originally the aim had been to demonstrate the need for qualification of children's rights experts in academia and weigh possibilities for future activities of graduates' of the unique new study programme MACR. In the meantime, it is not possible to talk about "future fields of actions" generally. We have arrived in this future already. As we have seen, many of the envisaged professional placements for child rights experts have been created over the past years. Nonetheless, there are still many fields of action in which children's rights are nominally existent, their conceptualisation however can still be challenged and improved.

This study might have benefitted from more in-class observation to enable a first-hand assessment of group dynamics and the realisation of working, teaching and learning in the international and interdisciplinary student groups. It could be interesting to engage in a shorter-term assessment of the impact of internationalisation processes at higher education institutions on study programmes and the student groups in particular. The aim of this study, however, was not primarily to gather first-hand observation data in the classroom to investigate group dynamics, rather it went one step beyond and was concerned with the impact such a study context entails.

Another consideration about the subjective interpretation of the analysed data is the general subjectiveness of qualitative research data interpretation. Again, I believe my knowledge of the field is an advantage rather than a hindrance for this study. Only by having been closely connected to the network of children's rights studies and the master's itself was it possible to give an account of processes as holistic as possible that led to the establishment of both. The readily available information on motivational factors for the enrolment in the master's, the results of evaluations with students, etc. was a great asset I was able to utilise. I am aware that there is a possibility, as in any secondary research, that another interpreter of the data I collected might come to (slightly) different conclusions (James, 2012). Nonetheless I firmly believe that the essence of the findings, namely that students experience a change in their perception of children and their rights as well as approaches to social realities would be confirmed.[310]

The evaluation is based almost only at FUB, hardly considering situations and outcomes of children's rights master's education at other CREAN universities. It would be highly inter-

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[310] The MACR has been running for eleven years and there has been a development towards more children's rights courses in academia across Europe which are based on similar theoretical conceptions and beliefs about childhood and children's rights. Very recent much smaller-scale evaluations of courses reveal that these have similar effects on the participants (see internal evaluation of a singular Bachelor's course on children's rights at University College East London; - lecturer and author of the study: Francesca Zanetto: Presented at the CREAN conference: *The impact of child rights education and research on policy development*. Geneva: 18.-19.1.2018).

esting to undertake a similar investigation (perhaps more condensed, yet on the same premises) and make the effort to compare the findings. This could back up an internationally more holistic picture of what contribution study programmes in children's rights can have on social change.

I will turn to how this is reflected in the findings of this study. Beforehand, as a reminder, I would like to review the research stages as depicted in the three images in the introduction. The three stages refer to the subjects that were investigated in successive steps, each described with the "initial condition"; the "context" in which the respective research step is imbedded, the "strategies of conduct" employed concerning the research subject and the "outcome" or "consequence" respectively (introduction, figures 1-3).

I will focus on the findings of the evaluation describing the outcomes and discussing (possible) general consequences. The initial condition framing the MACR and CREAN as the encompassing theme of this study was to counteract the lack of higher education degrees in children's rights in Europe. The aim of such a degree is to qualify individuals to become advocates of children's human rights. The background of the perceived necessity to establish such programmes was a lack of academic attention to the subject. This led to the CREAN network and its members' strategy of conduct to develop a curriculum for a master's programme (chapter 5), reflecting a more encompassing and holistic approach to childhood studies and children's rights (chapter 4). In the context of short-sighted, often paternalistic, international, European and national political operations based on North Western, Eurocentric understandings of what childhood is and should entail were and still are dominant approaches regarding children's rights. Such approaches by public and non-government as well as not-for-profit organisations were equally significant for the establishment of the programme. A critical reflection of these dominant views must do justice to children's evolving capacities, (Lansdown, 2001) eventually transforming them into children's evolving capabilities when allowed to realise them (Liebel, 2015b), making children's rights a lived reality that is prone to changes over time and within frameworks and has distinct variations in different contexts. When understood in these terms, children's rights require a theoretical foundation that goes beyond the CRC (chapter 4). Framed by various disciplinary approaches, the initiators of the network and programme aimed at marrying childhood studies and children's rights (Vanobbergen, 2015; Mayall, 2015) and cooperating to explicate the interdisciplinary nature of children's rights. In abidance with the formal context of the EU "Bologna" regulations on higher education and the "Dublin Descriptors" for competencies to be achieved in higher education in the EU (chapter 1.6. and 5.1.2.3.), the master's programme was developed with the outcome of enrolling students for the first time in 2007 during a pilot year of the programme (figure 1).

After having established the master's programme, the next subject under investigation are the MACR students. The initial condition is that they are enrolled, are highly motivated individuals from several countries across the globe with varying expectations towards the

programme.[311] Some students had practical reasons to enrol in the master's, such as earning a higher university degree, others expected to gain new insights and practical tools for their field of work (e.g. education; law) again others were driven by the desire to change their careers or to gain access to large international human rights organisations (chapter 7.3. and 7.4.). The context in which the master's is offered is highly heterogeneous with a student body that is distinct respecting both national and disciplinary background, thus making the learning experience a most differentiated and, according to the graduates' narrations, valuable one deriving from the diverse insights into and the numerous opinions on the topics introduced in the curriculum. During their studies, the participants meet in face-to-face sessions in which themes are also discussed from various viewpoints and disciplines. The strategies of conduct they apply are the preparation by reading scientific literature and following up on them when writing scientific papers to complete the modules. Scientific writing skills are especially important for students who have not written such papers before. In particular either for students coming from another discipline such as e.g. medicine, business marketing or engineering or for students who have studied in a different educational and academic background before, writing module papers can involve difficulties and are often highly challenging (Sachverständigenrat, 2017; see also chapter 9.3.). The outcome of this intensive time of learning is having developed theory-based practical competencies, such as scientific writing and advocacy skills, knowledge of the international human and children's rights system including its difficulties and potential for further development (see e.g. Holzscheiter, 2010; Montgomery, 2015; see also chapters 2 & 4) as well as participatory research methods with children, all of which, in my opinion, makes children's rights experts of them (figure 2).

The third subject of investigation and the most important step of this evaluative study is the impact the master's has on the students and graduates in its several facets, depending on their surroundings and the strategies of conduct they employ. Considering that the general (societal) situation of approaches towards children and their rights changes only gradually and with time, the context in which students perform after graduation is similar to the one at the time of their enrolment in the MACR. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that political and civil society progresses and the number of movements to trigger change concerning children's rights has increased, resulting in a significant growth of awareness of children's rights in the past ten years of implementing the master's.[312] To make common use of the competencies achieved in the programme, students take on a strategy of knowledge sharing with each other and within the broader community of children's rights experts and activists, in their work context and privately (chapter 11). This is done through regular face-to-face encounters, skype meetings, by inviting fellow students

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[311] Remarkably, nearly all study places were taken in the first year (the programme team had envisaged taking in a maximum of 28 students; in the first year, 21 of the places were taken), although the degree was yet completely unknown.

[312] At least in Germany, where children's rights did not find any mentioning in e.g. newspapers ten years ago, today, references to children's rights can be found in nearly all print media at least once, often several times a month; politicians have set children's rights on their agenda, negotiating their inclusion in the federal constitution; initiatives for child-friendly schools and communities have taken up speed, etc. On increasing children's rights agendas in Europe see chapter 2.4..

to current work contexts to present their work to each other. Knowledge is also shared via social media; a CREAN student facebook site was founded in 2012. With the theoretical foundation conveyed and internalised during the programme, the outcome of having read the master's, having become a member of the children's rights community and being in a position to use the competencies achieved in several contexts, many participants undergo a change in attitude towards children and people in general, encountering them with (more) respect and as equals by taking a child rights-based approach. This induces me to regard the consequence of such change in behaviour, attitude and newly acquired thought patterns leading to conceivable social change, beginning with a change in children's human rights situations (figure 3).

