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瀬平劉，アントン
九州大学基幹教育l浣

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瀬平劉 アントン [1*]

[1] 九州大学基幹教育院, 〒819-0395 福岡市西区元岡 744

Potential Applications of Schema Pedagogy in Japanese University Education.

Anton SEVILLA-LIU[1*]

[1]Faculty of Arts and Science, Kyushu University, 744, Motooka, Nishi-ku, Fukuoka 819-0395, Japan

*E-mail: sevilla.anton@artsci.kyushu-u.ac.jp

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This article introduces "Schema Pedagogy," the educational application of Schema Therapy that was introduced by Marcus Damm (2010) in Germany. Schema Therapy is a 3rd wave development of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. It examines the needs of people, how the failure to meet these needs results in Early Maladaptive Schemas, how these schemas manifest as different modes, and how such problems can be addressed. Schema Pedagogy bridges these principles to the classroom, for both pathological and non-pathological students, allowing for more effective student guidance and prevention of future characterological problems. After introducing the approaches, this article proceeds to examples of how schemas show in university classrooms, both in students and in teachers, and how people cope with these schemas in an educational context. Next, it examines the application of Schema Pedagogy, using several examples from university classroom experience, showing the use of observation and relationship building, addressing mind games, and mode mapping. Finally, in the discussion, it reconsiders Schema Pedagogy from the point of view of the fundamental principles of education as argued by philosopher of education Gert Biesta. It shows how Schema Pedagogy's conceptualization of the struggling student fundamentally contributes to subjectification and active learning, and how the view of relational mental health contributes to relational subjectivity and collaborative learning.

1. Introduction

This article introduces the concept of "Schema Pedagogy," its background and core ideas, and how it might connect to core curriculum education in Japanese Universities—with particular emphasis on applicable situations at Kyushu University and the key principles of active learning and collaborative learning that the university espouses.

Schema Pedagogy (German: *Schemapädagogik*) is the educational application of Schema Therapy; it is a deep approach to student formation, guidance, and counseling that looks at the core worldviews of students (and teachers), the emotional patterns that emerge from them, and how addressing these schemas and modes might sustain healthier interactional patterns in education that fulfill students' needs. It was designed by Marcus Damm and detailed in his book, *Schemapädagogik: Möglichkeiten und Methoden der*

Schematherapie im Praxisfeld Erziehung (2010, only available in German). It now has a growing network of teachers in Germany called "Schemapädagogik-Netzwerks," (http://www.schemapädagogik-netzwerk.de/) who are applying the method in schools.

Japanese education as a whole is greatly concerned with issues of psychological health and holistic human development. This is most evidenced by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) textbook, *Guidebook for student guidance* (*Seito shidô teiyô*, 2010) which advocates for the guidance of students' holistic development in all aspects of schooling—from academic curricular instruction to extracurricular activities and to direct mental health support.

Kyushu University also shares this concern. It has a Center for Health Sciences and Counseling that caters to student needs, with a very active Support Section for Inclusion to ensure that students with various needs are able to benefit from university education. Also, KIKAN Education (core curriculum, headed by the Faculty of Arts and Science) as a whole is concerned not merely with the transmission of academic knowledge but with the formation of various "mental habit[s]" and attitudes required of an "active learner." (See https://www.artsci.kyushu-u.ac.jp/english/) This is not merely academic, but includes some aspects of psychological health as well. For example, key required courses like Interdisciplinary Collaborative Learning (*Kadai kyôgaku*) builds communication skills, prosociality, and cognitive flexibility, and KIKAN Education Seminar (*Kikan kyôiku seminâ*) supports self-awareness, values, and identity development. Therefore, Schema Pedagogy's contribution to supporting students' psychological health both in and out of the curriculum may be relevant to Kyushu University and all universities that teach a core curriculum.

This paper is a primarily theoretical and applied theoretical work in the field of Education (specifically "Clinical Pedagogy," *Rinshô Kyôikugaku*). I begin with a description of the background of Schema Pedagogy and its roots in Schema Therapy. I then proceed to the main aims and uses of Schema Pedagogy, as applied to common educational situations in Kyushu University. I end an analysis of Schema Pedagogy from the point of view of the wider aims of education as a whole, dialoguing with Gert Biesta's philosophy of education and its implications for the role of mental health interventions in an educational system.

2. Core Features of Schema Pedagogy

2.1. From Schema Therapy to Pedagogy

Schema Pedagogy comes from Schema Therapy, a 3rd wave development of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) by Jeffrey Young that incorporates elements from CBT, attachment theory, Gestalt therapy, and psychoanalysis (Young et al., 2003). In the 1990s, Schema Therapy was designed for situations when CBT fails with the most challenging clients—like those with Borderline Personality Disorder and Narcissistic Personality Disorder—who are uncompliant and whose problems seem to be embedded in their personalities ("characterological patients"). Concisely put, Schema Therapy is an approach that is closely attuned to the core emotional needs of clients, the history of the meeting of these needs, and the deeply embedded schemas and modes behind the response to these needs; it seeks to empower the client to heal those wounds and better fulfill

their own needs.

At the core of this approach is an awareness of needs—of the client, but also of the carer who interacts with the client. Young et al (2013, pp. 9-10) list five core emotional needs:

1. Secure attachments to others (includes safety, stability, nurturance, and acceptance)
2. Autonomy, competence, and a sense of identity
3. Freedom to express valid needs and emotions
4. Spontaneity and play
5. Realistic limits and self-control

If one looks closely at these needs, one finds that they are, like Erik Erikson's list of developmental needs, *relational* needs. One cannot have secure attachment without someone to be attached to, or freedom to express without someone to hear that expression. This shows a fundamentally relational approach to the person, similar to Erikson's idea of generational chains and attachment theory. (See Lockwood & Perris, 2012.)

When core needs are not met, the child suffers. And when suffering is extreme or repeated, the child learns and generalizes this situation in order to cope with its possible recurrence, resulting in schemas of how they see themselves, human relationships, and reality as a whole. For example, if a child is repeatedly denied protection, the child will learn this and store this learning as a schema, a felt sense that the world is fundamentally unsafe.

