

# Inclusion, Inclusion, Inclusion – mental maps and great expectations

Robin Richardson, Insted consultancy, London ([www.insted.co.uk](http://www.insted.co.uk))

*A lecture for education welfare officers*

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My father's name being Pirrip and my Christian name being Philip, my infant tongue could make of both words nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So I called myself Pip and came to be known as Pip.

Thus begins the novel by Charles Dickens from which this lecture derives a phrase in its title. It's a beautiful description of how every human being starts to use language, and of how as tiny infants we are permitted and indeed encouraged to name the world with our own words. But as we grow older we have to adapt to the language and expectations of our tribe. However hard we negotiate, we have no choice but to submit. 'When I was a child,' said Saint Paul, 'I spake like a Teletubby. But having now put away childish things, I speak today like a lecturer at a conference organised by the Association for Education Welfare Management. For that is what is expected of me.' No choice but to submit. Well, not much choice.

At least your lecturer at today's conference has a measure of choice and control in relation to basic concepts. I am going to argue that all of us in education need to re-draw the mental maps that we use most of the time when we form and act on expectations. From time to time I shall refer to the person with whom I began, Philip Pirrip. Implicitly throughout, and explicitly near the end, I shall indicate that I have great expectations of everyone at this conference.

## **Expectations**

Pip, in Dickens's novel, is at times traumatised when he encounters other people's perceptions and expectations of him. One particularly poignant moment comes near the start of the book when he is playing cards with Estella. Both of them are about eight years old and he is already falling in love with her.

"He calls the knaves Jacks, this boy!" said Estella with disdain, before our first game was out. "And what coarse hands he has. And what thick boots!" I had never thought of being ashamed of my hands before; but I began to consider them a very indifferent pair. Her contempt was so strong that it became infectious, and I caught it. She won the game, and I dealt. I misdealt, as was only natural, when I knew she was lying in wait for me to do wrong; and she denounced me for a stupid, clumsy labouring boy.

That game of cards took place in about 1820. Let's stay with the words 'stupid, clumsy labouring boy' in our ears and come fast-forward towards more recent times. In her autobiography *Bad Blood* Lorna Sage recalls the rural primary school she attended in the late 1940s. Basically, she says, the job of the education system in those days was 'to reflect your ready-made place in the scheme of things and put you firmly back where you came

from'. She describes how one day the headteacher lined up the senior class and went along the line predicting for each child their future occupation in life: 'You'll be a muck-shoveller, you'll be a muck-shoveller ...' He spoke these words, says Sage, with 'gloomy satisfaction'. The reason for his satisfaction was his confidence that the predictions would come true. His gloom was not because his pupils had unfulfilling and un-lived lives ahead of them. Rather, it was because he himself found no fulfilment in his own job – there was no dignity, since everything was fixed and foreordained, in the work of a teacher.

And let's come fast-forward another 25 years. In the early 1970s, Lee Jasper was at school in Oldham. Recalling his time there, he wrote later:

Education was typical of the attitudes of the time: the posh kids got all the attention. Those from the poorest sections of the white working class, British-born blacks, those from the Caribbean (particularly the boys) and the Bangladeshis were all in the bottom class ... The teachers were in the main ex-grammar-school unreconstructed racists. That they were forced to teach black and Asian children was an insult to both their professional standing and the notion of Empire. They made their distaste known by the expression of their extreme prejudice. They simply refused to teach us.

Nowadays, no teacher or headteacher would communicate low expectations of their pupils with such bluntness or cruelty as did Lorna Sage's headteacher. And few if any teachers nowadays could reasonably be described, anyway at first sight, as 'ex-grammar-school unreconstructed racists'. It is still the case, however, that society has its hierarchies, pecking orders and notions of what is posh, and its structures of inclusion and exclusion. 'Not one child,' it has been said, 'lives in poverty today – 4.1 million do.' According to the 2001 Census, two million children live in households where no one works. This is around 17 per cent of all children.