"Social change is the result of the interplay between structural conditions, on one hand, and conscious and deliberate human interventions, on the other" (Qvortrup, 2009: 21). The analysis of the graduates' voices and statements has revealed that there has indeed been a change in attitude in most students, resulting in a change in behaviour and altered thought patterns leading to the development of competencies to approach problems consciously. The exposure to various disciplinary approaches to children's rights in a rather intimate learning environment with a small group of students that find trust in each other, enables students to develop a critical sense of their own value systems and those dominant in society. Although societies' structures have not been altered significantly during the past ten years of offering the MACR, there has been some progress made towards taking child rights-based approaches in caretaking, schools, municipalities and, albeit to a much lesser extent also in policy-making. There has equally been progress in including children directly in issues concerning them in particular. The National Coalition for the implementation of the CRC in Germany must e.g. be given credit for inviting children and young people to participate in public events (they have not been invited to internal meetings (yet). The National Coalition in its activities concerning the children's and youth report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child invited and took children aged 11-18 who had participated in several preparatory workshops to Geneva for the consultations on Germany's last State Report to the Committee.[313] On a European level, however, children were e.g. not included in the design of the Commission's Communication *Towards an Agenda on the Rights of the Child* (2006) nor were they included in the drafting process of the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights* (2009), even though by means thereof they were given the status of independent rights holders who are not only mentioned in the framework of families and other authorities. Progress was made in the development of the *EU Agenda on the Rights of the Child* (2011) where children were consulted in the drafting process. Even though they were only included on adult terms, by answering pre-defined questions, all the same, they were asked, which is a novelty in international treaties on children's rights. Nonetheless, children are more often excluded than included in meetings and summits of international organisations where issues of children's concern are discussed and deci-

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[313] (see AGJ (ed.) (2010): *Erster Kinder- und Jugendreport. Zur UN-Berichterstattung über die Umsetzung der UN-Kinderrechtskonvention in Deutschland. Ein Zeugnis für die Kinderrechte in Deutschland 2010.* Berlin: Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kinder- und Jugendhilfe

sions are made that have an impact on children's lives (see also chapter 2.3.). How children can be involved and make use of their agency is a challenging issue that students perceive as one of the most difficult aspects of children's rights to apply in their work and surroundings for and with children.

Children as agents of their own life and their surroundings- in the Global North and Global South

The concepts of children's rights "from below" and children's "living rights" result principally from children's movements in countries of the Global South that aim at changing not only their immediate surroundings. They also fight for a change in attitudes and behaviours of decision-makers who may not be in their immediate surroundings yet are often responsible for the conditions the children live in. In their recent research in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, researchers of the CREAN network have demonstrated how children themselves can make their rights a lived reality. They launched a successful campaign against an anti-vagrancy draft law in which children living on the street were closely involved. Even though the subsequent new legislation did not consider their claims the way they had envisaged them to be, they took advantage of their right to participate, which made their rights a lived reality for them (van Daalen, Hanson & Nieuwenhuys, 2016).

As has been demonstrated in this research and the example above, CREAN and, in particular, the MACR has a strong focus on international children's rights issues, critically reflecting Eurocentric approaches and drawing from situations of children in the Global South analogous to the Global North. This does not imply that children's rights in the Global North are not considered in the MACR. Several graduates engage in research in Germany or neighbouring countries in Europe, connecting children's rights issues of the Global North and the Global South, in particular now, since there have been many refugees coming to Europe, including large numbers of children, accompanied or not. Several of their researches refer to the resilience children in such difficult situations present or how child-friendly spaces can be created in refugee centres, to name some examples. In particular, unaccompanied young people often prove themselves cognisant of their rights when they allege minority age (under eighteen years old), as they know that they then have more extensive rights to be protected.[314]

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[314] The harsh and at times children's rights violating means to measure and "prove" these young persons "real" age cannot be discussed here. For many under age refugees the time of reaching 18 years of age proves traumatic in many cases. MA theses that have dealt with this topic are e.g.: *"Wie Flüchtlingskinder ihre Lebenssituation wahrnehmen- eine qualitative Studie in Berlin"*- „How refugee children perceive their living situation- a qualitative study in Berlin". "*The minimum age of penal majority"* (with reference to unaccompanied minor refugees). *"Aging Out" Youth on the Move - Age discrimination within migration policy in Germany"*. "*Child-Friendly Spaces im deutschen Kontext - Welche Besonderheiten ergeben sich für die Implementierung des internationalen Humanitäre Hilfe-Konzeptes aus den Bedingungen deutscher Erstaufnahmeeinrichtungen für Geflüchtete?"*- "Child-Friendly Spaces in the German context- what particularities result from the conditions in German first-stage institutions for refugees for the implementation of the international human aid concept?"

Another example of how children and young people in the North claim their rights is e.g. children's reports directed to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, complimenting state and shadow reports in the monitoring process of the CRC in the signatory states (see chapter 2.4.). Smiljana Simeunovic Frick (ed.) 2011, an EMCR alumna, has compiled such children's reports (submitted to the Committee between 1998 and 2006) and made them available in her edited volume *Children's Rights: Experienced and Claimed- Children's Reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*. A difficult task, as, contrary to the states' and NGOs' reports to the Committee, children's reports are not archived in Geneva (or anywhere, including digitally) and "the reporting system remains largely inappropriate for children's meaningful participation" (Liebel, 2011: 7, preface to the compilation of reports). Although, with the release of GC no. 14 on Art.12 in 2009, the Committee pointed to children's reports being desirable, they have still not been duly considered in discussions, let alone made available publicly, documented or archived. By virtue of these examples, I have aimed at demonstrating the practical implications of the theoretical concept of children's agency and participation, a focus of children's rights studies in the MACR.

(Non)-Inclusion of Children in Academia

Researchers in the CREAN network and MACR teachers alike understand that children are subjects of rights, who not only receive their rights from adults (in the form of caregivers, teachers, mentors, states and institutions) but are to be enabled to enact their rights themselves on the basis of their agency. Having spoken about how children can live their agency, and how this is a major part of the qualification of children's rights experts in academia, I would like to reflect on the involvement and participation of children in the MACR and CREAN.

Up to now, none of the cooperative network activities have directly included children or have been developed and conceptualised together with children- although they and their rights are always central to the actions. How to include children and young people has been discussed on several occasions; the various suggestions, however, have been dismissed as not being "correct" and respectful enough or as being prone to benefit children who are already privileged, as only these children would have access to necessary preparatory steps. The first step therefore would be to set up an adequate framework in which children from several backgrounds can enact their agency in a meaningful way, which is a highly challenging task that requires much innovative and creative energy. The child-unfriendly setting of e.g. academic conferences was precisely the argument used to dismiss the well-meant intentions of some network members. Specifically, in one instance, when conceptualising the first CREAN conference in Madrid (2011): *Children's Rights Research: From Theory to Practice,* time was taken to discuss possibilities of including or inviting children to participate in the conference. All the members of the network agreed that it is desirable to include children. Ideas arose to videotape children and show their testimonies during the conference, another suggestion was to live video-stream them during the conference. Again, due to moral doubts and limited time for preparation, children did not partake in this conference.

