



Article

Students' understanding of legal citizenship and co-citizenship concepts: Subject positions and capabilities

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Abstract

This article presents findings from a research project aimed at exploring youth understandings of two Norwegian words for citizen: statsborger and medborger, translated as legal citizen and co-citizen. The topic was explored through group interviews with 10th-grade students in three schools. The findings are analysed through the lens of subject positions and capabilities, with the results showing that students appropriate categories and storylines within public debate in order to frame different citizen subject positions as either one of 'us' or 'them'. Dichotomies and overlaps are also visible in descriptions of citizen capabilities as either legal, ideal, or societal. Legal capabilities, understood as the juridically defined rights of majority and minority legal citizens and co-citizens, are less clear to students and are at times obscured by societal capabilities, or the rhetoric within public debate which may hinder minority capabilities. Additionally, ideal capabilities, or democratic values, often stand in conflict with the rhetoric of public debate. The main implication of these research findings is that a citizenship lens allows for a nuanced exploration of citizen subject positions and attendant capabilities within a democracy, including exploration of the challenges that minority citizens may face. Being explicit about the who (subject position), what (categories), and how (storylines) of democratic



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participation will allow students a more critical understanding of citizenship than the value-centred discussions which are often a staple of citizenship education.

Keywords: legal citizenship, co-citizenship, citizenship education, capabilities, subject positions, youth

Introduction

Within society, we play different roles. Some we take on ourselves, such as the friend or the parent; others we are assigned, such as the class clown or the nerd; and some we contest, such as the culprit or the outsider. Such roles can be understood as subject positions, and these are constantly under development, with individuals (re)positioning themselves whilst negotiating the categories and storylines which have hitherto defined them (Törrönen, 2001). Within these subject positions, we also evaluate our possibilities for action, or, following Sen (2001), our capabilities.

This paper focuses on the subject position of the citizen as understood by youth, as there is considerable scholarly discussion surrounding the educating of children and youth as they transition into the citizen subject position from the child or minor subject position. In this process of education, Biesta (2020, p. 97) argues that a ‘reality check’ is needed in order for students to better understand what (in)actions are open to them, or what capabilities they have (Sen, 2001). Biesta is to a degree referencing citizen rights and responsibilities. However, citizenship has multiple conceptualisations, from Marshall’s (1950) early focus on rights to Joppke’s (2007) delineation of status, rights, and identity to citizenship education’s focus on participation (Mouritsen & Jaeger, 2018). Citizenship education is also important to nation building (Heater, 2004), and citizenship’s connection to nationalism—often ethno-centric—is constantly challenged by emigration and immigration. With such diversity of conceptualisation, how do students understand citizen subject positions and the attendant capabilities?

This article tackles the question by employing data from an empirical research project, focused on students’ exploration of two Norwegian words for citizen: *statsborger* and *medborger*; which can be translated respectively as legal citizen and co-citizen. The data consists of group discussions with 10th grade students in Norway, and is set against the backdrop of inclusive citizenship education discourses versus exclusionary rhetoric in the public sphere, such as anti-

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immigrant narratives (Fangen & Vaage, 2018).

