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Poetry pedagogy and university students with intellectual disabilities

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ABSTRACT

Little is known about the level of poetry appreciation that can be achieved by university students with intellectual disabilities. Indeed, there are limited studies that provide knowledge of poetry pedagogy for teachers of this group of individuals. Going some way to address the paucity of research in this area, this paper advances an approach to poetry pedagogy which is built on three tenets: (1) Teacher and positioning; (2) Student and the poetic voice, and (3) Language, metalanguage and poetry writing. It is argued that these tenets have the potential to become a powerful tool for people with intellectual disabilities to explore their self and social identity, and a medium to question and challenge the ideational world that these individuals are situated in. For teachers, utilising this poetry pedagogy encourages a critical reflexive practice which has the potential to enhance the relationship between teachers' positions and identities and the way this is enacted in the classroom.

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Introduction

Poetry is one of the first genres that many children are exposed to in the form of nursery rhymes, jingles, and play (Manning, 2003). However, poetry has been described by some teachers as the "most feared and least understood" literary genre (Hawkins & Certo, 2014, p. 196). Poetry is fundamentally different from other forms of writing: it uses an economy of words, it possesses variations of form and structure, and its use of symbolism and complex imagery can result in obscure, ambiguous and difficult meanings (Smith, 2018). Consequently, poetry reading, and poetry teaching are complex tasks and the quandary of choosing the most effective teaching approach to increase students' knowledge and understanding of poetry has frustrated teachers for years (Wolf, 2004). Consequently, it has been reported that poetry teaching is experiencing somewhat of a decline which may be due, in part, to a current focus on more functional notions of literacy in schools, as opposed to creative, performative or personal forms of writing (Creely, 2019).

Within the literature on poetry teaching, two traditions of pedagogical discourse have been identified: "The Formalist" which pays attention to form and structure, and "The

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Populist", more interested in readers' creative use of poems (Dressman & Faust, 2014); between the two traditions there has been "a persistent general and unresolved debate" (p. 62). It has been noted that these traditional perspectives on reading and learning poetry have influenced research in the theories on personal response pedagogies (Sigvardsson, 2017). For example, Rosenblatt (1978) theorised the poem as the result of a transactional event, a process of exchange between the text and the reader which enables a unique "personal response". Duke (1990) a follower of Rosenblatt uses concepts such as "aesthetic" and "efferent" reading; "aesthetic" refers to the personal emotional experiencing of a literary work, whereas "efferent" is a way of reading where one retrieves information from the text. Duke emphasises that students need to have the input of the teacher's and sufficient time to develop an aesthetic stance, since they often read poems efferently, as bits of prosaic information. Other concepts, such as Pike's "responsive teaching" (2000b; 2000c) emphasises the student's unique personal response which "encompasses the concept of an individualised transaction between the reader and text, recognising that every reader is unique and participates in each literary transaction in a highly individual way" (2000b, p. 46).

However, this individual response can become a collective process: after students have developed their own written response, they can discuss what they have read in pairs. This can be followed with the teacher initiating a whole-class discussion where students are asked to talk about their reading (Pike, 2000c). Naylor (2013) further emphasises the value of collective reading and re-reading to aid students' responses; in this manner individuals are enabled to "build up their response, built through a series of different viewpoints and structured through different activities" (p. 73). The collective process is evident in research from the field of education which tends to view poetry reading as more of a sociocultural and collective learning process, where the meanings of texts are formed dialogically in social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978).

In combining personal response theory and metacognition, Eva-Wood (2008) values the challenge of poetic language and the confusion that results in students' readings, as these encounters can be used as a resource for meaning making. Eva-Wood suggests that a "think and feel aloud" method for poetry instruction may help students to "think rationally within an emotionally coloured context". Results from an intervention conducted by Eva-Wood showed that when students were taught to use their emotions in their response to poetry reading, they showed a higher level of engagement, their questions were more complex, and discussions were deeper.