And what about the MACR? There have been (on-going) discussions over the years of the master's existence to invite children in the role of teachers to the programme- the idea seemed utopian yet very attractive. For reasons similar to those for not including children in CREAN activities, up till now children have not been directly invited to MACR classes. Besides having the feeling that they could be instrumentalised for the purposes of the teachers and students to show "hey, see how revolutionary we are, we even include children as teachers in the programme", administrative higher education norms in the North West would not allow for children to be teachers in academia. Although some universities, including the FUB, have organised "children's universities" where children are invited to come to university and gain an impression of (adult) university research and studies. Notwithstanding these difficulties in opening up (formal) spaces for children to experience ownership of their rights (to participation), children's voices and opinions do find their way into academic activities and classes, conferences and presentations through the research undertaken by members of the network and students of the MACR who report back on the children's standpoints. Realistic and mutually beneficial ideas on including children more directly in the delivery of the master's are yet to be developed, discussed and possibly applied in future years. The students as experts of children's rights of whom after graduation several work directly with children could develop feasible ways for children's inclusion, always beneath the premise that children and young people who have been sensitised for their rights judge such an activity to be beneficial to them with respect to the implementation and further development of their human rights, which could contribute to a wider change in society.

Contribution to Social Change

Can social change be prompted with the application and use of the described knowledge and competencies delivered and acquired in the MACR? Notwithstanding the difficulty of measuring the contribution a master's study programme in children's rights can make to change the situation of children and their rights, when looking at the developments in this field, there has been a change in approaches to children's rights since the MACR was established and I maintain (emphatically) that the programme *has* had its impact on this change.

Placed in the framework of the CREAN network, which gives the MACR more weight within in the FUB, the understanding of children's rights and its implications for practice has shifted. Discussions e.g. in the National Coalition for the Implementation of the CRC in Germany, of which the network was a member until the coordination office moved to Geneva (chapter 3.1.3.) and in which the MACR as a study programme is now a member, have received new impulses, replacing the focus on implementing the CRC with little reflection on its shortcomings and basic underlying paradigms (Eurocentrism, paternalism, vulnerability of children) with a more holistic understanding by acknowledging children's own role in shaping their surroundings and in the realisation of their rights (see above). Pertaining to research within the master itself, the development of new theories in childhood studies and children's rights as well as the critical analysis of existing theories and practices in the field are a common endeavour of students and teachers, too, in the MACR. Topics

which have been previously insufficiently dealt with are researched by students with advice and accompaniment from professors, senior researchers, who agree and claim that they learn from the students and the classes every time they teach.

In my opinion, to trigger social change, more important than finding ways to include children and make adult-led spaces and places in which children's rights are debated and discussed attractive, is that a children's rights attitude is lived in all encounters with children and young people. In addition, and this may be even more important, is that this attitude is lived and presented in settings in which children are not present yet concern them, inasmuch as an internalised attitude and belief are convincing and allow for examining and challenging fixed beliefs and thought patterns in other adults (and children) as well. A global human rights attitude, "thinking human rights", that is grounded in an integral sense of moral duty that is manifested in dignity-based activities, as the precondition for a true implementation of human and children's human rights, does not prove to be easy or even possible to achieve by singular approaches. This research, this evaluation of the MACR, has shown that in the students' view their attitude *has* changed- set belief structures have been shaken, ambiguity and perplexity regarding topics and firm beliefs have arisen and led to new ideas and possibilities how to further conceptualise and work with children's rights in a meaningful way.

After seven decades of the international human rights and almost three decades of children's rights project, we must take a different, more comprehensive route to human rights and children's rights. During the past ten years, academia has begun preparing future child rights actors from an enormous number of disciplines to take up this challenging task. I believe that many more academic courses in children's rights are needed that create changes within the participants' understanding of children's rights, to "breed" a critical mass of qualified people to truly enable the often-mentioned social change.

As mentioned above, it could be interesting to take a second look at the data gathered for this study, compliment it with further information by students and engage in more in-class observation to find further aspects that point in the direction of advancing children's rights. In all the competencies mentioned in this study and the areas of research, media and children still play a marginal role- even though there is a module on children and media in the MACR. I believe the potential of media in particular when used by the younger generation has great potential to initiate (positive) social change. An in-depth study on how children learn about their rights from each other and engage in cooperative actions to enact these, and whether and how a new generation can be formed that can also lay the foundations for change would also be a worthwhile study to engage in. All these ideas for further studies should also address the requisite societal changes for children and their rights. The answer to this question must be found with children themselves as children's rights (and duties) are always a matter of negotiation between adults and children.

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Annexes

Annex 1   Examples of Student Projects (MA Theses, FUB) 2007/08; 2010/12; 2013/15

2007/08

- How children use internet to communicate with each other- peers to peers

- Childhood and Internet Usage. Case Study : X in two primary schools in Berlin

- Institutionalized young adults in the Romanian Child Care System

- Der Kinderrechtsansatz und die Implementierung in bestehenden Entwicklungs- projekten

- Opportunities and Challenges of New Media Communication tools for Children's Learning Environment

- An evaluation research of a Disaster Risk Reduction project for children

- Protection and Participation through Education in Emergencies- A Qualitative Case Study on the School Experience of Displaced Iraqi Youth in Jordan

- Illusions or Denied Opportunities? A Case Study on Unaccompanied Senegalese Migrant Minors in Madrid

- Arbeitende Kinder und Jugendliche in der Landwirtschaft am Beispiel eines Land- kreises in Nord-rhein-Westfalen: Welche Beweggründe haben Kinder und Jugend- liche für ihre Mitarbeit in landwirtschaftlichen Familienbetrieben?

- Zwischen Familienpflicht, Eigenmotivation und Eigenverantwortung: *Ein empiri- scher Forschungsbericht über arbeitende Kinder und Jugendliche in Betrieben der deutschen Landwirtschaft*

- Probleme bei der Umsetzung der UN Kinderrechtskonvention in Deutschland am Beispiel der Kinderrechtsbildung in Berlin

- The ability of separated young refugees to get access to services and provisions and how this impacts on their psychosocial well-being

- Child Rights and Participation in Ethiopia. Experiences & Challenges from Child focused NGO's

- Participation as a possible factor to improve the lives of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs)- A case of a food security project in Lesotho

- Wege und Hindernisse der Partizipation junger Flüchtlinge in Deutschland

- Beschneidung in Burkina Faso: Tradition aus Unwissenheit?