Research shows that despite citizenship education's earlier iteration as a tool for nation building, globalisation and the multicultural nature of nation states has effected an increased focus on diversity within citizenship education literature (Osler, 2017). The research covers a broad spectrum, and distinctions between citizenship education and democratic education are lacking as demonstrated by the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) which was created to address the lack of common aims in EU member states' citizenship education initiatives (Europarat, 2018). [Biesta (2013, 2020) uses the term democratic education.] Some examples of the research include the connections between citizenship education and national identity (Ljunggren, 2014), research on teachers' understanding of citizenship and their role as educators (Sætra & Stray, 2019), students' view of politics and democratic engagement (Mathé, 2018), and comparison between students and teachers views on citizenship education (Biseth, 2011). Research also shows that the term 'diversity' in teacher education often serves as a euphemism for the non-white Other (Fylkesnes, 2018), while students frequently connect Norwegian-ness with ancestry or whiteness (Eriksen, 2020) More generally, the 2016 International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (Schulz et al., 2016), which included 24 countries, explores students' civic knowledge and political participation. The research focus is thus only implicitly on citizenship, while less common in the field is asking research participants explicitly what they understand citizenship to be. – As further demonstrated by Biseth, Seland, and Huang's (2021) review of Norwegian civic and citizenship education research. It is also worth noting a potential conflict, in that the aim is to facilitate children and youth becoming citizen subjects and taking part in democratic processes, while legally they are still minors and thus what it actually means for them to participate before reaching legal age is debateable (Lansdown, 2009). This research project centres citizenship, and the investigation into students' meaning making demonstrates the potential which a citizenship lens offers. It facilitates an explicit exploration of the who (the role), what (the category), and how (positioning within a storyline) of democracy in contrast to the RFCDC competency model which focuses on values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge of democratic culture (Europarat, 2018). This pragmatic approach is relevant for educators who aim to help students learn about their role (subject position) as well as their potential to contribute (capabilities) to society (Osler, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Citizenship is a contested term with a variety of iterations (Mouritsen & Jaeger, 2018), which could be the reason that democratic knowledge and participation has been a focus in citizenship education research (Schulz et al., 2016). However, the “question that has haunted democracy from day one [is] ‘Who are the people?’—or, to put it differently: ‘Who are to be included in the (definition of the) demos?’” (Bingham et al., 2010, p. 74). Thus, subject position(s) are vital to explore, particularly since democracy is often understood to belong to the white European (Lentin, 2008), and Arendt cautions that democracy ought not to equate to the “tyranny of the majority” (1961, p. 181).

By looking at subject positions within democracy discourse, the citizenship amalgamation can be broken down into who, what, and how. The role of the subject position, or the who, is defined according to the what and how of the categories and storyline which have been created by society at large (Törrönen, 2001). These discourses also craft an understanding of who can inhabit certain subject positions (Hall, 1996), while these understandings can also be (re)negotiated—as shown by this decades’ black U.S. president. Categorisations which often intersect with the citizen subject position are those which frame an ‘us’ and a ‘them’, and the attendant storylines typically tend towards exclusionary discourses, such as nationalistic rhetoric based on imaginaries of sameness (Gullestad, 2006). On the inclusive side of the spectrum are storylines which draw on human rights and idealised democratic values, such as those outlined in the anthology *Inclusive Citizenship* (Kabeer, 2005). In discussion with minorities and marginalised from various parts of the world, Kabeer (2005) and her colleagues found a recurrence of the themes justice, recognition, self-determination, and solidarity. Within this notion of justice, there is an understanding of the times “when it is fair for people to be treated the same and when it is fair that they should be treated differently” (Kabeer, 2005, p. 3); recognition encompasses “the intrinsic worth of all human beings but also recognition and respect for their differences” as well as “the right to have rights” (2005, p. 4); self-determination is defined as “people’s ability to exercise some degree of control over their lives” (2005, p. 5); while solidarity is “the capacity to identify with others and to act in unity with them in their claims for justice and recognition” (2005, p. 7). These themes inform understanding of inclusive discourse and acted as sensitising concepts in the analysis.

Biesta argues that “our freedom is fundamentally interconnected with the freedom of

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others—contingent upon the freedom of others” (2013, p. 106). This requires awareness of inequalities within society, including differing capabilities, who is included and excluded. More specifically, Biesta states, ‘The encounter with responsibility is therefore the “moment” when I encounter my freedom and thus my unique existence as subject—unique in the sense that it is up to me to determine what to do, which no one can do for me’ (2020, p. 101). This can be understood as capabilities (Sen, 2001), or the freedom inherent in having choices available.

The concept of capabilities comes from Sen’s ‘development as freedom’ (Sen, 2001). Here the question moves from what rights people theoretically and juridically have to encompass nuanced and intersectional understandings of the actual possibilities for action or inaction which are open to people. —Considering, for example, their gender and social status. An underlying assumption is that equity or equal access is a social good and that factors such as gender and minority status should not be overlooked. An adaptation of this concept useful for this analysis is looking at capabilities as legal, ideal, and societal. One may have legal rights but be unaware of those rights. Alternately, an ideal may clash with a societal norm or the populist rhetoric of the day, which may hinder the realisation of that ideal. Such an understanding of capabilities is compatible with Biesta’s (2020) discussion of the importance of students’ understanding of their and their peers’ possibilities for (in)action within society. There is a body of research focusing on children’s rights and responsibilities, for example, research on students’ perceptions of their rights and responsibilities (Bjerke, 2011; Çayır & Bağlı, 2011). However, I would argue that while rights and responsibilities implicitly cover some aspects, the concept of capabilities more accurately correlates with exploration of citizen subject positions.