In summary, the variations of personal response pedagogy outlined above centres on students' readings of poems and the value of working with the students' own cognitive, affective and somatic responses which come together in synchronicity. As students age and develop during their secondary education, it may be reasonable to assume that their progression of poetry interpretation will also increase. However, research in this area outlines a slow progression of poetry reading at this level – Peskin and Wells-Jopling (2012) have shown that while students' symbolic thinking, number of interpretations and "cultivated disposition" seem to increase with age, it was also found that even the high-ability students in their final years struggle with poetry interpretation and read poetry quite literally. Peskin and Wells-Jopling conclude that the development of a more complex poetry reading is probably a long process, which is in line with findings from research on the development of expertise where "deep knowledge"

about the genre and "rich knowledge schemata" is more important than any specific strategy.

Poetry teaching and adults with intellectual disabilities

Little is known about the level of poetry appreciation that can be achieved for adults with intellectual disabilities, nor is there an articulation of an effective pedagogy to inform the teaching poetry to this population. According to Dillon (1994), poetry is rarely employed in teaching basic reading or literacy skills to people with intellectual disabilities – the focus remains instead on skill acquisition and remediation, and/or teaching functional literacy skills with a focus on vocational preparation. However, Moni and Jobling (2000) argue that such functional approaches to literature development for adults with intellectual disabilities construct the world as a serious place where students learn about language and literacy, so they can conform to society's perceptions and expectations. For Westgate-Pesola (2008), the practice of learning functional literacy has thus led to limitations being set for those with intellectual disabilities, and consequently, assumptions are made that this population have a ceiling on learning due to weak executive functioning.

Chapman (2006) questions such assumptions and challenges the concept that children with intellectual disabilities cease to learn language when they reach their teens and argues that these individuals often acquire language and other literacy skills well into their adult years. In this regard, poetry has an important role to play in language and literacy acquisition as it develops the skills of deep listening, participation and reflection (Dillon, 1994). For example, Ryndak et al. (1999) revealed that reading poetry to individuals with Down syndrome provided the opportunity for them to relate experiences in their own life which deepened their understanding through the sharing of stories and the social connection attributed to social communication. In this way, rather than attempting to remediate so-called language and literacy "deficits" in students with intellectual disabilities, the connection between literacy and identity was foregrounded. Consequently, an acknowledgement and respect of the multiple identities of people with intellectual disabilities, if embraced, has the potential to allow teachers to identify culturally sustaining pedagogies, so these individuals' voices and experiences are honoured.

Students with intellectual disabilities learning poetry in university

Amplifying marginalised voices is particularly important at tertiary level where efforts are being made to combat educational exclusion and ensure that those who are most at risk become part of and contribute to the knowledge society (Stodden & Mruzek, 2010). While many institutions and faculties have created an inclusive environment for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties, only recently, however, have these opportunities been extended to include people with intellectual disabilities. Consequently, post-secondary and higher education opportunities for this population have now emerged in the United States (Grigal et al., 2010), Canada (University of Alberta, 2006), Australia (Rillotta et al. 2018), and in many parts of Europe such as Iceland (Stefánsdóttir, 2010), Spain (Izuzquiza Garset & Herrero, 2016) and Ireland (Kubiak et al., 2019).

One such inclusive programme entitled Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice (ASIAP) is located in the Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities, School of

Education, Trinity College Dublin, the Republic of Ireland. The ASIAP curriculum is made up of 22 modules and is divided into six interdisciplinary themes: (1) advanced learning theories and self-development; (2) applied research theories and practice; (3) applied science, technology and maths; (4) business and marketing; (5) advocacy, rights and culture; (6) fine arts and languages. The module entitled *Poetry: An Introduction* – the focus of this current study – is positioned within the ASIAP fine arts and languages theme and introduces students to a wide range of European and American poets and includes poems from the fourteenth century to the present day. Students are also encouraged to investigate perspectives beyond those offered by "Whitestream" thinkers (Grande, 2004, p. 140) by studying the poetry of the activist-professor June Jordan, as well as the writings of disability poets such as Larry Eigner and Jim Ferris. In addition to the curriculum, students undertook a series of poetry writing workshops which became an experimental space for creative expression and culminated in the publication of a book entitled *Pen & Palette* (Kubiak, 2014).