- Making school more attractive - Analysis from a child-rights oriented point of view

- The role of school in improving Gypsy Children's Self-Empowerment, Resilience and active Participation
- Protection and Participation through Education in Emergencies - A Qualitative Case Study on the School Experience of Displaced Iraqi Youth in Jordan
- Reconciling Protection and Participation - A Balancing Act?
- Der positive Einfluss sozialer Kulturarbeit auf Kinder und Jugendliche am Beispiel von Kooperationen zwischen Schulen, Wohlfahrtsorganisationen, Opernhäusern sowie Philharmonien in Deutschland und den USA
- Demokratie von Anfang an? Was können Schülerinnen und Schüler an Grundschule durch Partizipation lernen

2010/12

- Der Kinderrechtsansatz und das Recht auf Bildung in der Internationalen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit
- Addressing Rights of Children in Migrant Communities of Bangalore/India
- Child Imprisonment and Children's Rights
- Where God Died: Prostituted Children
- Seminars for Parent/Guardians
- Lebensqualität von Kindern in Deutschland unter dem Aspekt des möglichen Einflusses sozialer Ungleichheit
- Kinderrechte - Mit Qualität vermittelt?
- Welche Bedeutung hat der Umgang mit Medien in der frühkindlichen Kindergartenerziehung als Bestandteil der Realisierung von Kinderrechten?
- Early Childhood Educational Software and Children at Promise: Teacher's Perspective
- Perspectiva de los niños y niñas sobre la parentalidad positiva (Children's perspective on positive parenting)
- The Measure of Humanity: How does citizenship status determine our claim for human rights?
- Children and Environmental Rights
- Children's rights promotion through music: A Ghana case study

- Education Policy Analysis and Evaluation from the Students' Perspectives

- A Blanket Ban of Corporal Punishment in Africa – Case Study: Cameroon Schools and Homes

- Non-Formal Early Childhood Education in Kibera – A case study of a Nursery School in a Kenyan informal settlement

- Youngster becoming engaged online?!

- Kinderrechte machen Schule

- Service-Learning als Umsetzung des Rechts auf Partizipation im schulischen Musikunterricht

- Child Poverty and the development of social policy in Romania under the obligation of CRC

2013/15

- The Perspective of Displaced Children on Their Own Situation. Study on Refugee Children from Syria in Turkey

- Facing Future Options: The Effects of Formal Education in Suriname on Indigenous Youth from Galibi

- 150 Jahre Health Visiting in Großbritannien. Ein erfolgreiches Konzept für die Frühen Hilfen in Deutschland?

- The situation of blood feud children in the context of UN CRC in Albania - elements empowering and hampering the children towards their rights

- It takes a Village to Raise a Child - SOS Kinderdorf: A Step Towards Family Reunification

- Our beliefs, our choices' - A study on religious education in Romanian public schools

- Die Respektierung der Rechte von arbeitenden Kindern. Handlungsmöglichkeiten für das Departement Cochabamba / Bolivien

- Vertretung von Kinderrechten in Nicht-Regierungs-organisationen der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe. Konfliktkonstellationen und Kompetenzanforderungen am Beispiel des Kinderrechts-Beauftragten von Kompaxx - Jugendhilfe e.V., Berlin-Spandau

- Architecture and Urban Planning as a Chance to Help Translate Children's Rights in to Action

- Lebensqualität von Kindern in Deutschland unter dem Aspekt des möglichen Einflusses sozialer Ungleichheit

- How can schools be more inclusive?

- Assessing Resilience in Children' of African Descent in Berlin

- Junge Menschen und ihre Jugendhilfeplanung - In welchem Zusammenhang stehen Partizipation und der Familienrat?

- It is easier to command and scold than ask for the opinion of a child. Roma Children's perspectives on migration to Germany and their education

- Why After Schools? Comparative Stuy of Student's Outcomes from two Romanian Primary Schools

- Zwischen Menschenrecht und Asylgesetz. Das Menschenrecht auf Bildung im Kontext der Beschulung junger Flüchtlinge in Berlin

- Children's Reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

- Case Management System for Vulnerable Children in Egypt. Challenges and Tribulations

- Participation of children in the investigation on child abuse and neglect. An exploratory research at the former AMK Hagglanden

- "Aging Out" Youth on the Move - Age discrimination within migration policy in Germany

- The relationship between tourism and children: A case study of Hmong children in Northern Vietnam
- Citizenship and the Right to have Rights. Study with Bedouin Stateless Children in Lebanon

Annex 2: List of CREAN Member Universities/Institutions as of 31.12.2016:

International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands;
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Law, Croatia; Department of Education,
Siauliai University, Lithuania;
Institut Universitaire Kurt Bösch, Sion, Switzerland;
Institute of Education Faculty of Children and Learning, University of London, UK ;
Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Portugal;
Internationale Akademie (INA) an der
Freien Universität Berlin (FU), Germany;
Faculty of Social Policy, Mykolo Romerio Universitetas, Vilnius, Lithuania;
Norwegian Centre of Child Research, Trondheim, Norway;
Child Rights Academy, Örebro Universitet, Sweden;
Centre for Children's Rights, Queen's University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK;
Universidad Complutense Madrid, Spain;
Institute of Child Studies, Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal
Università degli Studi del Molise, Campobasso, Italy ;
Alma Mater Studiorum, Università di Bologna, Italy ;
Faculty of Law, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain;
Universitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Iasi, Romania;
Universitatea Babes-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, Romania;
Universitatea de Stat Din Moldova, Chisinau, Moldova;
Faculty of Sociology and Psychology, Universitatea de Vest din Timisoara, Romania;
UNICEF Chair in Children's Rights, Universiteit Antwerpen, Belgium;
Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Netherlands;
University of Bristol, England, UK;
University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK ;
University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece;
Univerzitet u Novom Sadu, Novi Sad, Serbia;
Faculty of Law, Univerzitet Union, Belgrade, Serbia;
University of Leiden, UNICEF Chair in Children's Rights, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Associated Members:
Department of Pedagogy UNESCO chair Janusz Korzcak, The Marii Grzegorzewskiej Academy of Special Education, Warsaw, Poland;
Tartu University, Estonia;
Univerzitet o Nisu, Serbia;
Estonian Union for Child Welfare, Estonia;
RheinMain University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Updated http://www.crean-network.org/index.php/membership/members (accessed 8.8.2018)

Annex 3   Example of Stakeholder Survey, Spring 2006

European Network of Masters on Children's Rights- ENMCR

Curriculum Development Project

Habelschwerdter Allee 45

D- 14195 Berlin

Tel: +49 (0)30 838 53968

Fax: +49 (0) 30 838 54656

European Network of Masters on Children's Rights

May 2006

To whom it may concern

Dear Madam, Dear Sir!

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was agreed in 1989 and ratified by all European countries. Despite the commitment from governments in Europe and efforts from civil society, it is clear that professional human resources dedicated to the promotion and/or implementation of children's rights requires specialized education. By offering a higher university degree that takes an international and interdisciplinary approach to children's rights, the programmes associated in the European Network of Masters on Children's Rights extend and complement existing training courses on children (aged 0-18 years old), childhood, human and children's rights.

The European Network of Masters on Children's Rights (ENMCR) is currently engaged in an exciting process of conducting a Curriculum Development project under the European Union programme Socrates. Within the framework of this project a unique joint and integrated European MA study programme on Children's Rights is being developed at seven European universities in Germany, Netherlands, UK, Sweden, Spain and Romania. The core element of the MA programmes is children's active and effective participation in societal processes. Please visit http://www.enmcr.net/cd for a summary of the project and links to the project's partner institutions.

ENMCR recognises the importance of integrating recommendations from key local, national and European actors concerned with childhood and children's rights in the design of the curriculum, in order to prepare professionals according to perceived needs in the practical and professional world. We therefore invite your institution to provide some valuable input and ask you to take some time to answer the questions attached.