Three storylines characterising citizen subject positions can be understood as those pertaining to: 1) legal status and rights, 2) democratic engagement, and 3) membership and identity (Leydet, 2017). Additionally, the Norwegian vocabulary for citizenship (‘statsborgerskap’ and ‘medborgerskap’), legal citizenship and co-citizenship, highlights two categories of citizen subject position. This categorisation is subjectively my own, as the Norwegian word ‘medborger’, which I translate as co-citizen, has only recently been taken up within educational and political circles. Thus, the vernacular development of the word is yet to be seen. It is therefore not entirely surprising that respondents were unsure of the meaning of the word, and anecdotal evidence suggests that teachers are also not sure of its meaning.

The category of legal citizen is defined as all those eligible for a passport, whether living within the national border or without, and the associated rights. The category of co-citizen is defined as all residents within the borders of the country, who are thus de facto part of society—regardless of their citizenship status (see figure 1). Additionally, the category of minority in this analysis refers to those in an Other or hybrid space (Bhabha, 2015) whose belonging or citizenship status may be delegitimised, often due to ethnicity—thus essentially hampering their capabilities.

Figure 1. Categories of citizenship

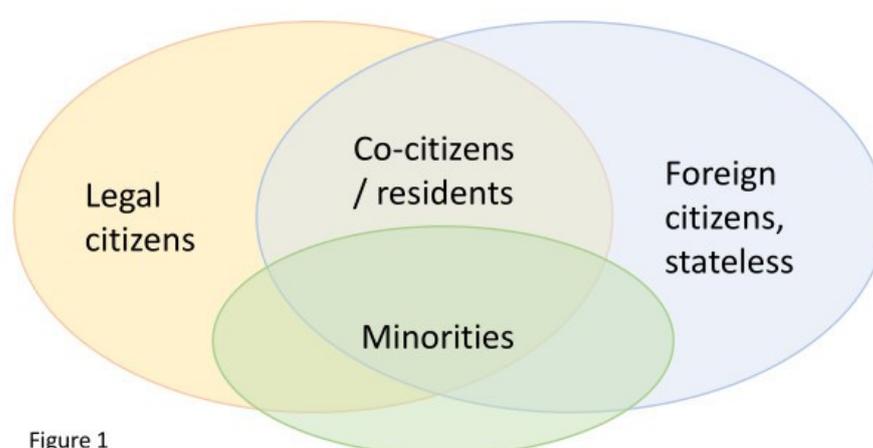


Figure 1

Citizen categories are influenced by the storylines within which individuals (re)position themselves in order to inhabit desirable subject positions. Justice, recognition, and self-determination characterise the storyline surrounding the status and rights of the legal citizen category, as rights are institutionalised for all those eligible for the national passport (Heater, 2004). This storyline correlates somewhat with legal capabilities, as citizenship rights—as well as responsibilities—are purportedly juridically divorced from populist rhetoric, such as constructions of European-ness as whiteness (Lentin, 2008). Legal capabilities are not only codified for legal citizens, but resident foreign citizens also have rights and responsibilities which are codified through regional international juridical bodies, such as the EU, or through global juridical frameworks, such as human rights legislation. Additionally, the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO, 1989) provides a legal framework for some categories of minorities. However, international rights agreements aimed at foreign citizen residents and indigenous peoples must be ratified by individual countries and can thus vary. The storyline attached to legal status and rights is thus theoretically inclusive.

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The storylines connected to democratic engagement are complex due to the overlap of legal, ideal, and societal capabilities. Participation is an important concept within this storyline, and an emphasis in modern civic education is the good citizen as the contributing useful citizen (Mouritsen & Jaeger, 2018). However, the concept of lived citizenship highlights the negotiation of the legal, ideal, and societal which is necessary for meaningful engagement on a day to day basis (Kallio & Mitchell, 2016). Social rhetoric impacts the capabilities of legal citizens and co-citizens alike, however, those placed in the minority citizen category experience higher demands, as anti-immigrant rhetoric demonstrates (Fangen & Vaage, 2018). Mouritsen and Jaeger (2018) show that active citizenship educational discourses are often targeted at minorities and refugees, with the understanding that an assimilated minority citizen is a good citizen.

