

Chapter 13

Theorising Underlying Notions of Citizenship in the Dynamics of Learning in Public Policy Units

Griet Roets and Rudi Roose

Introduction

Currently there is an increasing interest among politicians and policymakers in the question of democratic citizenship and political participation, which can be seen as 'responding both to an alleged crisis in society and to an alleged crisis in democracy' (Biesta 2011a, p. 1). In this chapter, we focus on the current emphasis of social policymakers in Flanders (the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium) on the issue of the (user) participation of people with experience of poverty. This emphasis on the participation of people in poverty as service users is in line with international developments, where practitioners of social policy have shown an interest in putting people with experience of poverty into participatory positions in order to implement antipoverty policies and to pursue a more democratic society (Cruikshank 1999; Beresford 2002; Lister 2004; Krumer-Nevo 2005, 2008).

It is argued, however, that the participation of service users, such as people with experience of poverty, in social policymaking is a crucial and yet a deeply problematic process (see Cook 2002; Simmons and Birchall 2005; Beresford 2010; Simmons 2011). In addition, it has been argued that there is a lack of empirical research which would allow us to discuss the potential risks and challenges of the actual procedures and practices of implementing user participation (Krumer-Nevo and Barak 2006). In that light, we discuss research concerning a recent federal pilot project in Belgium in which service users with experience of poverty were employed, as requested by the Federal Public Service for Social Integration (POD MI), to bridge the existing gap between people in poverty and those working in the administration of federal public policy units (POD MI 2006). This 'gap' was seen

G. Roets (✉) • R. Roose
Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University,
Henri Dunantlaan 2, 9000 Gent, Belgium
e-mail: Griet.Roets@UGent.be; Rudi.roose@ugent.be

in the lack of responsiveness of social administrators to service users who were poor (Demeyer and Réa 2008). In response to this failure to provide responsive public services, users with experience of poverty were trained as experts and employed as interpreters of the poverty problem in the administration of these public policy units (Casman et al. 2010).

In what follows, we first chart the conceptual debate on poverty, citizenship, participation and civic learning. Second, we throw light on recent developments in Belgium. Third, in the light of the ambiguous practices of user participation in public policy units in Belgium, we discuss the dynamics of learning found in those public policy units and underlying notions of citizenship.

Poverty, Citizenship, Participation and Civic Learning

It has been observed that conceptualisations of poverty and antipoverty policymaking are closely interrelated. Lister (2004, p. 12) indicates that ‘how we define poverty is critical to political, policy and academic debates; it is bound up with explanations and has implications for solutions’. As Veit-Wilson (2000) observes, the ways in which poverty, antipoverty policymaking and social justice are defined and pursued are influenced by the prevailing welfare state regime, and the issue of citizenship has been essential in this. Antipoverty policymaking has been linked to wider concerns about citizenship and democracy, by referring to the nexus of the lack of citizenship, voice and power of people in poverty (Mehta 2008). Lister (2004) asserts that the realisation of the citizenship of people in poverty should be perceived as vital to human dignity in order ‘to address economic and social inequalities’ (Lister 1997, p. 17).

In *reality* our societies are often characterised by the dynamics of social exclusion and marginalisation (Kabeer 2005). The experience of people in poverty of not being recognised as citizens is frequently identified and refers to the discrepancy between their formal citizenship (embodied as an entitlement and a status) and their *de facto* citizenship (constructed through the experience of being a member of a particular community and society in practice) (Lister 2004). This *de facto* social inequality of people in poverty, which is seen in structural class divisions between nonpoor and poor citizens (Jones 2002), is related, both in historical and in current arrangements, to the social question (Rosanvallon 2000). These gross social inequalities continue to cut across the everyday lives of people in poverty and ‘can lead to second-class citizenship’ (Lister 2004, p. 165). This reflects the exclusionary tensions and contradictions in citizenship.

From our point of view, citizenship refers to the ways in which the relationship between the individual and the state is constructed, and we are also concerned with the political values of Western democracies such as equality, freedom and solidarity (Schuyt 1972). This relationship between the individual and the state can be constructed in different ways, depending on different underlying assumptions about the responsibilities of a citizen and the state, and about processes of learning. In that vein, Biesta (2011a) makes a conceptual distinction between citizenship as a social identity and citizenship as a political identity.