Poetry pedagogy and adults with intellectual disabilities – three central tenets

Three central pedagogical tenets for teaching poetry – (1) Teacher and positioning; (2) Student, identity and the poetic voice, and (3) Language, metalanguage and poetry writing – which have emerged from reflexivity about my own pedagogical practice and my work in the expressive arts are now advanced (see Figure 1).

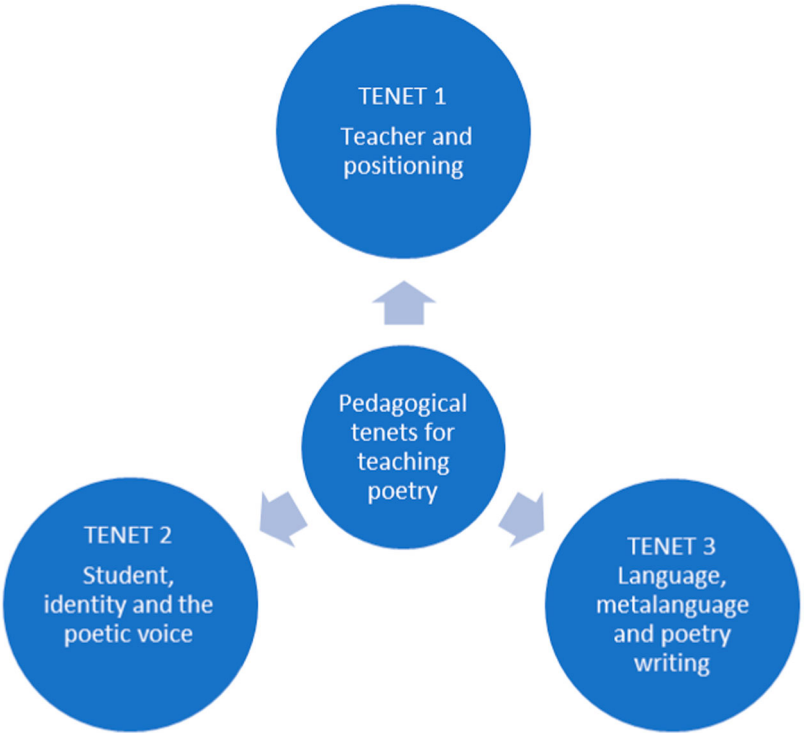

Figure 1. Three pedagogical tenets for teaching poetry.

TENET 1 Teacher and positioning

While there is evidence to suggest that teachers are adult readers and that many student teachers come to teach English due to a love of literature (Peel, 2000), it could reasonably be assumed that such individuals possess a good subject knowledge of poetry for use in the classroom. However, it has been found that teachers had an extremely weak subject knowledge in relation to poetry and that there was a considerable reliance for classroom activities upon the work of poets and poems that were known to the teachers since childhood (Ofsted, 2007). Reflecting on my own initial efforts in delivering a poetry curriculum resulted in a selection of a lot of my old favourites – T.S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,* Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven;* Homer's *Odyssey,* Dante's *Inferno,* as well as the music and lyrics of the album *Songs of Leonard Cohen*.

For Broudy (1972), the starting point for any conversation about poems is an attempt to instigate desire, feeling, appreciation, enjoyment and love of poetry in learners. In my early teaching interactions with the students, it became apparent that my passion for the genre impacted on them; over the course of a few weeks, they began to bring in their own choice of poetry to read out loud in class. In addition, we studied the rap lyrics of Eminem and Tupac and watched the YouTube link of The Simpson's interpretation of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*. We proceeded to examine the poems of the Jamaican American poet and activist June Jordan as well as "disability" themed poems such as *Tell Aristotle* by Jim Ferris. During this learning journey, I noticed that students were becoming more at ease in talking about their reading interests and preferences, and any opportunity to read aloud in class was jumped upon by willing volunteers. Such significant shifts in this level of classroom engagement suggested that there was a complex interplay unfolding between my repertoire, my knowledge of the subject, my personal passion, and their positioning as decision-makers regarding the curriculum content.