Storylines connected to membership and identity further highlight the potential conflation of legal, ideal, and societal capabilities. As a full exploration of identity is outside the scope of this paper, the focus is on membership. Legal citizenship as a category is essentially legal membership; however, it is also an ideal category which can be recast and co-opted into the category of 'us' in contrast to 'them', and both minority legal citizens and co-citizens can be categorised as non-member Others (Fangen & Vaage, 2018). Also, rhetoric regarding participation and integration as key to membership (Mouritsen & Jaeger, 2018) may or may not be a societal reality in local communities. The subject position of the citizen is thus not an empty or neutral category, as it is influenced by categorisations shaped by the rhetoric and storylines of history, cultural norms, and public debate, as well as the individuals who (re)position themselves as citizen subjects. Hall (1996) argues that identities are not the same as subject positions, and while one may play the role of the 'good citizen', this may be contested when one is ascribed the subject position of the Other. Also, how one positions oneself within these storylines and categories of 'us' and 'them' dictates one's relationship to the Other, and the use of pronouns such as 'we' or 'they' can signal self-positioning within inclusive or exclusive storylines.

Returning to objectives, Biesta (2020) argues that democratic education offers an invitation to behave maturely, understanding not only that we cannot always have everything we desire, but also the responsibility we have to our compatriots. The findings provide an empirical example of exploration of citizen subject positions and how students frame 'us' and 'them'

categories as per societal storylines, while the next section explores the data collection methodology.

Methodology

The empirical data included in this article was collected through group interviews with 10th grade students in three lower secondary schools in Norway. The schools offered differing environments: a private urban school where Norwegian was the language of instruction, a public urban school, and a public rural school; and willingness or ability to participate was the main determining factor. The aim was to include one whole class from each school, however not all students had parental permission or wanted to participate. Thus, in school one (S1) the full class joined while in the other two schools, half to less than half of the class participated. The teachers provided demographic information on students: gender and minority / majority status, therefore references to students' minority or majority status are understood to be subjective while they provide a glimpse into the composition of the groups. The data set consists of eight group interviews with a total of 44 students. (Note: Students are coded by school, group, gender, status [a = majority, i = minority] with Roman numerals distinguishing students with similar codes: e.g., S3G2Mill stands for school 3, group 2, male minority II.)

The interview guide began with questions regarding the terms legal citizen (statsborger) and co-citizen (medborger). The word 'multicultural' was used as a layman's term in the interview guide to facilitate participants' understanding of the context. After the initial set of questions, a two-minute television clip was shown to the students in order to situate the discussion within the context of public debate. The clip from the national broadcasting station, NRK, is an excerpt of an interview conducted by Norwegian television host, Faten Al-Hussaini, with Siv Jensen, a leading politician from Norway's right-leaning Progress Party (FrP). Both women have been vocal and visible in public debate on the 'multicultural' Norway. The interview clip centres on citizenship, belonging, language, participation, and values, with Jensen avoiding directly acknowledging Al-Hussaini as Norwegian (NRK P3, 2017). This clip likely influenced student discussions; however, students tended to remain consistent in inclusive / exclusive discourses before and after the viewing.

The group interviews provided rich discussion. They were recorded audibly, and transcription in full was outsourced. The analysis was conducted on the original Norwegian transcriptions using a discourse analytical lens and its understanding of dominance relations (van Dijk, 1993), which strengthened analysis of inclusive and exclusionary discourses. After the analysis, pertinent excerpts were translated into English by the author, and then proofread by a native speaker. While the schools represented different social environments, the recurrence of themes indicate validity and a potential for qualified generalisability. In the next section, the findings will be discussed, looking specifically at understandings of legal citizenship and co-citizenship as well as how minority legal citizens and co-citizens were framed.

Discussion

Nuances and conceptual overlaps

The most frequent response from students was that they did not know or were unsure of the meanings of legal citizenship and co-citizenship. This included uncertainty regarding the difference between the terms, with some students asserting that there probably was no difference—that it was just a matter of preference (S2G1FaIII).