Biesta (2011a, p. 1) asserts that citizenship can be seen as a *social identity*, referring to the citizen's place and role in the life of society and the citizen's *social participation*, since 'the one who fits in, the one who goes with the flow' is part of the social fabric. In this frame of reference, citizenship is considered to be an identity that should be established by the individual citizen and is 'obtained through identification with an existing socio-political order' (Biesta 2011a, p. 145). As such, citizenship is often perceived 'as an individualistic bourgeois charade designed to obscure fundamental economic and social class divisions' (Lister 1997, p. 17). In the case of people in poverty, their second-class citizenship has been translated as a problem of the deviant behaviour of the poor (Lister 2004). In this understanding of citizenship, poverty is predominantly framed as an individual problem and therefore as something that needs to be overcome by the individual as part of a process of identification or of conforming to the sociopolitical order. In that vein, Biesta (2011a, p. 5) refers to a socialisation conception of civic learning, which is about the individual *learning* of people in poverty *for future citizenship* that is necessary to become part of an existing sociopolitical order.

A different conception implies that citizenship is perceived as a *political identity* (Biesta 2011a); this refers to the democratic potential for the citizen to have *political participation* as the one who stands 'out from the crowd, the one who goes against the flow, (...) and who, in a sense, is always slightly "out of order"' (Biesta 2011a, p. 1). According to Biesta (2011a, p. 3), who draws on the work of Rancière, no social order can ever be fully equal: 'While in some societies or social configurations there may be more equality – or less inequality – than in others, the very way in which the social is structured precludes the possibility of full equality, or at least makes it highly unlikely. (...) Rancière maintains that every social order is all-inclusive in that in any given order everyone has a particular place, role, and identity. But this does not mean – and this is crucial – that everyone is included in the ruling of the order'. Rancière defines politics as always democratic, 'as an interruption of an existing social order with reference to the idea of equality' (Biesta 2011a, p. 3). In that vein, democracy has to be understood as occurring in the moments when the logic of the existing order is confronted with the logic of equality. However, the moment of democracy is therefore 'not merely an interruption of the existing order, but an interruption that results in a reconfiguration of this order into one in which new ways of being and acting exist and new identities come into play', as a process of dis-identification or subjectification (Biesta 2011a, p. 4). For Biesta (2011a, p. 5), this also suggests a subjectification conception of civic learning, which is about the learning that is involved in the engagement with an ongoing and never-ending 'experiment' of democracy, implying both individual and collective processes of *learning from current citizenship experiences*.

Participation of People in Poverty: The Belgian Case

Over the last decades, the symbolic significance of participation as full citizens for people in poverty – which indicates a collective sense of human dignity and solidarity in our society (Fraser 1996, 2000) – has been defended and extended through the

political struggles, campaigns and collective action of a rather vibrant civil society, including people in poverty or the so-called de facto non-citizens, for structural and participatory democracy (Powell 2008). This struggle for the marginalised to have full participation in society has been pushed onto the political agenda, and since the 1960s and 1970s the argument has gone that the political and policymaking process is strengthened when the standpoints, perspectives and experiences of minority groups are directly represented (Beresford 2002, 2010). Since the 1990s, the formal participation of people with experience of poverty in policymaking has figured prominently on the international agenda as ‘they have the capacity to place, and indeed sometimes to force, life knowledge on the political, professional, academic and policy making agenda’ (Beresford 2000, p. 493). In order to enhance the performance of key public services, *user participation* has moved into the foreground of social policy, placing participatory ideas and strategies into a more central position (Lister 2002; Simmons and Birchall 2005; Krumer-Nevo 2005, 2008). User participation has been put forward as a way of using dialogue to support new forms of responsiveness and accountability, because it is assumed that user participation has ‘practical value for the performance of key public services by shaping better-informed decisions and ensuring that limited resources are used to meet service users’ priorities’ (Simmons and Birchall 2005, p. 261).