For many years, teachers have set of limitations for individuals with intellectual disabilities regarding their reading and literacy practices. Generally, the assumption has been made that those with intellectual disabilities experience ceilings on learning due to weak executive functioning. As reading abilities play a fundamental role in the acquisition of personal autonomy and emotional awareness (Verrucci et al., 2006), it is vital that individuals with intellectual disabilities are offered the opportunity to acquire language skills through exposure to poetry and literacy-related texts. In this regard, the teacher plays a central role – Tenet 1 highlights the importance of the teacher's personal passion and positioning in relating to the delivery of this genre. It also foregrounds the crucial role of engaging in critical reflexive practice, and the impact this can have on the establishment of a class atmosphere of trust and an acknowledgement of students' feelings and choices. In this regard, poetry classes can provide a supportive space for risk-taking and an exploration and questioning of students' identity.

TENET 2 Student, identity and the poetic voice

Language is not only a linguistic system; it is also a social practice in which experiences are organised and identities are negotiated. The connection between literacy and identity is evident in the concept of labelling theory (Link & Phelan, 1999), which suggests

that humans manage the world around them through categorisation and by applying labels to themselves and to individuals or groups around them. Whilst positive shifts in attitudes towards people with disabilities have developed in recent decades, the label of "intellectual disability" however continues to be a dominant and stigmatising one (Logeswaran et al., 2019). Szivos and Griffiths (1990) proposed that the answer for dealing with a stigmatised identity is to enable those affected to examine the meaning of the disability and to "own" it through a process of increasing self-acceptance. Emerson (1990) instead, focused on the multiple roles and identities people with intellectual disabilities have, or should have, access to. Such understandings of identity as socially constructed and fluid rather than fixed (Gergen, 1977), moves away from group-based definitions of self and goes some way to avoid the somewhat black and white tones of such debates.

Empowerment and transformation

Empowerment is frequently used to address the identity of disadvantaged groups and often evolves from collective dialogue and raised consciousness emerging from a shared network who establish bonds and develop strategies to cope with stigmas (hooks, 1994). Similar in nature to the empowerment perspective, the concept of transformation (Mezirow, 1991) is a process whereby individuals develop critical thinking by questioning previous assumptions, perspectives, beliefs and values, thus widening alternative lenses and frameworks to see the world. The transformational role that education plays in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities regarding the way they view themselves is significant (Coeby et al., 2018). This is particularly true within the context of post-secondary and higher education, a setting where cultural identity is (re)constructed through discourse and social interaction (Gomez-Estern et al., 2010). From this point of view, poetry is a cultural tool which can amplify students' "voices" and in doing so, allow marginalised individuals to understand, question and ultimately challenge the "negotiated and constructed" (Foucault, 1980) nature of power and culture.

Amplifying the poetic "voice"

For people with intellectual disabilities, fostering empowerment, confidence and positive schemas has the potential to help sow the seeds not only of a positive identity, but also higher aspirations (Logeswaran et al. (2019)). The selection of appropriate interventions, for example, narrative approaches in the form of creative poetic expression is one way to question dominant narratives and the power relations that underpin them, as well as helping to promote a positive sense of self. For example, in the poem "Find your voice",[1] the poet laments the inability of other individuals with intellectual disabilities who don't have the confidence to use their voice to speak out in addressing injustices:

> Your voice matters;
> Let people know that
> You have the right,
> just like everyone else
> To stand up
> and speak up[2]

Equipped with an arsenal of words and rhythm power, the following poets see themselves as activists with two tasks: first, to condemn the social injustices which the disabled in society have to endure:

Life isn't fair!
It's like people don't care.
It's like you're black and
You can't be seen.
Life can be so mean![3]

And second, a "call to arms" to other people with intellectual disabilities:

People need to open their eyes
And hear other people's cries …
Open your eyes to listen …
I need help all the time,
Otherwise, I'm not fine.
But I have the right to speak –
Speak my mind and have it complete –
…
In the end it's we who decide,
And all the people on our side.
As together we have someone to walk beside.[4]

The following poet discovered that the central task of her poetic journey became the act of locating and listening to her own inner voice, and then learning to express it in her own words. In the poem *Include Me*, the importance of belonging is expressed:

To be part of a community
Means I have loads of opportunities.
I like to be valued and wanted
Not to be tormented and taunted.[5]

The voice in this poem is authentic; aware of the label of intellectual disability that's ascribed to her, she neither accepts it nor rejects it, but instead sees it from her antagonists' eyes (… teenagers shout/Calling names and won't let me be). While she is mindful of the impact of this negativity on her, she nevertheless possesses an inner voice and a strength which is confident and insightful:

Don't discriminate against me,
What goes around comes around you'll see,
You never know one day you might need me.

The words of this poet make us think again about how a person with intellectual disabilities feel about her (often negative) life experiences and her dream of being "complete":

Half-moon –
I think about me
being whole.[6]

Collectively, these poems highlight the resilience of these individuals and how they transcend their struggle through determination and inner strength: "I have the right to speak". The voices of these poets challenge our preconceptions of people with intellectual disabilities; through their writing these individuals affirm self-knowledge and intelligence, qualities society appears to deny them. These poets remind us of the gift that poetry offers:

an imaginative way to see ourselves and others. By holding this mirror up to themselves, they expose their vulnerabilities and yearn for understanding:

Not at home anymore
Because of my disability?
Divorced.
(don't you love Mammy anymore?)
Please –
Come home. (I'll be better, I promise).
I miss the way things used to be.[7]

To cope with her reality, this poet finds solace in the process of self-examination and even self-blame, a process which also has the potential to increase her self-understanding and self-compassion, qualities which have been shown to create opportunities for healthy self-attitudes and healing (Neff, 2016).

TENET 3 Language, metalanguage and poetry writing

For non-disabled children, the process of writing begins at an early age when they scribble, draw symbols and make recurring marks on paper (Smyth, 2018). As they acquire the conventions of written language, children progress from forming letters and words, to writing purposeful compositions, before eventually going on the acquire writing skills which serve functions that go beyond formal schooling requirements, such as the written expression that is needed in a technological society. However, it has been reported that children with disabilities are provided with fewer opportunities to learn written expression skills during their formal schooling years in contrast to their peers without disabilities; those with intellectual disabilities more likely to learn skills related to daily living, as well as social and prevocational skills (Berninger et al., 1996).

However, it has been demonstrated that people with intellectual disabilities can learn to express themselves successfully through various forms of writing (Pershey & Gilbert, 2002). Because research has consistently signalled the importance of metacognition in the process of writing (Butterfield et al., 1996), teachers of students with intellectual disabilities need to instruct these individuals how to think and to develop their knowledge of metalanguage – a repertoire of tools "to control and manipulate the material at hand" (Van Lier, 1998, p. 136).

Metalanguage and poetry writing

The term "metalinguistic" applied to poetry includes both linguistic metalanguage (i.e. verbs, clauses, subjects) and literary metalanguage (i.e. metaphors, caesura, enjambement) (Camps & Milian, 1999). Van Lier (1998) argues that there are multiple layers of language awareness; consequently, a writer who chooses to alter the syntactical structure of a sentence and to utilise the line structure possibilities of poetry to reinforce the syntactical choice, possesses practical metalinguistic knowledge of how to create suspense or insecurity. Consider the following example:

A young child sits in the corner
And cries.
She hears her father's footsteps. Her father comes in to the room.
Abuse.

She cries out for help
But no one hears her.
She is too small
To tell her Dad to stop.[8]

The writer of this poem is a woman with an intellectual disability. However, according to Van Lier, she (and, by association, other aspiring poets), may not be able to describe her technical metalinguistic knowledge by using the terms of, for example, "enjambement" (… cries out for help / But no one hears her.) and "caesura" (… her father's footsteps. Her father comes …). In this regard, Keen (1997) argues that it the role of teachers to explicate the resources of metalanguage in order to activate students' implicit understanding of language and equip them with a tool that enables them to make effective choices.