Thank you for your support of our work to develop a European Master on Children's Rights.
Yours sincerely

Prof. Dr. Manfred Liebel,   Prof. Karin Helander
Head of directive committee ENMCR   Prof. Birgitta Qvarsell, Stockholm Uni

1. About your institution:

Name and address: Plan Sverige, Textilg 43, box 92150, 120 08 Stockholm

Number of employees: full time ca 30

Which levels does your institution work at: (Please tick all options applicable)
  Local level X
  Regional level X
  National level X
  European level
  International level X

What are your institution's main activities concerning children's rights: (Please tick all options applicable)
  Child Rights advocacy
  Development of Child Rights policies
  Child Rights monitoring
  Social support services for children
 Practical 'hands-on' work with children
  Other (please specify):
*Being part of Plan, an international child centred development organization, we
are working with programs in 46 developing countries. Our main area of work is child centred community
development within arights-based approach guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

2. Recommendations for a European Master Programme on Children's Rights

In order to prepare professionals effectively, ENMCR would like to know what qualifications are expected of the staff in your institution.

What professional qualities do you expect from your staff in the field of children's rights?
(Please tick all options applicable)
  have knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC and its control mechanisms
  ability to critic and design children's rights policies
  lobbying skills at <u>national level; European level; international level</u> (please underline applicable options)
  ability to integrate multi-disciplinary knowledge to understand the complexity of real situations
  ability to apply multi-disciplinary knowledge and understanding to solve problems in unfamiliar
  environments
  ability to communicate knowledge, conclusions and rationale to specialists
  ability to communicate knowledge, conclusions and rationale to non-specialists
  have learning skills to continue to study children's rights autonomously
  Other (please specify):
Also knowledge about the other human rights instruments and how the CRC relates to these would be very valuable as well as knowledge about a child rights based approach to development and child rights pro-gramming.

3. Your institution's opinion for the MA programme:

In order to link theory and practice effectively, ENMCR aims at integrating the professional world with the demands of future professionals in the field of childhood and children's rights in the European MA programme on children's rights.

Please rate the following questions
How useful would you say that a master's degree in children's rights would be for persons aspiring to work at your institution?
That would be very useful for some of our positions.
How likely is it that you would support and encourage members of your staff to participate in a Master programme on children's rights as part of their further professional development?
That is very likely for some of our staff.

What in your opinion is indispensable for a MA study programme on children's rights in general?
It would be important to include in-depth information about the UNCRC and its control mechanisms as well as other UN bodies, also info about advocacy and lobbying at different levels, information about other regional child rights instruments/bodies, child rights approach to development, child rights programming, in-depth information about meaningful and active child participation

How could your institution see itself contributing to a joint European Masters Programme on Children's Rights?
  Give input in the development process/ next survey
  Give guest lectures
  Provide formal and practical information for students, with respect of ethical issues
  Organise visits for students to your institution
  Offer possibilities for student internships/voluntary work
  Assist students with technical knowledge and expertise in their dissertation work
  Other (please specify):

_____

Please add any further reflections that may be of interest to us that have not been covered above:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Please return the completed questionnaire either by post: to Birgitta Qvarsell, Pedagogiska institutionen, Stockholms universitet, 106 91 Stockholm or Karin Helander, Teatervetenskapliga institutionen Stockholms universitet, 106 91 Stockholm or via e- mail to: birgitta@ped.su.se or karin.helander@teater.su.se by **May 29, 2006**. Thank you for your cooperation!

Annex 4 Draft of core course "Children's Rights in Global Perspective"

<u>**02.07.2006**</u>
<u>**Core Course "Children's Rights in Global Perspective"**</u>

(to be discussed in Stockholm, 8th June, 2006)

Comments:

1. We suggest that the core course should not be divided into three parts (theory, policy and local focus)- but only two parts: Theory and Policy, all local foci shall be integrated in the electives. This will leave more time to discuss the theory and policy parts in more detail in the classroom. The two parts cannot be properly separated, as we saw in our e-mail discussions, as they are linked together and cross each other in themes. Therefore we suggest to elaborate and discuss the parts of the core course together. Another suggestion to be discussed is the idea of offering the introductory core course as block seminar, to which all students enrolled in the European MA come together- this would possibly have to take place in August/September 2007.

2. We also strongly suggest to start the MA, i.e. the core course with a self-reflection on the own generational and cultural identity and/or a self-reflection about the own professional experience with children and young people.

3. It is good to link literature to the different themes, yet we need to discuss which literature/book we will use as basis, as common obligatory reference (we suggest three books, see below). We like the idea to compile a reader with selected articles for the core course.

4. 1 ECTS stands for about 25-30 hrs student workload, the core course should add up to 10 ECTS, i.e. 250-300 hrs student workload. Of these, we calculate approximately 1/3 of classes, 2/3 of self-study, i.e. preparation, reading, writing etc. This means that we would calculate approximately 80-100 hrs of classes. If we agree on implementing the core course as a block seminar, we would calculate a duration of three weeks, i.e. 15 days. Each day there would be 6 hrs of classes, every week students would have 1 day off for self-study and/or visits to organisations (to complement the last theme)

<u>Qualification/Competences to be achieved in the course:</u>

Applied competences
Knowledge of meaning of children's rights in all disciplines
- Explain and use selected theories of children and childhood
- Ability to understand and explain children's rights and the UNCRC
- Ability to promote and defend children's rights in front of different audiences

- Ability to identify and challenge assumptions underlying examples of policy and practice, and make links to children's rights
- Ability to suggest policy recommendations

Critical competences
- Ability to critically analyse from different perspectives, with an emphasis on children's perspectives
- Ability to link these perspectives to wider aspects of children's rights, e.g. historical, social, cultural, political, geographic and economic aspects
- Ability to contribute to policy and practice at local, national and international levels

Transferable competences/communication, argumentation .
- Listening and debating skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Interdisciplinary team-work
- Ability to present orally in an interesting, understandable and challenging way on the topic of children's rights
- Ability to write in a concise, well-structured and balanced way on a subject related to children's rights

Content:

- Reflection based on own personal and/or professional experience in the field.
- Historical and cultural variations of basic concepts of childhood: Children, Childhood and their social representations and meanings: children in Western and non-Western societies; children in modern nation states;
- Diversity of childhoods (age, gender, class, race, disability)
- History of children's rights: children as subjects of civil rights: agency, protection vs. emancipation/empowerment, discrimination vs. equality of rights
- Theoretical sociological approaches to childhood
-
- Theoretical approaches to childhood studies and children's rights research
- Globalisation: Implications for children/ childhoods and children's rights
- History and content of the CRC as a charter of children's human rights (and other human rights documents relevant for children) and their monitoring mechanisms:
    - Differing actors' involvement in the setting up of the CRC (international institutions, civil society, states, academics)
    - Principles, philosophy, articles
    - special focus on: participation rights and citizenship of children
    - reporting systems (shadow reporting)
    - states obligation
    - children's involvement in the implementation of the CRC

- ▪ Criticisms of the CRC
- ▪ Unwritten rights of children - processes in civil society to constitute rights that are not included in the CRC
  - ▪ Criticisms of children's rights
  - ▪ children's views on their rights
- Understanding of barriers of implementing the CRC from a sociological and anthropological perspective
  - ▪ Social construction of childhood
  - ▪ The Structural positioning of children in societies
- Child rights' based programs developed and implemented by NGOs and governments

Teaching Methods/Learning Tools:

- Interactive lectures
- Pair work/Group work: reflection and discussion of prepared questions and theses
- Study of selected literature
- Use of internet resources
- Document analysis
- Small case studies
- Discussion of cases

Basic Literature (to be complemented with selected articles compiled in a reader):

Theory:
Alison James/Allan Prout (1997) *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood* ,

Berry Mayall (2002)*: Towards a Sociology for Childhood- thinking from children's lives.* Buckingham/Philadelphia, Open University Press

Lourdes, Gaitán (2006): *Sociolgía de Infancia* Madrid Síntesis (on the internet)

Children's Rights/Policy:
Verhellen, Eugeen: (1994): *Convention on the Rights of the Child, Background, Motivation, Strategies, Main Themes.* Leuven/Appeldoorn, Garant.