In parallel with international developments (Cancian and Danziger 2009), Belgian conceptualisations of poverty and antipoverty policymaking have shifted and changed and have informed assumptions about the citizenship and participation of people in poverty. In that vein, Vranken (1998) describes a remarkable conceptual shift in antipoverty politics in Belgium that has been inspired by these developments since the 1990s. During the ‘golden sixties’ and the 1970s, social policy ‘rediscovered’ poverty owing to ‘a broad critique on welfare politics since the Belgian welfare state was conceived and implemented, such as negative consequences of economic growth, dehumanizing and alienating effects of production measures, and increasingly uni-dimensional patterns of consumption’ (Deleeck 1972, as cited in Vranken 1998, p. 64). After this ‘rediscovery’ there followed a ‘redefinition’: from the end of the 1970s and during the early 1980s, the focus of the definition of poverty mainly shifted to non-materialistic and cultural aspects, rather than being perceived as a lack of material and social resources, and ‘this shift took place because of the belief that material poverty was eradicated’ (Vranken 1998, p. 67). Along with this shift in perception, people in poverty were mobilised as social actors ‘through social movements, such as ATD Fourth World, who asserted the claim to give voice to the real interests and concerns of poor people’ (Vranken 1998, p. 68). A significant milestone was the appearance of the *General Report on Poverty* (AVA) in 1994. This was the result of a joint venture by social workers and other actors in civil society, particularly (self-) advocacy organisations of people in poverty, and was aimed at guaranteeing the recognition of the standpoints of people in poverty in a structural dialogue with representative policymakers in the Belgian welfare state to pursue full citizenship for people in poverty. As the Prime Minister of the day, J.-L. Dehaene stated, ‘in the future, the government will take the conclusions and the suggestions in the general report as a point of departure for anti-poverty policy making’ (AVA 1994, p. 416). The coordination of the AVA as a policy instrument became an annual Belgian

enterprise, and a network of social movements of poor people, calling for their rights of citizenship, was constituted (Van Robaeys et al. 2005).

As a consequence of these developments, participation has come to function as a central and dominant social policy concept for the implementation of antipoverty strategies in Belgium (Bouverne-De Bie 2003). Antipoverty policymaking has been predominantly based on the principle of empowering people with experience of poverty in order to support their participation in policymaking processes (Dierckx 2007). The depth of the yawning gap between the poor and the nonpoor is emphasised as an essential cultural dimension of poverty, and antipoverty policymaking is pursued through making individual empowerment the building block which enables user participation:

We cannot forget that the accumulation of social inequality and exclusion makes up the individuality of poverty. The dimension of the depth of this gap is of crucial importance: how deep is the gap between the poor and the rest of society? (...) The powerlessness of the poor is crucial: they cannot bridge the gap that separates them from the rest of society under their own power; they need help to do this. And that is exactly the role of government intervention and the welfare sector. (Vranken 2007, p. 37)

In this dominant Belgian approach, explicit government intervention is meant to bridge the cultural gap created by vicious processes of social exclusion which result in individual feelings of powerlessness, apathy, isolation and shame (Van Regenmortel 2002). This ‘psychology of powerlessness’ has been the rationale behind a paradigm of individual empowerment which is intended ‘to improve the participation of people in poverty’ (Van Regenmortel 2002, p. 75). According to this approach, participation ‘is viewed as (...) the mechanism by which people gain mastery over their lives’ (Van Regenmortel 2002, p. 75). That being the case, Belgian social policy concerned with antipoverty policymaking is formally preoccupied with empowering people in poverty so that they can engage in self-advocacy and participation and can claim their full citizenship; this is the dominant way to implement antipoverty strategies (Dierckx 2007).

In the next section, we go on to describe and discuss empirical research on the challenges of practices of citizenship and participation which are inspired by these perspectives and assumptions in antipoverty policy strategies (Krumer-Nevo and Barak 2006). We aim to discuss the underlying dynamics of learning in these practices.

User Participation in Public Policy Units: A Pilot Project

In this section, we describe the framework of the innovative pilot project in public policy units in Belgium and our research involvement.

An Innovative Pilot Project

Since antipoverty policymaking in Belgium is embedded in a logic of user participation, social policy has shown an interest in deploying, in public policy units, users

with experience of poverty as experts in implementing and monitoring antipoverty policies. In the drive to become more responsive to the needs of disadvantaged users, user participation has been injected into public service delivery to empower the recipients of social policy (Gilliatt et al. 2000). Since 2003 (see the Flemish 'Decree on Poverty Policy' in Degrande 2003), the user participation of people with experience of poverty in public service delivery has been formally recognised by policymakers in Belgium. The 'Decree on Poverty Policy' stated that people in poverty can only transform their experience into expertise by following an advanced educational programme (Walschap 2001). The surplus value of active participation by the poor in public service delivery was emphasised because of an assumption that poverty at play in public services was in tension with the 'hard-to-understand' culture of poverty, characterised as a psychology of powerlessness (Nicaise and Dewilde 1995). This assumption is defined as 'the missing link':