Students also used different approaches in their attempts to tease out the meaning of the words in our discussions, with some framing legal citizenship in juxtaposition to co-citizenship. Most students understood legal citizenship to be more concrete and signify stronger ties to the nation state, and therefore some concluded that co-citizens must be everyone else who 'just lives here' (S1G1MiVI). Thus, in some instances, co-citizens were categorised as an Other, as in this comment following the viewing of the television clip:

S1G1FaVIII: I feel that maybe she... Her from FrP [Jensen] thinks, like, that you are a co-citizen if you don't have, like, legal citizenship but you live in Norway, in a way. Like, because she [Jensen] didn't want to say she [Al-Hussaini] was Norwegian since she had on a hijab, like. Or something like that, so like she... It felt like she thought of her as a co-citizen instead of a legal citizen, in a way. Like, not Norwegian, just a co-citizen. Yes.

This excerpt demonstrates an understanding of the prevalence of 'us' versus 'them' storylines as part of societal rhetoric. On the other hand, some students focused on the prefix 'co' (med) in their analysis of what co-citizenship (medborgerskap) means, with one stating that it made

her think of the word for fellow human being (*medmenneske*), while another student mentioned the word for fellow student (*medelev*):

S2G1FaIII: And I don't really know what co-citizen... what the word means, but when I think about it then I think more about, like, uh, not a friend, but like, someone I'm connected to, like a fellow student or something like that. Uh, so I think more about a neighbour, in a way. That it's, like, a community [in English], in a way. But for legal citizen, then I think more about, like, someone who lives in a state and more concrete.

In this excerpt, the student draws on an inclusive storyline, eliciting ideals of recognition and solidarity, while extending the idea of community and belonging beyond the confines of close friendships and family. This in some ways reflects the Norwegian Lexicon's definition of co-citizenship as being the antonym of exclusion (Thorsen, 2018).

The contextualization in the interviews played an important role in directing the conversation. For example, in one school, the students started discussing before I mentioned the 'multicultural' Norway as the context. The following comments were made prior to this mention (as well as prior to viewing the television clip), and clearly evoke the rhetoric of participation:

S3G1FaIV: About co-citizens, I think it can be, like, what we should do together in society, like. And what we, like, different... what we do actively, like, in a society, if we're joining in with different thing or we just... yes.

S3G1FaI: If we participate in deciding, like, we – everyone – it's not just the higher ups.

These comments echo storylines on the 'good' contributing citizen and the imperative to participate, while students do not necessarily show an awareness of potential barriers to participation or differing capabilities. Conversely, directly after my mentioning the 'multicultural' Norway, a student defined legal citizenship as follows, where the rhetoric of Norwegian-ness as whiteness is visible:

S3G1FaIV: That it has something to do with... in a way, where your identity lies and where you come from, like. Or like, you do live in Norway but you, in a way, have maybe not totally, uh, for example, if you come from Africa, they are Norwegian but that you don't come from Norway, like, actually. But if you live here, so then you're, in a way, counted as Norwegian instead...

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This excerpt shows that the mention of multiculturalism elicits a very different storyline on citizenship, and this theme of where one is 'actually' from was often correlated to discussion of parentage, where one is born and has grown up—in essence implying that Norwegian parents are white parents, echoing earlier research (Eriksen, 2020). This overlapping of legal citizenship and belonging, or membership, with rhetoric on the white Norwegian may have been exacerbated by the NRK television clip in which Jensen demonstrated reservation regarding Al-Hussaini's belonging. However, the correlation of legal citizenship with whiteness was also expressed prior to the viewing of the clip, as is the case with the excerpt above about where one is 'actually' from.

The subject positions of the legal citizen and co-citizen were thus interpreted in different ways, and students also (re)positioned themselves depending on the type of storylines or categories they were drawing on. Some students framed themselves in a positive co-citizen subject position through, for example, talking about 'someone I'm connected to' or what 'we should do together in society'. Conversely, other students elicited rhetoric on the Other, such as by framing the co-citizen subject as 'everyone else who just lives here' or a legal citizen as someone who is simply 'counted as Norwegian'.

Legal Citizenship (Statsborgerskap)

Repeated themes in discussions on legal citizenship were its concreteness, that it has to do with being a member in the state, and one's parentage. Some students also had a partial understanding of the process of gaining legal citizenship and mentioned, for example: the application process, that not everyone who applies acquires legal citizenship, and the long-term residency requirement for gaining legal citizenship. The group discussion on dual citizenship and minority citizens helped many of the participating students to understand that legal citizenship is not dependent on having white Norwegian parents or where one has grown up, but solely on whether one has a right to the passport (e.g., S3G1FaI). However, the frequent repetition of 'being born in Norway' as a criterion (e.g., S3G1FaIV) and the theme of having Norwegian parents or family—which were implicitly understood to be white—highlights the prevalence of the societal rhetoric which conflates Norwegian-ness as whiteness with legal citizenship.