"Schema" is a rather common concept in psychology and education, usually referring to Piaget's cognitive view of schemas: "…a schema is a pattern imposed on reality or experience to help individuals explain it, to mediate perception, and to guide their responses. A schema is an abstract representation of the distinctive characteristics of an event…" (Young et al., 2003, p. 6) However, the word "schema" in Schema Therapy usually refers to "Early Maladaptive Schema" (EMS) which has a narrower meaning than Piaget's:

> a broad pervasive theme or pattern / comprised of memories, emotions, cognitions, and bodily sensations / regarding oneself and one's relationships with others / developed during childhood or adolescence / elaborated throughout one's lifetime and / dysfunctional to a significant degree (Young et al., 2003, p. 7)

Frustration of needs results in the learning and generalization of EMS. Due to the intensity of emotions involved, these schemas are neurally "burned-in" (Damm, 2010, p. 33) and are felt as a "subjective truth" that is part of one's identity and worldview. This is explained via LeDoux's theory of learning via the amygdala, where the responses to learning are unconscious, automatic, more permanent, more generalized, and faster than rational thought (Young et al., 2003).

From interactions with clients and psychometric research, Young and his colleagues developed a list of 18 EMS, as well as statistically-tested inventories for their measurement (such as the Young Schema

Questionnaire, long and short form). They list five schema domains and the schemas included therein:

1. Disconnection and rejection: abandonment/instability, mistrust/abuse, emotional deprivation, defectiveness/shame, social isolation/alienation
2. Impaired autonomy and performance: dependence/incompetence, vulnerability to harm/illness, enmeshment/undeveloped self, failure
3. Impaired limits: entitlement/grandiosity, insufficient self-control/self-discipline
4. Other-directedness: subjugation, self-sacrifice, approval-seeking/recognition-seeking
5. Overvigilance and inhibition: negativity/pessimism, emotional inhibition, unrelenting standards/hypercriticalness, punitiveness

These lists enable therapists and clients to see what worldviews are hidden beneath certain patterns of action, often invisible to the persons themselves (Young et al., 2003, pp. 14-17).

Schemas influence the individual in varying ways, as lensed through "modes." "Schema modes are the moment-to-moment emotional states and coping responses—adaptive and maladaptive—that we all experience." "[Modes are] … schemas or schema operations—adaptive or maladaptive—that are currently active for an individual." (Young et al., 2003, p. 37) For example, a student may seem quite ordinary, but suddenly become very defensive when criticized, then flip to vulnerability and tears when that defensiveness is exposed, resulting in drastic personality shifts. These are modes within the person, akin to characters in a play, that pull together certain ways of responding to situations. These include child modes (like the vulnerable or angry child who has had certain needs frustrated), critic modes (like an internalized parent who deprives the child), and coping modes (attempts to relieve the suffering by avoiding, surrendering to it, or overcompensating). In terms of modes, the goal of Schema Therapy is to strengthen the "healthy adult mode" that is able to be aware of this interplay, fulfill the needs of the child modes, defuse from the critic modes, and choose healthier behaviors instead of coping modes. Compared to medical or psychopathological approaches, I think this approach is closer to education, which is focused on growth and maturation.

With the above concepts, a practitioner of Schema Therapy would try to understand a client (case conceptualization) by examining the problem behavior, seeing the automatic thoughts, modes, and schemas behind them, and the deprived needs that trigger these. The practitioner would then attempt to heal these schemas through a range of cognitive strategies (ex. reality testing for irrational thoughts), experiential strategies (imagery rescripting), and behavioral pattern-breaking. This occurs within a warm relationship of "empathic confrontation" (explained later) and "limited reparenting," where the fundamental aim is to empower the client to respond to these deeply ingrained patterns in a healthier way that better responds to their needs, like learning to become a healthy parent to oneself and the various modes within.

But why might we need such an advanced (and difficult) form of therapy for education? Damm first applied Schema Therapy to education in 2009, at a workshop for teachers entitled "Difficult students and how to deal with them" (*Schwierige Schüler – und wie man mit ihnen klarkommt*) (Damm, 2010, p. 9). The focus was not on students with psychopathologies (like one would encounter in a counseling room or psychiatric

unit) but included relatively healthy students in classrooms who have common behavioral problems. It addressed usual concerns of teachers—understanding students with behavioral problems, why they test and play "mind games" with their teachers, understanding how some students could be so triggering for certain teachers, and how to get through to students in cases where no amount of rational instruction seems to help.

What Damm found in his own practice and work with teachers is that despite the design of Schema Therapy to deal with the most challenging psychological disorders, its basic view of the person—as having core needs, schemas that form in early attachment relationships, and an inner drama of modes—is very much applicable to normal students. Normal students try to fulfill their needs in educational settings, have certain views of themselves, teachers, and classmates based on how their needs are usually met, and certain emotional patterns that can get very conspicuous in certain situations (like groupwork, conflict, or examinations). Furthermore, students are *in the process* of forming these EMS, giving teachers a unique opportunity to unravel complexes *before* they become hardwired as adults (Roediger in Damm, 2010), in a sense participating in a limited way in the process of parenting (before limited *re*-parenting becomes necessary).

2.2 Aims of Schema Pedagogy

Schema Pedagogy aims to address six main problems in education (Damm, 2010, pp. 17-26). The first is "external causal attribution" and how students with problems tend to have great difficulty in understanding and taking responsibility for their part in problem interactions; instead, they blame it on other people or circumstances. "I didn't do anything wrong! It's my groupmate's fault!" Behind this is a lack of self-insight into the role one plays in a problem (and perhaps other more complex coping behaviors) that can render many pedagogic interventions ineffective. This can be addressed by the relationship-building process and mode awareness process of Schema Pedagogy.