The idea of an expert by experience in social exclusion is a response to (...) a missing link between the policy makers and aid providers of all the services with which the socially excluded come into contact, on the one hand, and the excluded persons themselves, on the other hand. (...) The key element consists of the fundamental difference between the position of an excluded person, who is forced to live in long-term exclusion and that of the organisations and participants in policy making, who are not familiar with this social experience nor with the harsh reality of the life of socially excluded people in all its aspects, particularly the sense of shame and humiliation due to the fact that the excluded have no control over their own lives. (The Missing Link Europe 2011)

In 2004 the Council of Ministers in Belgium decided to recruit service users with experience of poverty to work in public policy units, and this initiative was launched by way of an innovative pilot project coordinated by the Federal Public Service for Social Integration (POD MI). The POD MI was commissioned by the government to enhance and reinforce national antipoverty policies in Belgium (POD MI 2006). This was an idea which was developed in the Belgian National Action Plan (NAP) on Social Inclusion 2004–2006, so the rationale behind the pilot project was the idea mentioned above of a missing link, or gap, between people in poverty and the government; this gap is most obvious in the psychological effects that are manifest in people in poverty since their experiences with federal public policy units often cause feelings of powerlessness and incapacity (POD MI 2006). The gap was defined as a lack of responsiveness in social administrators to poor service users (Demeyer and Réa 2008). In response to this failure to provide high-quality responsive public services, people with experience of poverty were educated and trained as experts, by taking part in an educational programme which transformed their experience of living in poverty into expertise in order to drive changes from inside the public policy units (Spiesschaert 2005; Casman et al. 2010). The POD MI agreed a full-time contract with for each of these experts with experience of poverty, the costs of which were subsidised by the European Social Fund (ESF); under these contracts, the experts were required to continue their advanced education for 2 days a week and were employed in federal public policy units for the remaining 3 days a week.

In 2011, 26 experts with experience of poverty worked across 22 federal public policy units, and their tasks involved (see POD MI 2011):

- Improving accessibility for service users in general and for poor and socially excluded service users in particular
- Supporting the recipients of welfare in dealing with administrative procedures
- Listing the needs of poor service users
- Improving the quality of accessibility by means of proposals with respect to communication
- Assisting in transversal collaboration between the policy units involved
- Drawing attention to the structural lack of voice for people in poverty

The project ran from the beginning of September 2005 until the end of August 2011 and was integrally funded by the ESF. As researchers, we were appointed as external and interim evaluators from March until August 2008 (see Final Report, POD MI 2008).

Research Involvement

The evaluation research was carried out as a piece of applied policy research to document and consider the implementation process through which organisations affect levels of privilege and disadvantage in society, as well as the distribution of privileges and advantages in these organisations (Hinings and Greenwood 2002). The research team applied a qualitative research design (Bogdan and Biklen 1998) using two complementary research approaches in order to document and analyse what actually happened in the federal policy units involved:

- We *collected all the relevant and available documents*: policy documents, collaboration protocols, function profiles of the experts with experience of poverty in each federal public service, reports of consultations with experts with experience of poverty and their colleagues, observations made by members of the coordination team and by the members of the organisation responsible for advanced education and reports and observations made by the experts with experience of poverty.
- We selected and contacted research participants, asking them to attend a *qualitative semi-structured interview* (see Bogdan and Biklen 1998) on the basis of their being directly involved with the employment of the service users with experience of poverty in the context of each federal public service involved. Eventually, eight employed experts with experience of poverty and eight of their close colleagues who were appointed as their support workers were recruited and participated in the research project.

We applied a qualitative content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005) analysing the available documents and the 16 qualitative, in-depth interviews with the relevant

actors who were directly involved. In the next section, we discuss the enacted practices of participation and civic learning which are evolving in the public policy units and the underlying notions of citizenship.

Uncovering Different Notions of Participation and Learning in Public Policy Units

Our research documents ambiguous social practices relating to user participation in the public policy units. In what follows, we address the underlying notions of participation in the practices in the public policy units involved and discuss the dynamics of learning there. Since it has been observed that the extent to which user participation is ‘substantively modified by group processes (...) or by individual processes (...) remains an open question’ (Simmons and Birchall 2005, p. 275), we distinguish between the dynamics of the individual learning of the employed service users and the dynamics of the joint and collective learning of the employed service users and other employees.