Alston, Philip, Tobin, Jogn, MacDarrow, 2005: *Laying the foundations for Children's Rights.* Innocenti, ICDC Florence

Annex 5 Statement on possible professional activities and work fields of EMCR graduates (Manfred Liebel, 4.3.2007)

Mögliche Berufs- und Arbeitsfelder für Absolvent/innen des EMCR
(English version below)

Die Absolvierung des interdisziplinären Masterstudiengang macht vor allem Sinn in Verbindung mit anderen bereits erworbenen Qualifikationen in den Bereichen: Sozialarbeit,
Erziehungswissenschaften, Soziologie/Sozialwissenschaften, Psychologie, Jura, Wirtschaftswissenschaften, Publizistik, Architektur, Stadt- und Landschaftsplanung, Anthropologie, Ethnologie, Gesundheitswesen...

Klassische Arbeitsfelder finden sich in den Bereichen Kinder- und Jugendhilfe, Sozialwesen,
Stadtplanung, sei es im Öffentlichen Dienst, sei es in Wohlfahrts- und Jugendverbänden (NGOs). Ein relativ neues Arbeitsfeld bietet die mit dem neuen Kindheitsrecht eingeführte Institution des Verfahrenspflegers bzw. der Verfahrenspflegerin (Kinderanwalt/-anwältin). Ein relativ neues, mit der vermehrten Einführung von Ganztagsschulen erweitertes Arbeitsfeld ergibt sich auch im Rahmen der Schulsozialarbeit und Schulpsychologie.

Eine Fülle von Arbeitsfeldern besteht in internationalen Organisationen wie UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHCR, sowie in international tätigen Organisationen, insbesondere der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit und hier wiederum in Organisationen, die sich der Förderung von Kindern, Jugendlichen und Familien widmen, z.B. Save the Children, terre des hommes, Kindernothilfe, World Vision, Plan International.

Für Jurist/innen erschließt der Studiengang spezifische Tätigkeiten im Bereich der Jugend- und Familiengerichte und der entsprechenden Staatsanwaltschaften. Er ermöglicht
spezifische Angebote von freiberuflich tätigen Rechtsanwält/innen.

Absolvent/innen von Lehrerstudiengängen können mit dem Masterstudiengang ihr Profil erweitern und schärfen insbesondere mit Blick auf Konfliktbewältigung (Mediation), Gewaltprävention, Förderung von Migrantenkindern...

Journalist/innen erwerben mit dem Masterstudiengang spezifische Qualifikationen, die ihr berufliches Profil schärfen und ihnen ermöglichen, neue Aufgaben wahrzunehmen. Freiberuflich tätige Journalist/innen können ihre fachliche Angebotspalette erweitern, in den Medien könnten Stellen für spezifische Aufgaben im Bereich von Menschen- und Kinderrechtsrechtsschutz und -förderung eingerichtet werden (was entsprechende Initiativen erfordert).

Die Einführung des Masterstudiengangs ist mit Initiativen verbunden, die neue Berufs- und Tätigkeitsfelder entstehen lassen.

An erster Stelle ist die Institution des/der Kinderbeauftragten (Ombudsmann/-frau) zu nennen. Kinderbeauftragte gibt es bisher nur in einigen Kommunen und drei Bundesländern
(Schleswig-Holstein, Sachsen-Anhalt, NRW). Wir setzen uns dafür ein, dass Kinderbeauftragte in allen Kommunen, Bundesländern und auf Bundesebene eingeführt
werden. Angesichts der klammen öffentlichen Haushalte könnten Wirtschaftsunternehmen
dafür gewonnen werden, jeweils einen oder mehrere Kinderbeauftragte zu finanzieren. Wirtschaftsunternehmen haben ein zunehmendes Interesse an einem stabilen gesellschaftlichen Umfeld und sehen sich zu sozialer Verantwortung und der Beachtung ethisch-menschenrechtlicher Maximen verpflichtet. Dies könnte zum Anlass genommen werden, ihren Blick für die Belange und Rechte der Kinder zu schärfen und sie zu bewegen, spezifische Personalstellen einzurichten.

Statement on the potentials and professional benefits of studying the MACR (excerpt) by Manfred Liebel, from March, 4, 2007

"The establishment of the master's is connected to initiatives to create and develop new professional profiles and fields of action.

Studying the interdisciplinary master's makes special sense as complementary to prior studies and qualifications. In particular social work, pedagogy, sociology and social sciences, psychology, law, economics, public relations, urban planning, anthropology, public health and more (all disciplines which concern children, indirectly and directly).

- *Classical job possibilities are in the field of child and youth welfare, public and non-governmental urban planning.*
- *A relatively new work field is school social work and school psychology which has been developed at "full-day schools" lately.*
- *A wealth of work possibilities are international organisations such as UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHCR as well as organisations working internationally in particular in development cooperation, AND here especially those that promote children, youth and families, e.g. Save the Children, terre des hommes, World Vision, Plan International, SOS Kinderdörfer etc.*
- *The master's opens the way to specific fields for action for lawyers in youth and family courts and proceedings.*
- *Graduates of educational studies can enhance their profile by including more aspects on conflict management (mediation) violence prevention, promotion of migrant children amongst others.*
- *Journalists are qualified to enhance their profile and can engage in new tasks/themes.*

*As state finances are limited it would be good to win over enterprises that have been increasingly claiming to have a social responsibility which they fulfil to finance such an institution. At the same time, they could **create specific child rights job positions** as to fulfil their share in stabilizing society and to meet the ethical, human rights maxims they have set themselves".*

> *(Manfred Liebel, 4.3.2007, working document, unpublished, own translation from German original)*

Annex 6:   Criteria for the assessment of written assignments

Formalities:
Please orient yourselves to the guidelines for scientific papers, reports and theses in this handbook.

Design and Structure
The assignments should be structured systematically.

Content
- empirically and/or theoretically founded argumentation, i.e. not only receptive and descriptive argumentation
- critical reflection and elaboration of texts
- own standpoint / independent conclusion
- consistent use of approaches, scientific theories and terms
- comprehensibility
- correct proof of sources*
- not the quantity of references is important, but the quality and relevance for the subject

Marking Process/Grading
Very generally speaking, the grades are given for content (80%) and form (20%).

Content, style and description are divided into:

- Description and justification of the problem to be investigated, as well as hypotheses, and aims of the paper.
- Design and structure, whereas the examiner will check the paper on working style, salience, conciseness and accuracy; expression, formal depiction and w r i t i n g style.
- Method and depiction, whereas special attention will be given to: methodological reasoning; implementation of methods; systematic design and structure, incl. coherence; clarity and comprehensibility; structure and quality of reasoning.
- Discussion of the topic concerning content. Here the results, conclusions and Interpretations as well as the quality and appropriateness of references; capacity to judge, authenticity of the work, possibilities for transfer and meaning for possible future research will be assessed.

The last two points weigh more than the first two. Assignments are marked by one lecturer. The MA theses are marked by both supervisors. They mark them independently. If the markers do not agree on the grades they give, they discuss the differences and then agree on a grade. If they cannot agree, a third marker is asked to read and grade the work, the grade is then agreed.