Furthermore, juridical misconceptions of legal citizenship were visible in discussions of rights:

who has rights, how they acquired these rights, and what rights they have. Rights, such as freedom of expression and freedom of religion, which are part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) and thus universal through human rights legislation, were framed by students as Norwegian rights (e.g., S3G3Fall). Additionally, the frequent reference to being born in Norway indicates an understanding of the concept of *jus soli*, which connects birthplace with legal citizenship. However, while this is the case in many countries of North and South America, most European countries—including Norway—use *jus sanguinis* as their starting point with legal citizenship following parents' nationality (Erdal & Sagmo, 2017). These findings indicate a need for legal literacy and clarifying with students, for example, that children of non-white Norwegians—born in Norway or abroad—automatically have the right to Norwegian legal citizenship. —Congruent to the fact that, legally, non-white Norwegian legal citizens have the same rights as white Norwegian legal citizens.

The storyline of legal status and rights as per the legal citizen category is thus not as justice oriented as is claimed, and 'us' and 'them' categorisations, or inclusive versus exclusionary (see figure 2, page 14), were highly visible. Where the 'us' categorisation was narrower, legal citizenship was framed in line with the rhetoric of whiteness and the ethnic Norwegian as being the 'real' Norwegian legal citizen. Where the 'us' categorisation was wider or more inclusive, legal citizenship was described by students as a juridical category which was unconnected to physical appearance, with an acknowledgement that legal citizenship does not always equate to feelings of belonging or local identification. A parallel understanding of legal citizen as an inclusive category was visible in discussion of dual citizenship, where hybridity and multiple belonging were acknowledged.

Co-citizenship (Medborgerskap)

Themes which came up repeatedly in discussion of co-citizenship align with storylines connected to democracy and participation. Democratic ideals were highly visible in students' discussions of rights, such as freedom of expression and freedom of religion; political participation, such as voting; as well as democratic values, such as tolerance and acceptance of other cultures. However, some of the discussion tended towards integrationist narratives about the importance of minorities participating in Norwegian culture, norms, and rules. Knowing and following Norwegian norms and rules was a particularly oft repeated theme,

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however there were two strains of this theme. On the one hand, some students focused on norms, arguing that participating in Norwegian culture, following Norwegian norms and not being 'too different' (e.g., S2G1FaVI & S2G1FaIII) were important for feeling a sense of belonging. On the other hand, some students focused on rules, arguing that it was a safety issue as well as the normally expected behaviour of everyone visiting foreign countries. For example, one student spoke of the importance of knowing which side of the road to drive on (S3G1FaI), while another provided examples of tourists abroad who are not exempt from local laws (S3G1FaIV). Interestingly, the students (e.g., S2G1FaVI & S2G1FaIII) who said not being too different was important for participation and belonging also demonstrated an awareness of societal pressures. Conversely, students who framed rules in terms of safety tended toward exclusivity, arguing that minorities' difference should not threaten the majority's sense of safety and stability (e.g., S3G1FaI). Interestingly, in another group discussion, students said agreeing with Norwegian values was important and that accepting all cultures is an important Norwegian value.

There was also a difference in the way that majority and minority students' described community participation and engagement. Majority students' spoke in institutional terms, such as neighbourhood cooperation (dugnad), sports and leisure clubs, and parent associations (e.g., S3G3FaI & S3G3FaII). In contrast, some minority students discussed participation and community in terms of generosity and hospitality—as spontaneous responses in personal interaction (e.g., S1G2MiVI & S1G2FiIII).

Figure 2 provides a condensed overview of storylines connected to inclusion versus exclusion. Inclusive storylines frame 'us' as a broader category, with legal status and rights disconnected from whiteness rhetoric. On the other hand, exclusive storylines define a narrow 'us' category, requiring greater adherence to 'our' norms in order to be included.