Dynamics of the Individual Learning of the Employed Service Users

In the Belgian approach, the conceptualisation of poverty as a ‘gap that poor people cannot bridge under their own power’ translates antipoverty policy strategies and practices into a logic of empowerment to induce an individualised process of the personal growth of poor people. This approach is clearly at work in the educational programme, where poor people were educated and trained as experts to transform their experience of living in poverty into expertise in order to drive changes from inside the public policy units (Casman et al. 2010). The educational programme produces people in poverty who have socialised (or specialised) in ‘being poor’ and therefore have a reason to exist in the public policy units. Many of the public policy units involved act upon this use of user participation by recognising that these people are experts who ‘personally experienced exclusion, who have coped with this experience and extended it’ (The Missing Link Europe 2011). As employed users, their viewpoints on poverty and antipoverty policymaking in the public service unit acquire a status of authority and expertise; but, in deference to their expertise, they are individually responsible for solving problems associated with the delivery of a responsive public service on an interpersonal or organisational level (Block 2003). In practice, the so-called antipoverty practices in the public policy units turn out to have counterproductive implications, as they ‘construct citizens committed to a personal identity [and] a moral responsibility’ (Rose 1989, p. 131, as cited in Baistow 2000, p. 98), or lead to an *identity politics* of people in poverty. As Phillips (2004, pp. 36–37) argues, ‘identity politics threaten to reinforce the very patterns of

domination they otherwise claim to challenge, for in ignoring or promising to transcend differences (...); they treat difference as a problem – and those marked by them as a problem too. (...) In doing so, they leave the agenda to be set by people whose power has been so much taken for granted that they do not even think of themselves as a distinct social group'. In the public policy units, the expertise of employed experts with experience of poverty risks to remain exclusively an expertise in poverty and social exclusion and discourages opportunities for collective learning about the ways in which public policy units can deal with, and act upon, poverty and social inequality issues in the long run.

Moreover, these practices of user participation may lead merely to rhetorical change because service users with experience of poverty risk being, in the end, little more than physically present. As one of the experts with experience of poverty observes, she was dealt with during the implementation process as an expert who had been expelled from the group and not as a colleague:

That moment, a colleague asked me: “Oh, are you alone here?” and I said, “Yes, please join me!” But the colleague refused: “No, I sit over there with the colleagues; you are not an employee or a colleague here”. In the federal public service, I was like an appendage to the regular employees. I was allowed to be physically present, nothing more. If you ask me, employing us seems to be a charitable act to help us poor duffers, because they want to do something about poverty in our country. However, the employment of 10 or 20 individuals with experience of poverty won't uproot poverty at all.

Le Grand (2003) grasps the nettle by asking how *democratic* user participation can actually be if the participation of service users tends to remain primarily instrumental and tokenistic, merely implying rhetorical change. As Beresford (2010, p. 499) observes, since ‘the aim is to draw in the views and ideas of service users to inform and in some cases legitimate, existing decision-makers and power holders, (...) for many service users, it can feel like little more than tokenism or a “box ticking” exercise rather than meaningful involvement’. Participation may become an empty exercise, at best a token gesture or, at worst, a manipulative and exploitative exercise. As Cook (2002, p. 522) argues, we have to ask fundamental questions about participation processes in which the objects of social policy are meant to find their voice in different areas of social policy: ‘if we are not prepared to do anything about the responses, why ask the questions in the first place?’

Dynamics of Collective Learning from Experiences

Focusing on the ways in which practices of user participation can influence the extent to which the public policy units in question give meaning to, and challenge, poverty issues shows the importance of collective and reciprocal processes of learning. Employing *expert* users with experience of poverty – which is done by the POD MI as an external incentive to guarantee the quality of public service delivery – might discourage and free the social administrators in the public policy units from learning to be responsive to service users, including those living in poverty. User participation

might work as a camouflage technique that masks the lack of collective responsibility and accountability for dealing with the poverty problem in public policy units. However, in contrast to these practices, in some public policy units, a collective concern and responsibility for dealing with the poverty problem was established. This collective responsibility appears to be a political choice made in some public policy units, those units where people with experience of poverty were employed on the condition that the units first explicitly subscribed to antipoverty politics as a mission statement. Simmons and Birchall (2005, pp. 273–274) also stress that the interplay between collective and institutional dynamics and user participation is essential, arguing that ‘as a starting point, providers must decide whether or not they actually want greater participation’. From that perspective, one of the employed people with experience of poverty explains how the meaning of the antipoverty perspective is construed in practice.

The director of the public service was well-informed and implemented the anti-poverty policy-making incentive in the organization. I don’t have a clearly outlined task, just that my colleagues could ask for my advice when they had to deal with problems associated with poor service users and inaccessibility. My colleagues told me that it was really useful – there was an openness allowing us to ask questions and to reflect – as they had expected that I would be a know-it-all and give orders about what to do. They appreciated the joint process of learning and I became a colleague in the collective.