If so many children and young people live in circumstances of social exclusion it's not at all surprising if large numbers of them are not included educationally: patterns of exclusion and inclusion in wider society affect the expectations that the education system has of pupils, and the expectations determine whether the pupils are included – genuinely included – in education. Also it is still the case that many Asian and black communities are on the lowest rungs of society's various ladders, and that their children will not move higher unless and until the system has higher expectations than those that currently prevail. Further, it is still the case that high and low expectations are communicated to pupils both directly by what teachers say and indirectly through the systems and processes through which teachers have to work, and that expectations can be self-fulfilling prophecies. As for understandings of British history, identity and Empire, these too still need to be addressed, to put it mildly. 'The absence from the national curriculum of a rewritten history of Britain,' said the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, 'involving dominance in Ireland as well as in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia, is proving ... to be an unmitigated disaster.'

The Commission argued that mental pictures and models of Britain need to be re-imagined and it showed that schools have key roles in the fashioning of new images and understandings. Also, there need to be significant changes in how schools and their teachers imagine concepts of so-called ability and intelligence and of so-called behaviour and attitude. That is the fundamental message of this lecture. To be interested in inclusion, as EWOs necessarily are, is to be interested in the mental maps that teachers and schools use. In so far as dominant maps relating to these concepts are not critiqued and replaced, there is institutional racism – and, to be blunt, the teaching profession *does* still contain many 'ex

grammar-school unreconstructed racists' with the consequence that not just Asian and black kids but also millions of white kids too are not included. The way ahead, the lecture claims, involves amongst other things attention to theories of multiple intelligence. Such attention must not be colour-blind, culture-blind, class-blind, however, and must not ignore the realities of social exclusion in wider society.

**Mental maps**

The word 'expect' is connected with 'inspect', 'respect', 'circumspect', 'spectacle' and 'spectre'. There are connotations of looking and seeing – to expect is to form a picture in your mind's eye of a future occurrence or situation. You do this in order to be prepared, wise before the event, and your expectations are weapons in your armoury as you go forwards into an uncertain and possibly risky future. For to be forewarned is to be forearmed – expecting rain, you carry an umbrella. The picture of possibilities in the mind's eye has two aspects. First and more obviously, there is an image of something *specific* – rain, say. But also, deeper down, there is an image or map of *general* possibilities – just at the moment one is expecting rain but one knows that sometimes there is hot sunlight, sometimes wind, sometimes snow, and so on. The map of general possibilities in the mind's eye is the basis on which particular expectations are formed. The distinction between mental map and specific predictions can be readily applied in education. On the one hand, there is a sense of what might happen in general terms; on the other, there are expectations of one particular pupil or group of pupils.

The most obvious continuum in the mental maps of the teaching profession is connected with what both teachers and the general public call 'ability' or 'intelligence' or 'potential'. A second is to do with attitude and behaviour – apathetic/keen, disruptive/co-operative, trouble-making/compliant, and so on. The latter aspect of teachers' mental maps was well described recently in a newspaper article by the leader of a teachers' union. 'This morning,' he wrote, 'many teachers will go to school dreading the prospect of facing a particular class. It could be a class with which last week's lesson went particularly badly, a class where almost every lesson goes badly, or a group with one individual who cannot keep still or keep quiet for more than a few minutes at a time.'

These two continua – 'intelligence' and 'behaviour' – are generally thought of as being independent of each other. So the four corners or quarters of the mental map used by the teaching profession can be shown as in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: The four corners in teachers' mental maps**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| B – High ability and negative attitude | A – High ability and positive attitude |
| D – Low ability and negative attitude  | C – Low ability and positive attitude  |

The 'ideal pupil' (known by researchers as the IP) is in Quadrant A. In the health service, by the way, they also have an IP concept – it stands for ideal patient. A few years ago it was revealed that nurses at a certain hospital routinely wrote the letters UNDY against the

names of certain patients when they went off duty. UNDY, it transpired, was the opposite of IP. It stood for Unfortunately Not Dead Yet. In some schools, as members of educational welfare services know all too well, an analogous set of letters is FDNTUT – they appear on reporting forms that teachers fill in about certain pupils at the end of each lesson: Fortunately Did Not Turn Up Today. A class consisting of Quadrant C pupils is easy to teach, but unrewarding. A class of Quadrant D pupils is the kind the union leader was referring to, in teachers' minds the class from hell, the kids of whom they long to say FDNTUT. But Quadrant B pupils are perhaps the most feared of all – not only challenging and disrespectful but shrewd and insightful as well.