Figure 2. Inclusive and exclusive storylines

	Inclusive	Exclusive
Legal citizenship	Status based solely on fulfilling legal requirements; <i>Jus sanguinis</i> (includes non-white parents)	Status based on white Norwegian heritage / ethnicity; Minorities required to become 'Norwegian'
Co-citizenship	All residents as part of the social community; Cultural diversity appreciated as more than a curiosity	Residents / minorities required to assimilate Norwegian culture and norms; 'don't be too different'
Community	Organised as well as spontaneous; Welcoming and generous	Organised only; Within designated clubs and institutions

Figure 2

The next section draws on analysis of a dialogue segment to further explore the potential of citizenship discussions to be used within educational settings, and even contribute towards what Biesta (2013, 2020) calls the three aims of education: qualification, socialisation, and subjectification.

“Exploratory talk for learning” (Barnes, 2008)

In the group interviews, educational moments arose which fall under Barnes (2008) definition of exploratory talk, where the discussions allowed students to think out loud and explore their ideas with their peers, resulting in a construction of knowledge. The following dialogue was in response to a question on dual citizenship, where I clarified the government’s 2020 instituted right to dual citizenship. I was prepared to move on to other questions, however, one of the students returned to the issue of dual citizenship.

Researcher: So, when I said that the law says you can have two legal citizenships, I mean you can have a passport from two different countries. Before this wasn't allowed in Norway. If you wanted to become Norwegian, then you had to give up your other passport. So, okay, uhm, have you sometimes discussed the status of new legal citizens in Norway? Or the status of Norwegian minorities?

S2G1Mal: We haven't discussed that any, but it's actually quite interesting that you can be from two different countries. Because, but what's actually the reason that they would have a

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passport from two countries and not just one? That is what (laughs) the question is actually about.

Researcher: So, you think that it's unnecessary or, you think it's good, or?

S2G1MaI: I don't really know, because I have one of... I don't, like, understand what you're going to do with two passports, but it's probably great for those who actually have a background from another country and then live in another country. So, or for example, if you've moved, they've lived in one country and then move to another country, then they still want to be, like, still be a member of that country, because they're most used to their culture.

Researcher: Uhu.

S2G1MaI: So, for that, both can be good.

Researcher: Yes.

S2G1FaIII: I feel there's, like, positive and negative sides. It's... it's quite positive that people feel better because of what he said that if you have two different backgrounds, and, but you feel... you feel you belong in both, that's why it's good that they have two passports. Uh, but I feel it's a bit, a bit more complicated, and I feel it's a bit unnecessary because there's a lot to keep track of, at least, if you're going to have two passports for one person. Uh, so I... I feel it's a bit unnecessary, but I understand the thinking behind it.

Researcher: Uhu. Yes.

S2G1FaV: Uh, I think that it's quite good, because if I, for example, would move from Norway, then I would like to be able to say I'm Norwegian, but also belong to that other country.

Researcher: Uhu. Someone else?

S2G1FaVI: Yes, I agree with what she said, uhm. It's like, I would have been proud to be Norwegian, but if I moved then I would have... there could have been a new reason for it and then I would have wanted to be a part of that country in addition to Norway.

This dialogue segment can be analysed in at least two ways. Firstly, there is an exploration of capabilities. Legal capabilities are visible in discussion of the right to two passports and complications which may be inherent in maintaining two legal citizenships. Societal capabilities are visible in the students' references to 'those' with a foreign background, drawing on rhetoric implying that it is the Other who must be accommodated through dual citizenship legislation. However, the last part of the segment demonstrates Biesta's "'moment" when I encounter my freedom' (2020, p. 101), with the students demonstrating an empathetic

understanding of what this capability can mean for themselves as well as for the Other—transforming dual citizenship as ‘for them’ to ‘for us’. Thus, dual citizenship becomes an ideal equal opportunity capability, benefiting all.

Secondly, if we understand this dialogue segment as an educational exploratory talk (Barnes, 2008), it can also be analysed as per Biesta’s (2013) three objectives of education—qualification, socialisation, and subjectification. The discussion contributed to qualification through my clarification of the meaning of dual citizenship which enabled the students to gain a better understanding of democratic citizenship and its attendant legal capabilities, while the students further explicated the complications which may be inherent in dual citizenship. As for socialisation, the students deliberated on the social and cultural belongings of fellow societal members and peers when they discussed ‘those’ who might find it useful to have dual citizenship. The conversation progressed to subjectification as it moved from those who are ‘mostly used to their own culture’ to reflection on their own subject positions and capabilities. The concluding comment indicates a understanding of Biesta’s argument that “our freedom is fundamentally interconnected with the freedom of others” (2013, p. 106). The students thus demonstrate reflexivity and the ability to see the desirability of duality through the eyes of ‘those’ others with ‘their’ culture.—Or following Biesta (2020), a non-egological viewpoint.