In these policy units, it is remarkable to see that the employed service users with experience of poverty were perceived as regular employees whose perspectives were included and discussed in everyday practices because of their specific knowledge of the strategies of people living in poverty which was gained from their personal experience, rather than as experts who had a monopoly of knowledge and an individual responsibility in bridging the ‘missing link’. In this scenario, the questions of people with experience of poverty can offer the collective a lens through which a public service can question taken-for-granted practices and improve its responsiveness, which symbolises ‘a demonstration of respect for people in poverty as being equal citizens’ (Lister 2001, p. 70). In these public policy units, the role of employed service users enables both individual and collective processes of learning from current experiences, in a process of subjectification and civic learning on an organisational level. As one of the employed service users observes:

A lot of colleagues said that they don’t know the taste of poverty. They told me that they couldn’t grasp the depth of poverty. For them, the homeless and beggars are ‘really poor’. I explained to them that poverty is a very complex and existential condition, sometimes very subtle and hard to recognize. And I stressed the importance of their involvement in recognizing this in our public service delivery, because we can’t solve poverty and certainly not when it is considered to be an individual responsibility; but we can work upon the structural dynamics of social exclusion.

This involves a continuous and collective questioning about whether, and how, the public service delivery is of high quality and whether the administration is useful for the range of questions posed by recipients of welfare in general and by people in poverty in particular.

Concluding Reflections

One can argue that the educational programme implements the idea that poor people should *learn for* future citizenship by establishing a social identity as a poor, although articulate and expert, consumer, an identity that is necessary for becoming part of an existing sociopolitical order; this is a socialisation conception of civic learning (Biesta 2011a). Biesta (2011b, p. 143) warns of the tricky nature of ‘entry conditions for participation’ for individuals who wish to take part in the game of democratic participation; ‘when democratic politics is restricted to those who already agree on the basic rules of the political game, the most important and most difficult aspect of democratic politics, that is, the process through which such an agreement about basic rules is achieved, is left out of the picture’. In the first approach, when the educated and trained expert service users are employed as interpreters of the poverty problem in the administration of these public policy units (Casman et al. 2010), they are supposed to bridge the gap, or the ‘missing link’, between people in poverty and those working in the administration of federal public policy units (POD MI 2006). It can be argued that this approach reflects social citizenship because the ways in which the public policy units deal with the poverty problem are implied in supplying the ‘missing link’, in tuning the demands of poor service users to the ways in which the service is, usually, offered. The employed experts by experience are not included in the decisions made or in the ruling of the order. In addition, the logic of equality remains out of the picture, which implies that these practices remain undemocratic. The research findings show that this idea of bridging the ‘missing link’ turns out to be instrumental and tokenistic in practice, discouraging opportunities for collective learning about the ways in which public policy units can deal with, and act upon, poverty and social inequality issues in society in the long run. The second approach might echo the democratic potential of the participation of people with experience of poverty as employees, whose new identities can come into play while a process of dis-identification with being an ‘expert’ takes place, and who stand ‘out from the crowd, the one who goes against the flow, (...) and who, in a sense, is always slightly “out of order”’ (Biesta 2011a, p. 1). Their interruptions can make ‘visible what has no business being seen’, linking up with the idea of equality (Biesta 2011b, p. 144) and are ‘work that happens on the borders of the democratic order’ (Biesta 2011b, p. 146). However, in the second approach, one could also argue that the involvement of people with experience of poverty does not necessarily and inherently grant them political citizenship, since the moment of democracy implies not merely an interruption of the existing order due to a confrontation with the issue of poverty and (in)equality but should also result in a reconfiguration of the collective. The vital question remains when, and how, these moments of interruption, which can perturb the arrangements in public policy units that have been taken for granted, are actually captured as political resistance against the existence of poverty and social inequality in our society. This suggests the necessity of a politicisation of citizenship, that can take place in actual

social practices that develop in the relationships between people, is embedded in a set of inter-relational questions and in a diversity and plurality of interests and concerns and is actualized and constantly renegotiated through (inter)actions in which temporary lack of consensus is a vital element (Roose and De Bie 2007; Roets et al. 2012). Antipoverty politics thus require a reclaiming of collective politics and values such as solidarity, collective responsibility and interdependency (Lister 2004).