Second is the tendency of students to have repeated unhelpful patterns in their interactions with teachers and students. Damm humorously calls these "mind games" (*Psychospiele*): deliberately testing the patience of their teachers, annoying others, or disrupting group activities. One could also include bullying, routinely shirking responsibilities, or being overcritical of themselves and other classmates. This also may include behaviors that seem positive, like trying to be very helpful (in a desperate bid to be likable to the teacher) or working very hard (out of a fear of anything less than perfect performance). In the face of these mind games, Damm asks, "What does this student really need?" This question gets us behind the veneer of behavior to what might really be going on.

This brings us to the third problem, repetition compulsion, the tendency to repeat schemas because they are very deeply neurally-ingrained cognitive structures. This repetition lies behind why mind games become bad habits that repeat no matter how unhelpful they are to the student. To raise a controversial example, rationally, it may seem that no student would *want* to be bullied. But a student with a mistrust/abuse schema (and a coping mode that surrenders to it) is in a paradoxical way *accustomed to* being maltreated—it is congruent with the student's self-definition (ego syntonic), despite being painful. Such a student might unconsciously repeat behaviors like acting oddly that increase the likelihood of them being bullied (Damm,

2010). (This is not to shift the responsibility away from the students who bully. They themselves clearly have problems, possibly schema-based.) The only way to get beyond this pattern is to recognize the role one plays in it, the triggers and needs that set it up, and consciously addressing these.

The first three points show that behind behavioral problems is a complex mesh of issues rooted deep in the personalities of students. And understanding these requires, fourth, a realization of the "inner plurality" of people. Instead of seeing people as merely rational actors, Schema Therapy/Pedagogy see that the attempt to be rational is an *active response* to a plurality of non-rational and sometimes self-destructive factors in personality.

> The "I" [*Ich*] is obviously dynamic, internally contradictory, in actuality an ego-complex [*Ich-Bündel*]. Therefore, Gerhard Roth also says: "We are not one ego, but several ego states that relate to each other." Previous approaches to pedagogy were unaware of this presupposition and what it demands from the practice of education—the promotion of a "balance between individual ego states." (Damm, 2010, pp. 23-24. Translations from the German are my own.)

A student may *want* to be an active learner (healthy adult mode) but at the same time have a part that is terribly afraid of social rejection (vulnerable child mode) and another part that is constantly criticizing herself when she does anything that makes her stand out (punitive critic mode). While education must focus on the integrating function of the healthy adult mode, students are still in the process of *becoming* healthy adults. Supporting this process requires that we be aware of the many non-rational facets that compete with the more rational self to sway a student's decisions.

Fifth, because of this complexity, education requires "empathic confrontation." If teachers are only empathic, Damm suggests that students and teachers alike will fail to become aware of unhelpful modes that lie in the background, sustaining problematic behavior. If teachers are merely confrontational (Damm may have Albert Ellis in mind), students will be too defensive to address something as intimate as a mode that is deeply entrenched in their personalities. Addressing modes and schemas requires a deep compassionate acceptance paradoxically united with a courageous exposing of what is hidden and willingness to work toward change. Young et al. (2003) see this empathic confrontation as a trademark of Schema Therapy.

Last—and much neglected in Japanese education books—is the problem of countertransference (*Gegenübertragung*). While trying to understand students in a deep and complex way and working toward "empathic confrontation," we must remember that *educators themselves* have their own needs, history of needs fulfillment, schemas, and modes. Again, this goes back to the relational focus of Schema Therapy—needs and the schemas about their fulfillment are relational, and are thus triggered by other people. For example, a teacher with a strong self-sacrifice schema may struggle with drawing boundaries with a student with a very strong dependence/incompetence schema who makes a show of being very helpless and needy. (Other than self-sacrifice, Damm repeatedly warns of the dangers of emotional deprivation, punitiveness, and unrelenting standards schemas in teachers. Ex. 2010, p. 132.) Self-understanding of one's schemas and modes is critical in therapy, and perhaps it should be so in education as well.

To summarize, Schema Pedagogy highlights how in education, both teachers and students have problem behaviors that are entrenched within the personality. It thus aims to understand these with a view of personality adequate to this complexity and address these problems through empathic confrontation.

2.3 Understanding Schemas in Kyushu University Classrooms

Schema Therapy divides 18 schemas into five schema domains, and Damm provides very quotidian, non-clinical examples of these (2010, pp. 36-59), which are helpful because Young et al.'s (2003) examples are severely pathological and quite different from what one commonly finds in the classroom. While it is not possible to discuss each of the schemas, we shall examine an example from each schema domain and how I have seen them appear in various classroom situations at Kyushu University. (Note that at this point, observations are idiosyncratic and inconclusive. While I have conducted empirical research on the schemas of students and how they manifest in education, as in Sevilla-Liu 2022b, I leave a direct connection between student schemas and actual behavior for a further study in a closed journal. Examples below are modified and combine multiple cases to protect privacy.)

The first schema domain is disconnection and rejection, and includes schemas that suggest that one's needs for "security, safety, stability, nurturance, empathy, sharing of feelings, acceptance, and respect will not be met in a predictable manner" (Young et al., 2003, p. 14). These schemas usually arise in a family or school context perceived as rejecting, lonely, shaming, or abusive. (In Schema Pedagogy, it is not the objective fact of the context—ex. abuse—that is highlighted but how events are subjectively interpreted.)

For example, some Kyushu University students had a lot of difficulty fitting in and feeling a sense of acceptance from the group, particularly when they were in elementary and middle school. For some, this results in a social isolation/alienation schema, where one thinks that one is fundamentally different from others and will never find a sense of belonging, no matter what one does. If one surrenders to this schema, a coping mode of an "outcast" (and automatic thoughts like "I'll never fit in anyway") may arise. This is particularly visible in groupwork, such as in collaborative learning classes. Such a student can be very withdrawn in their relationship to the group, or even absent themselves on the day of their presentation for fear of embarrassing themselves, further reinforcing the sense that they will never fit in.