This dialogue demonstrates the ways that the subject position of the citizen is explored through the storylines that shape the categories of ‘us’ and ‘them’. The dual citizen subject position has an inherent flexibility that challenges exclusive rhetoric, however whether this is recognised depends on the storylines invoked.

Conclusion

The implication for teaching which can be drawn from this exploration of student discussions is the potential which a citizenship lens has for opening up spaces to explore the subject position within democratic education. The legal, ideal, and societal capabilities inherent in these discussions highlight the influence of storylines—both exclusionary rhetoric in the public sphere as well as inclusive rhetoric evoking ideals of justice, recognition, self-determination, and solidarity. Additionally, by disaggregating citizenship into majority and minority legal

citizenship and co-citizenship (the who), the impact of categorisations (the what) and storylines (the how) becomes clearer.

Beginning at legal capabilities, examining the rights of legal citizens and co-citizens can help students to understand that which is codified juridically. The storyline connected to legal rights and status can offer different benefits for the minority than the majority. For the minority, it offers a storyline of justice, recognition, and empowerment in that they are made aware that rights are available to them—whether as legal citizens or resident co-citizens—and that they have the right to contest the absence of them. This in turn serves as an invitation to action, namely the full claiming of their rights and self-determination. For the majority, it can serve as a reminder that—despite populist rhetoric to the contrary—the minority are due legal equity, recognition, and justice, and it invites to solidarity and being part of social justice within society.

As for ideal and societal capabilities, opening up space for discussion can provide an opportunity to critically examine ideals which may be hampered by populist rhetoric. As the findings on rules and norms demonstrates, the implicit *who* defining the norms of societal participation—or how minorities may engage—is the white majority. While activism aimed at strengthening minority rights and representation has increased, nevertheless, by and large, white majority legal citizens are the default eligible citizens, whose capabilities or spheres of participation are broad, and who take for granted that their voices should be heard and taken seriously by those in power. Also taken for granted is that adjustment, integration, or assimilation—depending on the degree of expectation or difference—is required of minorities, both legal citizens and co-citizens.

Exploring citizen subject positions and capabilities thus necessitates a willingness to be explicit about the contradictions between ideal democratic values and populist rhetoric on the incompatible Other in order for Biesta's 'reality check' (2020, p. 97) to be fully realised. The findings highlight a need for critical examination of conflicting storylines, such as inclusive and anti-discrimination democratic values versus the implicit rhetoric of white ethnicity as the legitimate indicator of European citizenships. Such discussion offers an opportunity to recognise the challenges of minority or non-white citizens' lived experience and validate their resistance to gaslighting. It can help white majority citizens to be more aware of the daily

challenges, such as micro-aggressions and everyday racism faced by non-white minority legal citizens and co-citizens (Essed, 2008), as glossing over the diversity in lived citizenship experience is inadequate for providing students with a clear understanding of their capabilities—legal, ideal, and societal.

According to Biesta, “Interruption, suspension, and sustenance are [...] very concrete components of what is required of an education that takes subjectification seriously” (2020, p. 98). This discussion demonstrates that exploring the citizen subject position provides an opportunity to interrupt assumptions, invites to suspending populist judgements, and opens a sustained space for exploration of subject positions and capabilities. Furthermore, Biesta (2020) argues that democratic education should invite students to take responsibility and act maturely. It follows therefore that critical citizenship discussion posits students as citizens in relationship with other citizens. The aim of examining citizen capabilities—including the capabilities of one’s peers—is thus to elicit a reaction, an ex-centric appraisal of society (Biesta, 2020). A non-egological view thus asks critical questions of democracy, such as: Who is participating and how? What forms of participation are open to different citizens? What rights do different citizens have? What barriers do citizens face, whether individual citizens or citizen groups? What can I do about it and what capabilities do I have? This could lead to what is perhaps the most important question: What am I willing to do?

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