References

- AVA (General Report on Poverty). (1994). *Rapport in Opdracht van de Minister van Sociale Integratie Gerealiseerd door de Koning Boudewijnstichting in Samenwerking met ATD-Vierde Wereld België en de Vereniging van Belgische Steden en Gemeenten, Afdeling Maatschappelijk Welzijn*. Brussels: Koning Boudewijnstichting.
- Baistow, K. (2000). Problems of powerlessness: Psychological explanations of social inequality and civil unrest in post-war America. *History of the Human Sciences*, 13(3), 95–116.
- Beresford, P. (2000). Service users' knowledge and social work theory: Conflict or collaboration. *British Journal of Social Work*, 30(4), 489–503.
- Beresford, P. (2002). Participation and social policy: Transformation, liberation or regulation? In R. Sykes, C. Bochel, & N. Ellison (Eds.), *Social policy review 14: Developments and debates 2001–2002* (pp. 265–287). Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Beresford, P. (2010). Public partnerships, governance and user involvement: A service user perspective. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 34(5), 495–502.
- Biesta, G. (2011a). *Learning in public places: Civic learning for the 21st century*. Inaugural lecture on the occasion of the award of the international Francqui professorship to Prof. Dr. Gert Biesta, Ghent, 17th February 2011.
- Biesta, G. (2011b). The ignorant citizen: Mouffe, Rancière, and the subject of democratic education. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 30(2), 141–153.
- Block, F. (2003). Organizing versus mobilizing: Poor people's movements after 25 years. *Perspectives on Politics*, 1, 733–735.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bouverne-De Bie, M. (2003). Een rechtenkader als referentiekader. In M. Bouverne-De Bie, A. Claeys, A. De Cock, & J. Vanhee (Eds.), *Armoede en Participatie* [Poverty and participation] (p. 19). Ghent: Academia Press.
- Cancian, M., & Danziger, S. (2009). *Changing poverty, changing policies*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Casman, M. T., Vranken, J., Dierckx, D., Deflandre, D., & Campaert, G. (2010). *Experts by experience in poverty and social exclusion. Innovation players in the Belgian federal public services*. Antwerp: Garant.
- Cook, D. (2002). Consultation, for a change? Engaging users and communities in the policy process. *Social Policy & Administration*, 36(5), 516–531.
- Cruikshank, B. (1999). *The will to empower: Democratic citizens and other subjects*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Degrande, L. (2003). Participatie van armen op beleidsniveau: het Vlaamse armoedebeleid. In M. Bouverne-De Bie, A. Claeys, A. De Cock, & J. Vanhee (Eds.), *Armoede en Participatie* [Poverty and participation] (pp. 63–72). Ghent: Academia Press.
- Demeyer, B., & Réa, A. (2008). *Eindrapport Evaluatie ESF-project 'Ervaringsdeskundigen in Armoede en Sociale Uitsluiting binnen de Federale Overheidsdiensten'*. Onuitgegeven Onderzoeksrapport Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Leuven: Hoger Instituut van de Arbeid (HIVA).