As mentioned above, Schema Pedagogy also notes the *teacher's* schemas. For example, a professor may have an emotional deprivation schema from a very cold and performance-focused upbringing. ("I don't care if you're tired. I don't care if you don't like it. Work harder!") In such a case, a teacher who copes via avoidance might simply draw away from any emotional involvement in school, teaching only factually and not engaging with students on an emotional level (p. 37), which could reduce their effectivity as teachers and make them hesitant to teach classes like "KIKAN Education Seminar" that involve engaging with students' personal lives.

The second domain is of impaired autonomy and performance, wherein overcontrolling or overprotective family and school backgrounds result in a belief that one cannot function independently and successfully. There are students in Kyushu University who, despite having successfully gained admission to a

difficult university, have a long history of struggling with exams and being criticized for their setbacks, without their successes being reinforced. This may result in a sense that one is bound to fail and is no good (*dame*) compared to their peers. This "failure schema" is one of the most commonly reported schemas in informal student surveys I have conducted. Such a schema may result in a constant feeling of insufficiency (despite actual competence), resulting in the student avoiding growth opportunities to hide this perceived inadequacy.

The third domain is of impaired limits—those who have difficulty with self-discipline and other forms of limit setting in relation to both themselves and others, usually as a result of a permissive or undirected upbringing. This includes the schemas of entitlement/grandiosity and insufficient self-control/self-discipline. The latter manifests itself quite recognizably as poor performance—starting projects indiscriminately then failing to complete them, deficiencies in attention and so forth. But unlike usual diagnoses of ADHD or mania, Schema Pedagogues would explore if this failure to discipline oneself despite consequences is coming from a certain view of oneself ("I have to do what I want when I want!") or others ("People should never control what I do.") rather than merely neurobiological deficits.

Another striking case can be found with entitlement/grandiosity, which is not uncommon in students and teachers in a top-level university. Some may have grown up with the implicit message that their academic success makes them superior to others, and they may find themselves alienating themselves from others by being condescending (even when they regret this behavior and its consequences), by refusing to follow the rules everyone is subject to, or even throwing tantrums when they fail to get what they want.

The three domains above are easily recognized as relating to what one might judge as "bad students"—students often judged as being "messed up," incompetent, or undisciplined. However, the next two domains connect to what many teachers see as "good students."

The fourth domain is other-directedness, wherein as a result of conditional acceptance in their upbringing ("You only deserve love *if* ___."), some become excessively focused on the desires and responses of others at the expense of their own. For example, students with subjugation or approval-seeking schemas generally do required tasks well and are quite helpful to the teacher and to others. However, this may be at an extreme, saying yes to tasks even when they have exceeded their capacity to balance work and rest. Furthermore, I have found that many of the students with this schema struggle with active learning—where independent learning is accompanied by a lack of external direction and recognition. In my informal surveys, subjugation is one of the most common schemas students resonate with. Unfortunately, the tendency in education to focus on "problem behavior" (*mondai kôdô*) results in the struggles of such generally obedient students being completely dismissed (or worse, romanticized and reinforced).

Finally, the fifth schema domain is overvigilance and inhibition. This is another common domain for achievers, resulting from "grim, demanding, and sometimes punitive" (Young et al., 2003, p. 17) family and school backgrounds, resulting in a suppression of spontaneity, expression, and happiness, and instead prioritizing meeting rules and expectations.

The following schema is another that is very common in Kyushu University: Students with the unrelenting standards schema tend to do excellently, with their perfectionism driving them to become

overachievers. (Perhaps this is a large part of why they passed the entrance exams in the first place.) However, as a schema, this demand for excellence is carried out to an extreme, even if it sacrifices one's own well-being. Students tend to have a difficult time with weekends and vacations, feeling guilty for not working relentlessly, making them more prone to burn out. But also, we see conflict arising in group work, when an overachieving student behaves aggressively toward groupmates who do not hold equally high standards. Furthermore, this schema is probably widespread amongst the professoriate, and can lead to the unhelpful situation of a professor reinforcing perfectionist behavior because the professor is ego syntonic with it, resulting in the student burning out at an even faster rate.

Schema Pedagogy's keen attention to these two domains shows that it is not merely maintaining the school's status quo but is deeply concerned with how students, even successful ones, are actually experiencing their education. Schema Pedagogy's response to "good kids" and "achievers" shows its criticality toward the overall competitive ethos of schooling that comes at the expense of student mental health.

2.4 Coping and Modes

How do people cope with the pain of an EMS? Most of the examples I gave above involve "surrender" to the schema as a way of coping—conforming to the pattern and its predictability, as if to say "this is really how it is, and there is no other way." For example, a student may surrender to an unrelenting standards schema, telling themselves, "I have to do things perfectly. Doing merely passable work is simply not an option!" I have mentioned a case of "avoidance" wherein one avoids situations where a schema might be triggered at the cost of shrinking one's sphere of activity. For example, one may avoid the schema above by avoiding classes that have requirements, because if those requirements come up, they sense that the unrelenting standards schema will get triggered.

"Overcompensation" is a third way of coping, and I have momentarily avoided discussing it because it inverts the schema manifestation. However, I have seen cases where students who are sloppy and unmotivated actually used to be perfectionists and overachievers, but due to the sheer stress of it, have flipped to the opposite extreme of sloppiness. If they do tasks terribly, nobody will expect them to do a perfect job. There is a considerable pedagogic difference between a "sloppy" student who surrenders to failure, one who surrenders to insufficient self-control/self-discipline, and one who overcompensates against unrelenting standards. The first probably needs encouragement and exploration of their strengths. The second needs boundaries and discipline. And the third likely needs to let go of the pressure to be perfect, in order to give adequate but sustainable levels of effort. Without knowing the schema and coping mode, one's response to the problem behavior may be completely ineffective or even make the situation worse. For example, if the student were overcompensating against unrelenting standards by being sloppy, an attempt to give them boundaries and discipline will probably be perceived as a threat and anger the student!