## Research

Research findings show, not at all surprisingly, that pupils perceived by teachers to belong to Quadrant A have much higher achievements than those who are perceived to be in Quadrant D. This is precisely what common sense would predict. For according to common sense, teachers' expectations are formed on the basis of, and as a result of, pupils' attainments. However, research also shows that expectations of a particular pupil are often *not* rooted in objective evidence about that individual but instead in deep seated beliefs and assumptions, many of them tacit or unconscious rather than articulated, to do with social class, gender, ethnicity, disability, culture and race.

For example, pupils' names may affect what is expected even before a teacher has set eyes on them. In Roman times this phenomenon was known as *nomen omen* – knowing someone's name, you have been warned by that alone. When the pupil is met face to face, the teacher may attend in the first instance to entirely non-verbal cues – body-language, gesture, facial expression, demeanour and posture, complexion, physique, use of eye-contact, gait and movement, use of physical space, hairstyle and how tidy it is, how the school uniform is worn, and so on. And then as soon as the pupil opens their mouth, the teacher may be influenced by accent, intonation, use of standard or non-standard terms and syntax, tone, loudness or softness, readiness to interrupt or to be interrupted, and appropriacy and register of language when speaking to an authority figure.

All these features are connected with class, gender, culture or sub-culture, ethnicity and race. When a teacher interacts with a pupil, the more similar the pupil is to the teacher in these respects the more likely it is that the teacher will see the pupil as belonging to Quadrant A. The less similar, the more likely that the pupil will be located in Quadrant D. Research shows further that pupils perceived by their teachers to be in Quadrant A receive a substantially different educational experience from pupils imagined to be in Quadrant D. The differences include:

**A climate of respect.** Quadrant A pupils feel that they are respected and liked by their teachers. But Quadrant D pupils feel that they are unvalued. Communication of respect and liking, or of lack of recognition and respect, takes place not only explicitly but also through a range of non-verbal processes.

**Feedback.** Quadrant A pupils receive more frequent feedback on how they are progressing, and this feedback is not only more positive but also more focused and detailed.

**Stimulus.** Quadrant A pupils are given more engaging and interesting tasks, and receive more attention related to their learning. Quadrant D pupils are bored and it is their behaviour that teachers then respond to, not their learning.

**Expression and production.** One very simple form of expression is asking questions. Quadrant A pupils have more opportunities to ask questions and to clarify their thinking through talk and discussion. They see their teachers as, in a fine American term, 'askable' – people you can approach without getting your head bitten off and from whom, indeed, you can reasonably expect to get a helpful answer. If Quadrant D pupils ask questions, it is assumed that they're challenging, confrontational and troublesome. "Please, what's Hulks?" Pip one day asks his elder sister. "That's the way with this boy!" she exclaims, pointing at him with her needle and thread, and shaking her head: "Answer him one question, and he'll ask you a dozen directly. Hulks are prison ships..." - "I wonder who's put into prison-ships, and why they're put there?" asks Pip. "I tell you what, young fellow," she says. "I didn't bring you up to badger people's lives out... People are put in the Hulks because they do murder, and because they rob, and forge, and do all sorts of bad; and they always begin by asking questions. Now, you get along to bed!" By the way, Ofsted guidance on inspecting educational inclusion has a paragraph on how teachers ask questions, but nothing at all on how and whether pupils do.

**Justice and trust.** Quadrant A pupils feel that the education system, and the world generally, is just and patterned, and can be trusted. Quadrant D pupils, however, do not easily trust their teachers or their school or authority in the wider world. One consequence is that they are much more likely to look for moral support from their peers, the street and youth culture than from teachers, parents and adults generally.

These five points are a good summary of the central concept at today's conference, inclusion. To be included in education is to have an education with those five characteristics. To be excluded is to have the experiences of pupils in Quadrant D. In both instances there are self-fulfilling prophecies, or virtuous and vicious circles and spirals. Pupils perceived to be includable, as the term might be, do well and they get included all the more. Those not perceived to be includable do badly, and they get included all the less. Educational welfare services deal largely with children and young people who have spent years of their lives in the vicious circle of not being includable – the self-fulfilling prophecies that kick in with increasing grimness if you are perceived to be stuck in Quadrant D.