- Dierckx, D. (2007). *Between poverty policy and policy poverty. A retrospective and intervention oriented analysis of the Flemish policy practice*. Leuven: Acco.
- Fraser, N. (1996). *Social justice in the age of identity politics: Redistribution, recognition and participation*. The Tanner Lectures on Human Values, delivered at Stanford University, 30th April to 2nd May 1996.
- Fraser, N. (2000). Rethinking recognition. *New Left Review*, 3, 107–118.
- Gilliatt, S., Fenwick, J., & Alford, D. (2000). Public services and the consumer: Empowerment or control? *Social Policy & Administration*, 34(3), 333–349.
- Hinings, C. R., & Greenwood, R. (2002). Disconnects and consequences in organization theory? *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47, 411–421.
- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288.
- Jones, C. (2002). Social work and society. In R. Adams, L. Dominelli, & M. Payne (Eds.), *Social work: Themes, issues and critical debates*. Hampshire/New York: Palgrave Macmillan in association with The Open University.
- Kabeer, N. (2005). *Inclusive citizenship: Meanings and expressions*. London: Zed Books.
- Krumer-Nevo, M. (2005). Listening to ‘life knowledge’: A new research direction in poverty studies. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 14(2), 99–106.
- Krumer-Nevo, M. (2008). From ‘noise’ to ‘voice’: How social work can benefit from knowledge of people living in poverty. *International Social Work*, 51(4), 556–565.
- Krumer-Nevo, M., & Barak, A. (2006). Service users’ perspectives on the benefits system in Israel: A participatory action research. *Social Policy & Administration*, 40(7), 774–790.
- Le Grand, J. (2003). *Motivation, agency and public policy: Of knights and knaves, pawns and queens*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lister, R. (1997). *Citizenship: Feminist perspectives*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Lister, R. (2001). Towards a citizens’ welfare state: The 3 R’s of welfare reform. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 18(2–3), 91–111.
- Lister, R. (2002). A politics of recognition and respect: Involving people with experience of poverty in decision making that affects their lives. *Social Policy & Society*, 1(1), 37–46.
- Lister, R. (2004). *Poverty*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Mehta, L. (2008). Over the rainbow: The politics of researching citizenship and marginality. *Action Research*, 6(2), 233–253.
- Nicaise, I., & Dewilde, C. (1995). *Het Zwaard van Damocles: Arme Gezinnen over de Bijzondere Jeugdbijstand*. Leuven/Apeldoorn: Garant.
- Phillips, A. (2004). Identity politics: Have we now had enough? In J. Andersen & B. Sim (Eds.), *The politics of inclusion and empowerment: Gender, class and citizenship* (pp. 36–48). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- POD MI. (2008). *Evaluatie ESF-project Ervaringsdeskundigen in armoede en sociale uitsluiting binnen de federale overheidsdiensten* [Final Report]. Brussels: POD MI.
- POD MI (2011). *Experts with experience of poverty*. Available online at <http://www.mi-is.be/benl/armoedebeleid/ervaringsdeskundigen-in-de-armoede>. Accessed 7 Dec 2011.
- POD MI. (2006). *Colloquium tussentijdse evaluatie, 23 November 2006*. Brussels: POD MI.
- Powell, F. (2008). Civil society, social policy and participatory democracy: Past, present and future. *Social Policy & Society*, 8(1), 49–58.
- Roets, G., Roose, R., Claes, L., Vandekinderen, C., Van Hove, G., & Vanderplasschen, W. (2012). Reinventing the employable citizen: A perspective for social work. *British Journal of Social Work*, 42(1), 94–110.
- Roose, R., & De Bie, M. (2007). Do children have rights or do their rights have to be realised? The United Nations Convention on the rights of the child as a frame of reference for pedagogical action. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 41(3), 431–443.
- Rosanvallon, P. (2000). *The new social question: Rethinking the welfare state*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Schuyt, K. (1972). *Recht, orde en burgerlijke ongehoorzaamheid*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

- Simmons, R. (2011). Leadership and listening: The reception of user voice in today's public services. *Social Policy & Administration*, 45, 5. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9515.2011.00790.x.
- Simmons, R., & Birchall, J. (2005). A joined-up approach to user participation in public services: Strengthening the participation chain. *Social Policy & Administration*, 39(3), 260–283.
- Spiesschaert, F. (2005). *Ervaringsdeskundige in Armoede en Sociale Uitsluiting: Een Inleiding tot de Methodiek*. Leuven/Voorburg: Acco.
- The Missing Link Europe. (2011). Available online at http://www.themissinglinkeurope.eu/?page_id=21. Accessed 17 Jan 2011.
- Van Regenmortel, T. (2002). Empowerment en maatzorg: Een krachtgerichte psychologische kijk op armoede. In J. Vranken, K. De Boyser, D. Geldhof, & G. Van Menxel (Eds.), *Armoede en Sociale Uitsluiting: Jaarboek 2002* (pp. 71–84). Antwerp: Acco.
- Van Robaey, B., Dierckx, D., & Vranken, J. (2005). *Book on the participation in policy-making of the organisations of people experiencing poverty*. Ghent: Academia Press.
- Veit-Wilson, J. (2000). States of welfare: A conceptual challenge. *Social Policy & Administration*, 34(1), 1–25.
- Vranken, J. (1998). Van 'moderne' armoede naar 'sociale uitsluiting': Een verkenning van begrips- en beleidsontwikkelingen. In J. Vranken, B. Vanhercke, L. Carton, & G. Van Menxel (Eds.), *20 Jaar OCMW: Naar een Actualisering van het Maatschappijproject* (pp. 63–78). Antwerp: Acco.
- Vranken, J. (2007). Armoede is niet gezond. In J. Vranken, G. Campaert, K. De Boyser, & D. Dierckx (Eds.), *Armoede en Sociale Uitsluiting: Jaarboek 2007* (pp. 25–37). Antwerp: Acco.
- Walschap, T. (2001). Ervaringsdeskundigen, opleiden, inschakelen. *Sociaal*, 22(6), 6–8.