What we also see here is a unique way of *constructing* problem behavior. For example, if a student asks for reasonable accommodation (*gôriteki hairyô*) due to anxiety problems, if we construct their problem in a neurologically reductionist way as being entirely about GABA secretion and amygdala activity, or if we

simply classify it as Generalized Anxiety Disorder, we lose the opportunity to see what meaning-making may be at play within this particular student's fears. Is the student anxious because she fundamentally thinks she is a loser and she is afraid that school work will expose her? Or is she anxious because she pushes herself too hard to fulfill a perfectionist ideal? Without knowing this, we would never know if allowing her more time to accomplish her work (the reasonable accommodation) is schema perpetuating or schema healing.

Because of how problems are rooted in schemas, old habits, and attachment patterns, "the usual pedagogical responses (punishment, dispute resolution, mediation, etc.) are limited in effectivity" (Damm, 2010, p. 59). It is difficult to convince or pressure students to go against unconscious, emotionally loaded, and familiar patterns. When a persistent problem (like working too hard and burning out) is pointed out, a student may even defend their problem: "I am a perfectionist. It makes me miserable. But this is who I am." Schemas are, by their nature, ego-syntonic, and there is a natural tendency to fuse to it as a self-definition.

This brings us to the importance of connecting coping to the "internal plurality of the self" through the concept of "schema modes." Looking at the example above, the "perfectionist" self is not *all* of the self. There is a part of the student that demands perfection (demanding critic mode) and a part that feels so inadequate and rejected (vulnerable child mode). In the face of this inner turmoil, one may then turn perfectionist (over-controller = surrendering coping mode) or do the opposite (slacker = overcompensating coping mode).

Seeing this inner plurality also prevents us from "totalizing" the problem—seeing the problem as if it were determinative of the whole being of the student. The vulnerable child is not perfectionist. Instead, in the vulnerable child we can see the core needs of the person—the need for acceptance, for expression, for being themselves. And the self that is able to notice these various parts of himself and ask, "Am I really okay with beating myself up like this and then getting all perfectionist about everything?" (healthy adult mode) is definitely not reducible to the label "perfectionist." This resonates with the non-pathologizing and non-totalizing approaches of therapies like Narrative Therapy or Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, which are also used in educational contexts because of how this stance empowers students toward self-directed growth (Block-Lerner & Cardaciotto, 2016; Sevilla-Liu, 2022c; Winslade & Monk, 2006).

Thus, understanding the modes that are at play (child modes, critic modes, coping modes) is an essential skill for both the schema pedagogue and the student who is trying to understand themselves. This understanding prevents totalizing the problem and pigeon-holing the student into the problematic pattern, allowing for a sense of distance where one can take care of the needs of the child mode.

3. Applications of Schema Pedagogy

Above, we have seen how Schema Pedagogy views human beings, their needs, and the schemas that arise from their frustration, the complex drama of modes, and how this can unfold even within the classroom. How then is this basic view applied?

The goals of Schema Pedagogy are outlined as follows:

Promote the personal and social competence of teachers

Establish a complementary relationship that responds to students needs

Reduce external causal attribution of the student
Reduce unconscious manipulations (mind games)
Reduce repetition compulsion
Clarify countertransference
Strengthen healthy adult mode
Prevent problem behavior and reinforce prosocial behavior (Damm, 2010, p. 89)

Realizing these goals requires a range of skills from the teacher. This includes diagnostic skills: understanding schemas/modes and sensitivity to the needs and schemas behind student behavior (particularly difficult behavior that test, manipulate, or covertly appeal for help from the teacher). Furthermore, these goals require relational skills like understanding the worldview of students, showing interest, mirroring, and active listening. Additionally, they require self-understanding of one's own schemas and modes. Finally, they require specific pedagogic skills such as distancing from attacks, comforting, and modeling healthy adult mode.

Damm applies his method in nurseries (*hoikuen*), kindergarten (*yôchien*), after-school care (similar to *shien gakkô*), orphanages, youth centers, and pediatric psychiatry (in-patient). For each institution, he analyzes a case and shows how teachers might practice the principles of Schema Pedagogy. However, in all these cases and institutions, he consistently highlights the following basic procedure: building a complementary relationship with students, supporting them with proper boundaries, clarifying their problems, supporting solutions in everyday life, and psychoeducation on schemas and modes (Damm, 2010).

Below, in order to demonstrate the aims, skills, and methods above in a relevant manner, I focus on three aspects of Schema Pedagogy as applied to my own experience at Kyushu University.

3.1 Observation and Relationship Building

The foundation of Schema Pedagogy is how we see each individual student. Instead of merely seeing a student's academic performance or surface behavior, a Schema Pedagogue is interested in how each student is *experiencing* their educational situation. This interest is the first step in building a complementary relationship with students.

For example, I once had a student (Mr. A) who regularly disrupted my lectures by raising his hand and "reciting" tangential points, often humorous ones. It was funny for a while, then other students became uncomfortable, then irritated at these disruptions. What should I have done? Instead of having a fixed response ("A teacher must be strict and enforce discipline."), Schema Pedagogy reminded me to observe and show interest in his experience of education. Looking at the student in group work, and reading his homework, I began to see the kind of cognition behind Mr. A's incessant reciting: he seemed to think his examples were more interesting and more intelligent than that of others. He wanted to share them, but also seemed to realize that it was starting to grate on others. And yet still he did it, both in lectures and in group work. Furthermore, looking at the cognitive content, I began to form a picture of what this student might need—to contribute from his intellect, but also to find his place amidst the shared learning situation. This understanding allowed me to

orient myself toward the student in a sympathetic and non-adversarial way.

This is one difference between Schema Pedagogy and Schema Therapy—pedagogues have access to "clinically relevant behavior" directly *in situ*. Teachers do not need to rely on students *talking about* their problems in a counseling room but can see it directly in the classroom, and see documentary evidence in quizzes and feedback.