### **So what shall we do?**

The most obvious implication of this discussion of mental maps and self-fulfilling prophecies is that the education system should strive to see *all* pupils as having the characteristics of Quadrant A pupils, and treat them accordingly. Robert Tauber, an American specialist, says:

Even if a teacher does not truly feel that a particular student is capable of greater achievement or significantly improved behaviour, that teacher can at least act as if he or she holds such heightened positive expectations. Who knows, the teacher may very well be convincing to the student and, later, to himself or herself.

Yes, but how do we prevent such acting (Tauber's highly appropriate word) from being mere hypocrisy and tokenism? We may, as Tauber says, change both our pupils and ourselves by skilful play-acting. But not, surely, for long. Quadrant D pupils are perfectly capable of seeing through play-acting, anyway after a while. We have to change our mental maps as well as our outward behaviour. But in what ways? And how? And what is the role in such processes of inner, mental change of educational welfare services? To these questions the

lecture now turns. I shall summarise four things that need to be done; shall make one observation on the question of how; and end by commenting briefly on the role of educational welfare services.

First, we have to question rigorously, and discard mercilessly, all or most traditional notions of intelligence and ability. The latter are sometimes summarised with the single word 'IQism'. The differences between IQism and alternative views are shown schematically in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: IQism and its alternatives**

| <i>Basic questions</i>  | <i>IQism answers</i>  | <i>Alternative answers</i>   |
|---|---|--|
| Is intelligence of a single kind?   | Yes. Academics refer to 'G' – general intelligence which is much the same in all fields and subjects. | No. Academics refer to 'multiple intelligences' – at least eight different kinds of intelligence, largely independent of each other. |
| Is intelligence innate?   | Yes. Each person is born with a fixed level of intelligence   | No. Though affected by genetic inheritance, intelligence is developed, not innate.   |
| Can intelligence be reliably measured?  | Yes.  | Perhaps.   |
| If so, how?   | A range of paper and pencil tests.  | Activities, not pencil and paper.  |
| Can culture-free tests be designed and administered?  | Yes.  | Almost certainly no.   |
| Can tests be administered without regard to power relations in education and wider society?           | Yes.  | Definitely not.  |
| Can reliable and therefore fair predictions be made, on the basis of tests, about future achievement? | Yes.  | No.  |
| Which academic disciplines are most relevant?   | Cognitive psychology.   | Various, including sociology, social psychology, philosophy and political theory.  |

Second, we need to use learning style theory, and notions of accelerated learning and mind-friendly teaching. A pupil perceived by teachers to have low intelligence or negative attitudes probably has a learning style that the education system fails to recognise and appeal to.

Third, we need to develop richer concepts to do with adolescent identity than those with which we usually operate, and we need to develop the concepts and practice of what has variously been called 'democratic discipline', 'rights-based discipline' or 'inclusive discipline' as distinct from punitive discipline. At the risk of sounding absurdly idealistic and romantic, our basic text should be taken from that famous statement by Quadrant D young people to Officer Krupke:

Gee, Officer Krupke, we're very upset.  
We never had the love that ev'ry child oughta get.  
We ain't no delinquents, we're misunderstood.  
Deep down inside us there is good,  
There is good, there is untapped good,  
Like inside, the worst of us is good.

The same point is made by transactional analysis theory when it is said that we should 'level' with children and teenagers, namely speak to the 'adult' within each of them not to the 'child', and from our own 'adult', not from our 'parent'. In *Great Expectations*, Dickens provides a beautiful illustration of the essential approach:

"You call me a lucky fellow," said I. "Of course I am. I was a blacksmith's boy but yesterday; I am - what shall I say I am? - today?" Herbert replied: "Say, a good fellow, if you want a phrase," smiling and clapping his hand on the back of mine. "A good fellow, with impetuosity and hesitation, boldness and diffidence, action and dreaming, curiously mixed in him." I stopped for a moment to consider whether there really was this mixture in my character. On the whole, I by no means recognised the analysis, but thought it not worth disputing.

Every client of educational welfare services is, in Dickens's phrases, a curious mixture of boldness and diffidence, action and dreaming, impetuosity and hesitation. And so is every other quadrant D young person, and indeed every human being.