If an assignment consists mostly of other people's words, it will not say much about your own ideas. Expressing ideas clearly in your own words is one of the skills and challenges of the course

Annex 7   General evaluation form end of MACR

**M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights-: University of Applied Sciences Pots-
dam; Evaluation Questionnaire**

Dear Student
we are very interested in knowing your feedback on the teaching and learning in the M.A.
Childhood Studies and Children's Rights.
Your opinions are key for our aim to further improve the realisation of future courses and
other academic programmes with the help of your assessment and comments.
The questions shall also assist you in your reflection on what impact courses have had on
the development of skills and competencies.

And of course we are interested in anything else you find important and we encourage you
to make suggestions for change /(if desired)

Therefore we would kindly ask you to answer the following questions by ranking the crite-
ria from lowest (1) to highest score (5).

Please insert the title of the seminar/tutorial or colloquium and professor's name who
taught the session.

Please feel free to add comments wherever you feel appropriate.
Thank you for your cooperation!!

I benefitted most from.../ Most interesting for me were the
(please rank from 1- least beneficial to 5 most beneficial)

Input given by teacher _____
Presentations given by students   _____
Group work_____
Discussions_____
Materials/literature_____

  - **In general,** Balance of input, group work and discussions was appropriate
  - **The MACR is a coherent program**
  - **Overall I am satisfied with having studied the MACR**

The following questions refer to competencies and skills you have AFTER and DUE TO
having attended this seminar/colloquium/tutorial (in continuance: course)

  1. **Content related skills**
       - I know important terms and definitions of childhood studies, children's rights and
         other themes covered in the MACR
       - I can give an overview of the module themes

- I can present in a clear and consistent way the complex issues of the MACR
- I feel competent to work on typical questions of the covered themes
- I can map out contradictions and similarities of the content covered in the MACR (e.g. contradiction between different models and approaches to children's rights)
- I am able to better judge the quality of scientific literature

2. **Methodological skills- Reflection**
   - I can search for information more effectively
   - I can work better independently
   - My team work skills have improved

3. **Communication skills after having attended the course**
   - It is easier for me to express my impressions and opinions and bring my contributions to the point
   - I can moderate discussions better

4. **Personal competencies/Increase of motivation**
- I find the topic more interesting now than before the course
- This course has strengthened my motivation to continue studying
- I have developed joy in finding solutions to posed tasks
- I have learned things that inspire me

5. **Participation during the course**
- Possibilities for participation were sufficient
- I contributed to discussions
- In general, the balance between teacher's input and discussions/team work was appropriate

6. **Practice orientation:**
   - Practical orientation given was satisfactory, connections to practice/professional world is clear
   - Experience from the professional world was included and useful

Overall, the MACR was very attractive

Any additional comments? Here we would like to particularly ask you, what you missed and what you would like to suggest for improvement in the next year. Please formulate your comments in a constructive way

_____
_____
_____
_____

THANK YOU for participating and giving us your feedback! We will take your assessment into consideration and hope to improve the MACR continuously!

Annex 8   Interview Guideline

1. Background:
Demographic Data (Gender, Age, profession/first studies-discipline, nationality)

2. Motivation:
What motivated you to study children's rights?

3. Expectations:
- What were your expectations towards the study programme? (possibly you still have the application/motivation letter to check…)
- Were they fulfilled?
- If not, can you tell me why?

4. Acquired competences/qualification:
a.   General themes; social competences
Did studying the EMCR help you, to….
- be able to work on a theme more autonomously than previous to studying? (why?)
- improve your capacity to work in teams? (why?)
- improve your ability to deal with different cultures and contexts and to understand them better?
- improve your language skills (English/native language, if international student?)

b.   Subject related competences
- Do you feel more like a child rights expert now?
- Can you now explain, defend and argue for children's rights? (towards an expert audience as well as laymen?)
- Has your image of children and childhood changed in general? If yes, how, in what way?
- Can you estimate what the most important knowledge gained by studying children's rights is for you?

What did you enjoy in particular, what did you not like at all?
How are you using the gained knowledge/qualification now after graduation (in your job, your personal life, your further studies?)

5. Organisation/Coordination/Coherence
Was organisation satisfactory? (Information given was sufficient? Clear?; support by coordinators good? Information on exchange with partners sufficient and good? Coherence between seminars/coherence of the whole programme)

6. Europa/European added value
The European Master in Children's Rights is a European project as you know. In how far did you experience the programme as being European and why (or why not?)
Did you have vivid exchange with students at partner universities (virtual/web-based)?
Do you have any suggestions how to improve, intensify, make more efficient the exchange- from a coordinator perspective?

Could you please give me/us some recommendations for improvement of the programme

Annex 9   Letter to Essayists

Dear (Personalised),

I am working on my PhD - a summary of the decade of EMCR/MACR at the Freie Universität Berlin: **Qualification of child rights experts through academia** -expectations, perspectives and future fields of action-(Working Title)

Over the past 10 years of offering the Master and more than 200 graduates completing the program, critical children's rights research has emerged and scholars (of the network ENMCR/CREAN) have developed approaches to a children's rights theory which goes beyond the CRC as theoretical basis for the discussion on children's rights. This I am critically reflecting in my PhD.

On an empirical level, the PhD is an evaluation of the meaning of studying the program has had for you (students/graduates) to uncover the implicit impact such a qualification (can) have as a contribution to processes of social change.

I have interviewed some graduates and have come to realize that I need more data (important voices) in order to get a clearer picture of what the meaning and impact of the master and the competencies achieved has on its students and alumni- for you personally and in your professional activities.

That is the reason I am contacting you:
Would you be willing to write me ½-1 page (or more) answering the questions below:

- **In what way has the EMCR/MACR (studying the MA) impacted you (in your life – personal, job, ...)?**
- **How can you use the competencies acquired during the MA in your work? (What/Where are you working)**
- **What theory (from the MA studies modules) do your use/apply in your profession? How and why?**
- **What changes can you make out/depict in your personal and professional activities after reading the MA?**

This is greatly appreciated and I hope to be able to compensate you for this- please send me your addresses;-)
If you'd like to write this anonymously you can send the page per post to:

Rebecca Budde, Liberdastrasse 10, 12047 Berlin

Thank you so much for your help!!!

Warm Wishes,
Rebecca

Annex 10 MACR graduates professional placements (random sample)

Year of graduation	Former profession/discipline	Current work[315]
2008	International relations	Child protectionist at UNICEF
	Social pedagogy	Child rights representative at small NGO/MACR tutor
	Cultural sciences	Project director for small enterprises, social movements/
	Cultural sciences	Freelance trainer in Human and children's rights with another graduate
	Pedagogy	Red Cross- CR project work in Africa
	Referee at NGO Kindernothilfe	Change to Save the Children- director of international programs
	Journalist	Continued in journalism with a focus on children's rights
	Social Pedagogy, working as social worker with young people	In search of a new job position
	Political science	Setting up an action plan for child rights-oriented cooperation in Kosovo
	Theatre	Application for a job with UNICEF
2009	Economics (Erasmus Mundus student from Uganda)	Went back to Uganda, working in a child rights organisation raising awareness on CRC
	Education/Teachers from Ethiopia and Tanzania	Returned , continued working as teachers
	Education	Continue as teacher and principal of school
	Teacher	Teacher
2011	Islamic studies	Project coordinator international NGO
	Economics, Marketing	Self-founded youth organisation in South Africa
2012	Law	Project coordinator, lecturer at childhood studies study program
	Education	Director of small youth NGO
	Social Work	German child and youth foundation
	Opera singer	Teacher
2013	Law	Coordinator of study program in dance and theatre in Italy
	Social Pedagogy	Public relations at children's museum
2014	Law	Coordinator for juvenile restorative justice centres in Paraguay

Some graduates are (alongside other jobs) tutors in the MA or involved in another way in the MA or ENMCR, e.g. as member of the advisory committee to the program, or by "marketing" the course at child rights related events. Students have been involved in establishing a private school, are working as referees for members of parliament and as expected are also involved in activities unrelated to children's rights.