With this, I also began to have a conceptualization of what schemas might be involved. Unlike Damm, I do not think it is necessary to adhere to the 18 EMS, especially because a teacher does not have the details necessary for such a careful conceptualization. Instead, I formed a rough *idiographic* understanding that Mr. A, while intelligent, might feel this intelligence places him "above the rules" of classroom social conduct (entitlement), and that he also might have difficulty fitting in (social isolation).

Based on this understanding, my response required balance: On one hand, the need to contribute is valid. And so, I tried to use him as a point person, for example by making a theoretical argument, then asking if he had a nice pop-culture example for it, and validating this contribution. This further contributes to building a complementary relationship with empathy and acceptance, showing him that I am on the side of meeting his needs (p. 106). These relationship building efforts constitute the first half of empathic confrontation.

But on the other hand, Mr. A's behavior was disruptive, and actually reinforcing a sense of alienation every time he ended up derailing the lecture or the group work. This brings us to confrontation and the need for "empathic limit setting," not calling on him when he raised his hand mid-lecture, and trying to remind him that his suggestions were welcome, but at the right time. This could be conceptualized as restraining the "self-aggrandizer mode" (that surrenders to entitlement and counterattacks against social isolation) and helping the student see that there are healthier ways to meet needs (like reciting at the right times).

Another difference between therapists and pedagogues can be seen here: a teacher is not restricted to dealing with one patient in the counseling room but influences the educational setting where clinically relevant behavior takes place, directly shaping attitudes of other members of the class. If a teacher responds to students in an empathic way and tries to get to know them, this changes the atmosphere of the classroom, giving students a sense that they matter as individual subjects and not just as generic students. Furthermore, as this way of relating continues, students become aware of each other's challenges and have an opportunity to take part in helping each other. For example, there were some students in class who went along with Mr. A's disruptive humor, with their laughter enabling his misbehavior. But as I responded to this as a teacher, they started to see how the behavior was unhelpful. There were times when I even appealed to the class as a whole: "Hey guys, I know this seems funny, but is it helping you learn? Also, I'm a bit worried about these wisecracks putting others down. How about we keep these to a minimum, yeah?"

However, when considering relationship building, Schema Pedagogy reminds us that every relationship is two-way. One of the challenges was that I found his disruptions insulting to my intelligence, and I was getting the urge to "put him in his place" by demonstrating my own intelligence. This is an example of countertransference, and this told me that my schemas and modes were getting involved too, and that I needed to distance myself from his disruptions ("It's not about me, he's dealing with his own issues here.")

and respond more compassionately.

These show Schema Pedagogy's basic attitude of getting to know students (and teachers!) in a deep way and trying to respond to their needs while working to dismantle unhelpful coping modes.

3.2 Addressing Mind Games

Damm often explores various "mind games": a kindergarten child hitting his classmates, youth at a center insulting or trying to scandalize their teacher, students regularly losing their tempers, et cetera. However, at Kyushu University, I find that mind games in the classroom are usually much more restrained than Damm's examples. For example, I have seen or heard of cases of disruptive recitation (as above), stonewalling in groupwork (refusal to participate), and condescendingly putting down the suggestions of other members of the group. In all of these, we have manipulations that consciously or unconsciously recreate particular social scenarios—being the center of attention, being left alone, being dominant over others, et cetera. In the cases of problems, these relational patterns are dysfunctional, preventing the education of the student or those around the student.

Damm (2010) gives four basic steps to addressing mind games: revealing the gameplay, anticipating further course of the game, confronting the player with the costs of the game, and valuing the player as a person and giving alternative behavior.

For example, I had a student (Ms. B) who was very concerned with getting everything right, in her understanding of the readings, quizzes, homework, et cetera. And she tended to get caught up in trying to prove she was right instead of learning something new (overcompensation for subjugation). After I spoke with her about her difficulties, we came to an understanding that this behavior was unhelpful for her and got in the way of what even she wanted for her learning.

However, this did not stop Ms. B from falling back into the same pattern. And so when she came up to me after class saying, "Sensei, this can't be right! You said ___ but in my quiz…" Instead of engaging her, I pointed out the pattern behavior. "Hey, maybe you're right, but I wonder what you're trying to do right now? Is this the part of you that tries to be right about everything?" And I reminded her of what tends to happen when she focuses on that instead of learning something new. But of course, I needed to take care to remind her that I am on her side and I do not wish to misevaluate her, while shifting our focus on what we can learn from this difference in point of view.

Furthermore, Ms. B's struggles are hardly uncommon. Many students tend to fall into these challenges. And so I often remind the class as a whole of the existence of these problems, and how we might respond to these patterns as a class. "I noticed, sometimes some of you get so carried away with being 'good students' and getting everything right and getting good grades. But I also noticed that this kind of 'good student' image often keeps you from being an active learner, taking on new challenges, and learning in non-linear ways. Is that working out for you? I know it's hard because this is how you were taught in high school. But I wonder how we can approach things differently in our class?" Comments like this hopefully encourage students to see how their schemas and modes are common, how they are rooted in certain shared social experiences (like rote

learning in Japanese middle and high schools), and how we might respond to them together instead of stigmatizing the individuals who have these struggles.

3.3 Mode Map

For both situations above, I was reminding Mr. A and Ms. B about their pattern problems in order to help them overcome it. But if I really want to help people grow into better habits, students have to learn to catch their own patterns. In Schema Therapy, this is called "schema mindfulness" (van Vreeswijk, 2014) or "mode awareness" (Farrell & Shaw, 2018).

In order to build this self-awareness, Damm recommends a simple practice of a "Mode Memo." This memo is entitled with the problem that tends to come up—ideally as the student themselves name it. For example, Ms. B named it "Gotta get it right." Then, the student fills in the following four questions:

1. In what situation does this mode tend to get triggered?
2. What part of you does this wake up? And where does this part come from?
3. Reality Check: In what ways does the trigger *not* fit what's really going on?
4. What can I do to respond to the reality of the situation better? (Damm, 2010, p. 100)

For example, I have another student (Ms. C) who tends to break down every time her research is not going well, criticizing herself very heavily (failure, defectiveness). She filled out the memo as follows:

1. When I don't do so well in an assignment or presentation.
2. "Inner Critic," who tells me that I'm bad at everything and I'm so stupid and I shouldn't be in this school anyway, reminding me of all my mistakes, and making me feel I should just give up.
3. I make some mistakes, but I'm also learning a lot of new things, and I'm much better than I used to be before. So it's not that I'm bad at everything—I'm just learning.
4. I want to be nicer to myself, to remember that "Inner Critic" is not really helpful, and not get too carried away with that part. I want to focus on what I'm learning, and the people I might help by studying this.