Fourth, we have to look *critically* at the three things mentioned above: theories of multiple intelligence; learning style theory; transactional analysis theory. The basic problem is that the vast majority of these three discourses is colour-blind, culture-blind and class-blind – it fails to take into account concepts and experiences of ethnic and cultural diversity, and fails to recognise that schools and classrooms, and the teachers and learners within them, are affected by colour and cultural racism, by class bias, and by prejudices relating to disability. Time and again, when new ideas are implemented in colour-blind ways, Asian and black people are disadvantaged. In analogous ways, working class children are disadvantaged by class-blind initiatives.

## **How?**

It follows from all this that challenging mental maps is a collective task not a private one, for it is part of the larger task of 'restructuring the cultures, policies and practices of schools so that they respond to the diversity of students in their communities'. We are not like the infant Pip, naming the world with private words. Collectively we need both political will and political skill and to bear in mind that the tasks of restructuring and redrawing have been undertaken in each school separately, and in each local education authority separately, as well as nationally. What is the role of education welfare services in the collective tasks at their various levels and places? Again, there are four points are worth particular attention.

## **Education welfare services**

First, most obviously, it is important that education welfare services should be part of the action – EWOs should be centrally and vibrantly involved in restructuring the cultures, policies and practices of schools, and therefore in debates and deliberations about mental maps and expectations, and about concepts of ability and behaviour.

Second, they have a distinctive responsibility to represent and to champion the voices, perceptions, concerns and interests of what this lecture has called Quadrant D pupils.

Third, EWOs need to take pride in what may be called their 'outsider skills' – being able to keep one's distance, independence and objectivity but also being able to listen sympathetically, and being able to feed in fresh ideas and insights at the right time.

Fourth, their work with households and families needs to be seen as a form of non-formal adult education. It is sometimes said that adult education is not exciting or sexy – not at all like an adult movie. The reality, however, is that adult education is an extremely important and vital aspect of society, particularly in relation to inequalities, and its practitioners need to be deeply immersed in what was once famously called 'the pedagogy of the oppressed'. In this respect as in others, education welfare officers are in a pivotal place, deeply responsible and deeply exciting.

These four points are for consideration not only within services but also, of course, in dealings and negotiations between services and schools. They must be at least in the sub-text, though preferably in the main text, of service level agreements.

## **Concluding note**

Dickens's novel ends with Pip and Estella reunited and reconciled. It's late in the evening and the mists of early evening have lifted. All around there is 'a broad expanse of tranquil light' and there are no shadows, real or metaphorical. Pip has the great expectation that he and Estella will never again be parted by grim events or by grim society.

Happy endings in novels are happy not because grim eventualities are over but because the storyteller has shown that grim eventuality is not the full story, and that there are grounds for confidence, for great expectation. A lecturer – even a lecturer constrained by the expectations at a conference organised by the Association for Education Welfare Management – is a kind of storyteller. A lecturer's final message, like a storyteller's, is that grim eventualities are not the full story. There are grounds for confidence, for great expectation.

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## **Background and references**

The discussion of mental maps in this lecture is drawn from a chapter in *Equality Stories: recognition, respect and raising achievement* by Robin Richardson and Berenice Miles, Trentham Books, 2003.

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There is substantial discussion of IQism and of its links with institutional racism in *Rationing Education: policy, reform and equity* discussed by David Gillborn and Deborah Youdell, Open University Press, 2000

Howard Gardner's ground-breaking book was *Frames of Mind* (1983). More recently he has published *Intelligence Reframed: multiple intelligences for the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (1999). Eva Hoffman's *Introducing Children to their Intelligences*, 2001, is a useful and simple introduction. Details at [www.learn-to-learn.org.uk](http://www.learn-to-learn.org.uk). The relevance of Gardner's work to race equality issues in education is stimulatingly discussed by Reva Klein in her *Defying Disaffection: how schools are winning the hearts and minds of reluctant students*, Trentham 1999

*Disaffection and Inclusion: a mainstream approach to difficult behaviour*, based on work in the London Borough of Merton and published by CSEI, and *Managing Classroom Behaviour* by Chris Watkins, published by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers. Also relevant is Tony Sewell's brilliant *Learning to Succeed: a personal and social education programme for young people*, published in 2002 by NASUWT

Lyrics by Steven Sondheim for *West Side Story*. Quoted by Reva Klein in her excellent book on combating and reducing disaffection (see above)