However, despite the crucial role metalinguistic understanding has regarding learners, writing and poetry, there is limited research which explores metalinguistic knowledge in this context. In addition, Myhill (2011) outlines that teachers are less confident about teaching poetry than other aspects of the literature curriculum which has a knock-on effect on the teaching of poetry writing. At the heart of this concern is the view that poetry – considered a deep and personal expression of intimate thoughts – cannot be exposed to the cold reality of critical comment and evaluation criteria. By developing a pedagogical approach to poetry writing which articulates around the notion of writing as design, would, according to Myhill, "actively encourage students' metacognitive understanding of their own composing processes, and metalinguistic understanding of the language choices they are making in order to foster learner autonomy in critical engagement with their own writing" (p. 53).

Promoting poetic metalanguage

In promoting the practice of writing poetry for adults with intellectual disabilities, this section draws on a collection of poems written by university students with intellectual disabilities.[9] The workshops used a playful and open approach to language and encouraged students to experiment with the possibilities of language by drawing on their own life experiences. In the early stages of composition, several students experimented with narrative, perceiving narrative to be "easier" to write as it has more overt meaning in contrast to the more covert way poetry expresses meaning. Revisiting and editing these early drafts over a period of weeks exposed students to an awareness of the role and function of literary metalanguage. For example, one long prose piece was reduced in word length to become an outpouring of emotion about the poet's native city which was contained in a single sentence; this "prose piece" was then acknowledged by the poet to be a poem, yet "too short" to be a work of prose:

When I'm walking at night in the city of Dublin, I go down to the quays just by the water and I sit on the bench and I look at the beautiful reflection on the water from the buildings and beautiful lights surrounding the city of Dublin and when I look up I see the beautiful galaxy and it captures my heart with tears trickling down my face of emotion.[10]

The effect of repetition, a feature of poetry, was utilised by this following poet; in the poem "At Six", the line "My Mam and Dad could not manage me" becomes a type of refrain in order to emphasise an important personal and painful memory:

When I was a young
Girl I did not live
At home for long.
My Mam and Dad could not manage me.
At six they brought
Me to Dublin in a car
My Mam and Dad could not manage me
I lived in an old building
For a few years;
The nurses wore
Uniforms.
Like a prison.
My Mam and Dad could not manage me.
I was a bit
Lonely.[11]

Although students found little difficulty in understanding the concept of rhyme, (including rhyming patterns such as rhyming couplets as previously studied as part of the curriculum in *The Canterbury Tales*), they rarely used this technique in their writing to create a poetic effect. One exception is contained in the following lines:

Blaze fire blaze!
Daze girl daze!
Run guy run
There ain't no fun.
Help guy help
I can't do it myself
Go to the exit
Clear that shelf.[12]

Most poets, however, chose rhythm over rhyme to keeping the poem moving. One poet demonstrated how rhythm can be used to reinforce a sense of loss through delayed the pace and by the repetition of the words "I" and "Him":

I feel I miss
Him
I want to see
Him
Again
I speak French with
Him
When I see
Him
Around
I feel happy
I can understand
Him
I love
Him[13]

Although these students had some poetic metalanguage at their disposal in the process of writing poetry – i.e. rhyme, rhythm – they nevertheless showed limited awareness and understanding of the potentiality of drafting and re-drafting; decisions around