A memo like this can clarify one's self-understanding, allowing one to catch oneself before spiraling into old patterns. For example, after a presentation, Ms. C now knows (after a few reminders) to check how she is taking the result. And it also can remind a student how to respond to a situation, being the voice of the healthy adult mode even when one is beginning to feel triggered. (I also encourage this kind of self-awareness in narrative approaches to education. See Sevilla-Liu, 2021.)

I myself could fill in this memo to help deal with my "frustrated teacher mode." However, because teachers are professionals and can invest more time in self-discovery, I recommend Self-Practice/Self-Reflection (SPSR) workbooks like Farrell & Shaw's *Experiencing Schema Therapy from the inside out* (2018) to fully explore their schemas, modes, and triggers.

Damm suggested doing mode memos as a class, bringing schema awareness beyond the individual level to make it an opportunity for group awareness and collaborative growth. For example, I have done similar

mode awareness exercises in the "KIKAN Education Seminar" class. Students examined various key stories in their lives—high points, low points, turning points. Then they examined certain modes/characters that tended to emerge in these stories. A student spoke about the tension between her "good girl" mode and her "be myself" mode, and how she struggled with letting go of the urge to be what is expected of her, and find her own voice (Sevilla-Liu, 2021, 2022). When students voluntarily shared struggles like these in their final presentations, it seemed to open up the eyes of the whole class to be more sympathetic of the various internal struggles that their classmates went through.

4. Discussion

Above, I have outlined the basic features of Schema Pedagogy. In alignment with Japan's view of student guidance and Kyushu University's recent moves for inclusivity and mental health, Schema Pedagogy advocates a deep concern for student psychological health. This goes beyond the mere addition of counseling services to the transformation of the whole process of student guidance. This includes how we relate to students in the classroom, through their academic requirements, and in conversations outside class. Schema Pedagogy gives us a theoretically sophisticated model, language, and approach that crosses over from the counseling room to classroom. And as we have seen above, these can connect to many situations in Kyushu University like groupwork in collaborative learning courses and student-teacher interactions in KIKAN Education Seminars.

However, in this discussion, I would like to look at Schema Pedagogy from a broader point of view. Schema Pedagogy is not just about how to improve student mental health. As *pedagogy*, it has to be considered within the overall project of human formation (*ningen keisei*) and the fundamental principles of education. For this, I turn to Gert Biesta, a pragmatist philosopher from the Netherlands who is at the very forefront of contemporary philosophy of education.

In his book *Good education in an age of measurement* (2010), Biesta points out how evidence-based education and educational measurement run the risk that the focus on concrete measures of educational effectivity will lead educationalists to focus only on the technological aspect of education (whether or not means are effective) at the expense of the moral aspect of education (whether the ends achieved are really good ends for education). But the answer to the moral question of "What is education for?" is not simple:

> I have suggested that it might be helpful to make a distinction between three functions of education—qualification, socialization and subjectification—and have argued that we should not see these as separate aspects of education but rather as overlapping, intertwined and, to a certain extent, even conflicting dimensions of what education is and can be about. (Biesta, 2010, p. 26)

In other words, our attempt to be effective at certain things—in our case improving mental health—may lead us to ignore how our pursuit of mental health interacts with how students learn information and skills (qualification), how students learn to find their place within society (socialization), and how students learn to engage society transformatively from their own unique experiences and meanings (subjectification). This leads

me to two points to consider about Schema Pedagogy.

4.1 The Construction of the Struggling Student

First, when we try to improve student mental health, we construct or conceptualize problems and struggling students in a particular way, and that in itself affects educational ends. As we have seen above, Schema Therapy/Pedagogy construct the client/student as a unique subject who, faced with a problematic behavior that perpetuates distorted ways of seeing the world (schemas) and unhealthy dynamics within various modes of the self, tries to find new ways to navigate their own existence with the help of others. This choice entailed an active refusal of three other ways of constructing the struggling students and their problems: seeing problems merely as surface behavior, via the diagnostic classification of symptoms, and as rooted in neurobiological causes. These approaches are all found in educational settings and have certain effects.

For example, first, persistent sadness and low motivation can be interpreted merely by the resulting low performance that deviates from expectations (surface behavior), without understanding the various cognitions underneath. However, such a superficial view would not foster understanding of a particular student, and may result in superficial behavioral interventions like forcing discipline and hard work. In Biesta's terms, this is socialization at the expense of subjectification. It is likely ineffective even at the basic task of qualification (supporting individual learning) as well!

Second, it could, like in the Japanese manual for student guidance, be labeled as problem behavior and classified alongside other problem behaviors (bullying, school refusal, risk for suicide, et cetera). This is similar to (and perhaps influenced by) the Diagnostic Statistical Manual's approach of categorizing psychopathology on the basis of shared symptoms. While such a view sees what is experienced in a *generalized* way as what is statistically similar to other problems, it may obscure the *particular* experience of the person undergoing these difficulties as well as the characterological background of the problem (see Young et al., 2003, p. 37). (For other critiques of diagnosticism in psychotherapy, see Hayes & Hoffman, 2020.) Again, seen from Biesta, this is socialization and qualification at the expense of subjectification.

Third, this problem could be seen as caused by the problem of serotonin secretion and reuptake. While this empowers psychiatrists to give medical aid and students to seek it, a student given such an explanation may feel disempowered—"If this problem is in my brain, there is nothing I can do about it." (For an extended treatment on how biomedical and neurobiological discourse can be disempowering, see Denborough, 2019.) In other words, effective medical treatment and normalization (qualification and socialization) may come at a heavy cost to subjectification.