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[315] At the time of gathering this information (2015, 2017)

This survey was sent out in 2010 as an attempt to have some quantitative data as lining for the qualitative data and its analysis as much as interpretation. The number of questions far out-reached the maximum amount of time that could to be expected from an alumni to answer them all. The survey, albeit very long, is printed here as an example how errors in early research can occur.

Rebecca Budde: PhD Candidate, Qualification of Child Rights Experts in Academia

Dear Children's Rights Alumni,
I am contacting you today, to ask you for some of your precious time to answer questions about yourself and your work-life after having completed a child rights course at a university. It will take about 10-15 minutes. This survey is being sent to alumni of

Freie Universität Berlin
Institute Universitaire Kurt Bösch, Sion
Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Union University, Belgrade
University Babes Bolayi, Cluj-Napoca
University of Edinburgh
University of Cairo

Your participation in this survey is most valuable for the evaluation of a decade of childhood and children's rights studies in academia. (and by this my PhD:-))

1. Where did you study children's rights and which course(s)?

☐ Universidad Complutense Madrid, Experto de Infancia y Derechos del Nino

☐ Institute Universitaire Kurt Bösch, Sion, Master interdisciplinaire en droits de l'enfant (MIDE)

☐ Institute Universitaire Kurt Bösch, Sion, Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights (MCR)

☐ University of Edinburgh, MSc Childhood Studies

☐ Freie Universität Berlin, European Master in Children's Rights; European Master in Childhood Studies and Children's Rights; M.A. Childhood Studies and Children's Rights

☐ Union University, Law Faculty, Belgrade, Master in Child Rights

☐ University Babes Bolayi, Cluj- Napoca, European Master in Children's Rights

☐ Other (please specify)

[text input box]

* 2. In what year did you graduate?

○ 2006

○ 2007

○ 2008

○ 2009

○ 2010

○ 2011

○ 2012

○ 2013

○ 2014

Other (please specify) [text input box]

* 3. What is/was your former academic background?

☐ Pedadogy

☐ Psychology

☐ Social Work

☐ Political Science

☐ Law

☐ International Relations

☐ Economics

☐ Medicine

☐ Anthropology

☐ Philosophy

☐ Cultural Sciences

☐ Journalism

☐ Administration

☐ Other (please specify)

[text input box]

4. In which year were you born?

[text input box]

5. What is your sex?

○ Female

○ Male

Other (please specify) [   ]

Professional Work- Life

In this section, we would like to know a bit about your professional work-life after having graduated.

* 6. Where are you working?

☐ NGO

☐ INGO (UN etc.),

☐ Government

☐ Other Public Body,

☐ Private Company

☐ Research Institution

☐ University

☐ School

☐ Media

☐ Self-employed, Freelance

☐ I am studying

☐ I am not working at the moment

☐ Other

Can you please specify your answer, by adding name and location of your workplace or study programme you are attending. You are also very welcome to give some feedback on why you are not working at the moment, if this applies to you

[text box]

* 7. In what position?

☐ Leading

☐ Assistant

☐ Administrative

☐ Technical

☐ Internship

☐ other

Please let us know your job title

8. What are your tasks?
Please rank from 1-5, how much of your time you spend with the different tasks.
1= Not at all
2= Only very seldom
3= Sometimes
4= Quite often
5= Mostly

	1	2	3	4	5
Administrative Tasks	○	○	○	○	○
Organisational	○	○	○	○	○
Fundraising	○	○	○	○	○
Conceptual work (such as development of pro-jects/programmes)	○	○	○	○	○
Writing/Editing	○	○	○	○	○
Teaching/Training	○	○	○	○	○
Awareness Raising	○	○	○	○	○
Research	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

9. How did you find your job?

☐ job posting/advertisement

☐ friends

☐ other connections

☐ unsolicited application

☐ by chance

Other (please specify) [text box]

10. Was your child rights degree useful or necessary to get hired for the job?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not sure

If you like please explain a bit [text box]

11. Is your child rights degree useful or even necessary to fulfill the tasks in your job?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not sure

If yes, how and in what way [text box]

Impact of Children's Rights Studies
In this section I am interested in the impact children's rights academic programmes (can) have on personal lives and also on the wider society.

12. How has studying children's rights impacted on your personality?
Has your mindset changed, and if so, how would you describe this change?
Please add any information/aspects you find important in this respect.

[text box]

13. In your view, what contribution have academic children's rights programmes made to raise awareness on children's rights and realizing children's rights for children in general?

[text box]

THANK YOU
Thank you very much for your participation, once the information has been analysed, you will be sent the results of this study.

Annex 11   MACR graduates professional placements (random sample)

Year of graduation	Former profession/discipline	Current work[316]
2008	International relations	Child protectionist at UNICEF
	Social pedagogy	Child rights representative at small NGO/MACR tutor
	Cultural sciences	Project director for small enterprises, social movements/
	Cultural sciences	Freelance trainer in Human and children's rights with another graduate
	Pedagogy	Red Cross- CR project work in Africa
	Referee at NGO Kindernothilfe	Change to Save the Children- director of international programs
	Journalist	Continued in journalism with a focus on children's rights
	Social Pedagogy, working as social worker with young people	In search of a new job position
	Political science	Setting up an action plan for child rights-oriented cooperation in Kosovo
	Theatre	Application for a job with UNICEF
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	Social Work	German child and youth foundation
	Opera singer	Teacher
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Some graduates are (alongside other jobs) tutors in the MA or involved in another way in the MA or ENMCR, e.g. as member of the advisory committee to the program, or by "marketing" the course at child rights related events. Students have been involved in establishing a private school, are working as referees for members of parliament and as expected are also involved in activities unrelated to children's rights.

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[316] At the time of gathering this information (2015, 2017)

Declaration of Authorship

I hereby certify that the dissertation I am submitting is entirely my own original work except where otherwise indicated. I am aware of the University's regulations concerning plagiarism, including those regulations concerning disciplinary actions that may result from Plagiarism. Any use of the works of any other author, (including internet sources) in any form, is properly acknowledged at their point of use.

This thesis has not been previously presented to another examination board and has not been published.

Place, Date   Signature

Eigenständigkeitserklärung

Hiermit bestätige ich, dass ich die vorliegende Dissertation selbstständig verfasst und keine anderen als die angegebenen Hilfsmittel benutzt habe. Mir sind die Regelungen bezüglich Plagiat, inklusive derer, die zu Disziplinarmaßnahmen führen können bewusst Die Stellen der Arbeit, die dem Wortlaut oder dem Sinn nach anderen Werken (dazu zählen auch Internetquellen) entnommen sind, wurden unter Angabe der Quelle kenntlich gemacht. Diese Arbeit wurde bislang keinem Prüfungsausschuss vorgelegt und nicht veröffentlicht.

Berlin, 1.10.2018

Ort, Datum   Unterschrift