the use of caesura for a pause, or the use of repetition to emphasise a feeling or idea was something that needed to be explicated. As such, in the early experimental stages of the writing process, this limited amount of metalinguistic awareness resulted in a reduced capacity for critical reflection. In this regard, Stables (2002, p. 30) argues that the importance of supporting growth in "the understanding and practice of poetry" lies with the teachers who can offer a rich modelling experience to shape their students' metalinguistic understanding. In this way, both educators and learners can begin to locate and liberate a "voice" described by (Zuzovsky, 1994) as a tool which can give shape to a wide variety of responses, such as empowerment and transformation.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to articulate an effective poetry pedagogy is based on my own experience as an educator concerned with inviting students with intellectual disabilities into my love for poetry. In this paper I have advanced three central tenets – centred around the themes of "Teacher", "Student" and "Poetry" – which can create opportunities for students to engage experientially with a variety of poetry forms, ultimately creating a space for enhancing their creative expression through the written word. In this way, poetry becomes more than an elitist curiosity – instead, the voices and experiences of this marginalised group are re-centred and amplified, acting as a counternarrative to rhetoric that suggests that people with intellectual disabilities are disengaged, unaware and unwilling or unable to learn. The search for identity and the articulation of voice among the emerging poets presented in this paper is especially significant as they navigate their social development, deconstruct diagnostic labels and (re)construct their emerging identities in the context of a university environment.

For teachers, embracing a poetry pedagogy can help their students with intellectual disabilities negotiate and navigate their way through the multiple flows of their linguistic, creative and cultural resources and repertoires. In such a pedagogy, the central importance of the teacher's awareness of his/her identity and positioning is highlighted; this journey is initiated with a critical reflexive practice, what Pollner (1991, p. 370) defined as "an 'unsettling,' … an insecurity regarding the basic assumptions, discourse and practices used in describing reality". In the context of a poetry pedagogical practice, this means developing a critical literacy, questioning what constitutes appropriate curriculum knowledge, examining the assumptions underlying our actions, the impact of those actions, and from a broader perspective, what passes as good pedagogic practice that enables students to utilise personal linguistic resources that empower them. In this way, the classroom can become a space where the texts selected and studied by students are relevant and significant to their needs and draws on their funds of knowledge and understanding. Furthermore, student writing which is embedded in the multimodal literate environment that is part of individuals' cultural knowledge, can empower students with intellectual disabilities as creators of texts which describe their own lived experiences – whether it's abandonment, guilt, desire or love. In this way, the stereotypes of "otherness" are disrupted (Knight, 2009) as students take control of language and reposition themselves as composers of texts who "shatter the silence" and make visible the stigma that often accompanies it (Sethi, 2012).

By using the narratives that frame the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities, this paper has demonstrated that writing poetry can become a powerful tool to explore the self and social identity, as well as a means to question and challenge the ideational world that these individuals are situated in. Communicating this difficult and uncomfortable experience through creative means can evoke a powerful emotional response from the reader which can become a catalyst to promote dialogue on issues that impact the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. In this way, poetry is not only "a practical and powerful method for analysing social worlds" (Richardson, 2000, p. 931), poetry also communicates "the slipperiness of identity … (and) the way identity is created, maintained, and altered through our narratives and interactions" (Faulkner, 2006, p. 99). Poetry can also provide a critical reflective lens to explore experiences and longer-term aspirations and empower people with intellectual disabilities as active knowledge creators and artists who exercise creative control over their work, telling their own stories in a way they find most meaningful.

Notes

1. From the book *Pen & Palette,* National Institute for Intellectual Disability, Trinity College Dublin, 2014. The poems collected in the book is the result of a series of workshops which followed the module Poetry: An introduction.
2. Extract from the poem *Find your Voice* by Noelle Doran.
3. Extract from the poem *Why am I last?* by Āine Lawlor.
4. Extract from the poem *Disability* by Gina Wilkin.
5. Extract from the poem *My Family* by Yvonne Byrne.
6. Extract from the poem *Me* by Noelle Doran.
7. *Daddy* by Sandra Flynn.
8. Extract from *A Quiet Child* by Noelle Doran.
9. These workshops and book were generously funded by the Margaret McLoughlin Art Project.
10. *Dublin* by Alasdair Quinn.
11. Poem *At Six* by Julie Moloney.
12. Extract from the poem *Burning flame to a burning fire* by Gina Wilkin.
13. Extract from the poem *Him* by Clodagh Crombie.

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