While Damm's Schema Pedagogy considers neurobiological factors and social demands, it refuses to objectify students into mere social actors, patients to be classified, or neurobiological organisms. Instead, it seeks to see students as *subjects*, capable of becoming aware of their own modes and facing them in new ways in order to better deal with their problems. (For more on this contextualist approach and its opposition to mechanist and formist epistemology in psychotherapy, see Sevilla-Liu, 2022a.) In Biesta, this is connected to the task of subjectification—not merely treating a student as just another student, but seeing each as a particular

person with unique experiences (even of their own psychological problems) and empowering them to deal with their own circumstances. This education for subjectification also connects to the philosophical core of active learning, a central tenet of the Faculty of Arts and Science, which focuses on the subjectivity (*shutaisei*) of a student choosing how to face problems and find meaning in it. Schema Therapy is active learning in response to one's internal problems!

This is not a blanket critique of diagnostic and neurobiological approaches to mental health in universities. The decision of how to conceptualize students and their psychological health is affected by many factors, including risk management and the availability of therapeutic modalities. But in an educational context, we are called to consider how these interact with qualification, socialization, and subjectification, and how these might be better balanced.

4.2 Relational Approaches to Psychological Intervention

This brings me to my second point. One of the cornerstones of the fundamental principles of education is the relationship between individuals and society, as education forms a bridge between the two (Dewey, 1916). As such, one of Biesta's concerns is how education, by teaching individuals skills and having them compete with each other in examinations, has resulted in narrow individualism and the view of others as rivals. This comes at the expense of subjectification, which while looking at the unique learner, tries to help the individual *transform society* via deliberative democracy—a relational subjectivity. In Kyushu University, it is this view of relational subjectivity that bridges from active learning to *collaborative* learning.

As psychotherapy enters the school, one key question is how various interventions participate in the discourse of individualism vs. relationality. For example, if psychotherapy has an individualistic view of needs (from neurological needs to instrumental needs) and supports an individualistic view of psychological problems (an individual student needing behavioral change or an individual brain needing more serotonin), it will also tend to focus on individual interventions. While counseling often tries to address problems resulting from an individualist, competitive educational system, does their view successfully go beyond individualism or does it inadvertently reinforce it? (For more on the critique of individualist approaches to psychotherapy, see White, 2007.)

However, Schema Therapy and Pedagogy take a fundamentally relational view of the person. While the individual making sense of their own problems is a unique subject, their needs are relational—to be accepted and validated by others, to be able to express oneself to others and contribute to others. Their schemas and modes are primarily about our history of relating with others in seeking relational needs, histories that are repeated compulsively with in the social context of the classroom. Thus, the response to problem behavior is not merely individual, but involves shaping the relationships one is in as an active agent/subject.

While Damm merely hints at this, Schema Pedagogy has systemic implications. For example, anxiety that one's opinion may be rejected by others (subjugation) comes from a need to be in a relationship where one is validated by others. The response to it is not merely carried out by the individual in isolation (via mode mapping), but in an affirming relationship with the teacher, and respect from other classmates. But can this

occur if the overall ethos of the classroom is one of conformity and submission, where unique ideas are punished? What if the ethos of the educational system and society as a whole rewards conformity and punishes deviance? Seen in this manner, Schema Pedagogy is never merely "psychologistic" in trying to fix individuals in the isolation "inside one's head." It is about healing relationships and transforming relational contexts to make a healthier way of life possible. (This relational approach and its systemic implications are laid out in Narrative Therapy, as in White, 2007.)

Such a relational view of a person and their psychological health is fundamentally incompatible with the individualistic view that sustains individualist approaches to therapy and competitive education. Instead, it is drawn from the same worldview that birthed collaborative learning. Instead of seeing university mental health as founded in individual psychotherapy—something that is done in the private sphere, behind closed doors, with an individual and a psychotherapist—one can see mental health as a task for collaborative learning. Here, active learners share their unique challenges and ways forward with the community, deliberation is opened to others, and changes are carried out both on the individual and the group level, with an aim to democratically transform society as a whole in a way that better works for all its members (Biesta, 2010; Dewey, 1916).

4.3 Possibilities for Future Research

Research regarding Schema Therapy and education is still in its infancy. Moving forward, with Damm's basic framework, it is possible to repurpose other innovations of Schema Therapy for school use. For example, Farrell & Shaw's (2018) self-practice/self-reflection can be adjusted for Schema Pedagogues in training, or even for self-exploratory exercises in "Core Education Seminar" classes. The meditation exercises of Vreeswijk et al. (2014) and Roediger et al. (2018) can also be used in the classroom in a way that combines Mindful Education (Barbezat & Bush, 2014) and Schema Pedagogy. Practices like group therapy or chair exercises (Arntz, 2012) might be adapted for group experiential exercises. I leave this for further research.

Furthermore, there are also possible points of criticism toward Schema Pedagogy. First, Schema Pedagogy tends to focus on maladaptive schemas and modes, resulting in a negative view of the student that can be pedagogically unsound. Recently, Contextual Schema Therapy (Roediger et al., 2018) however is highlighting positive schemas and the connection of the healthy adult mode to psychological flexibility, and perhaps this might be used to rethink Schema Pedagogy.

Second, there is a tendency to look at EMS as pre-given diagnoses that are purely problematic. This risks making students feel that they are being analyzed, sorted, and judged—a feeling education itself tends to trigger. Narrative Therapy/Education attempts to look at "problem stories" in a more inductive way, looking at nuances (like how perfection may at times be helpful for this person), careful to empower students to understand themselves and find their own way of facing these schemas. Narrative Therapy/Education is also much clearer about the social critique element that I suggested above (Sevilla-Liu, 2021; Winslade & Monk, 2006). Schema Pedagogy may have much to learn from this, and I leave these challenges to further research.

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