

Lesson Plan

NEUROHEADWAY

Neuroscience Into Education

Lesson objective	Introduction	Main activity	Reflection	Success criteria
Social world, neural system alike, is a huge network of groups ("nodes") and individuals ("neurons"). Yet, the social networks are always incomplete, for some ties are chronically lacking, while some other are numerous and rather serve to close up the groups toward outgroups. Kandinsky's painting "Concentric circles", imparted in slide 14, may be taken as an illustration of a replete with "monads", i.e. putatively self-standing units (with varieties of similar colours, but strictly separated by boundaries). LO: To understand that the lack of the bridging (and the linking) ties in a world with multitude of bonding ties, causes cleavages and non-functional conflicts, including wars, between different social units, including countries, and may also cause mental imbalance among people belonging (with or without their consent) to conflicting parties. The same is true for immigrants who fled from the areas of conflict.* *In this module social ties are described in two different contexts. One is the context of socialisation and personal growth, which is normal for	Explain to pupils what are bonding and bridging ties and what is their specific significance, respectively. Thereby, linking ties, which are extensions of bridging (and less so of bonding ties), that upgrade the latter with new links and networks alike, enable people, including younger, to reach local authorities when they need them for solving an acute problem, whether in their neighbourhood (e.g. with local trouble-makers) or when their rights are obviously not respected (e.g. in the case of discrimination whatsoever).	Go over slide 5 and explain why pupils have more bonding than bridging ties (which is caused by a young age and a strong need for internal protection accordingly). Next, ask them how they see you, as their teacher, in this context. Most pupils will probably tip on your bridging role in linking them with facts and people from the surrounding world. Nevertheless, some pupils might project their bonding ties on you, seeing you as a member of their extended family, so to speak. In such cases, try to persuade them that an essential difference exists in that teacher is, for instance, an official person and professional in teaching, and not a nourisher as a parent is. Still, sometimes teacher along with parents and/or some other persons may take part in	I understand that bonding and bridging ties are equally important in social and mental life and that the bridging ties become more important as I grow and especially after coming of (legal) age.	I can understand why weak ties (acquaintances), which is another name for bridging ties, may happen to be more important for me than are strong (familial) ties. (Simply, the former are usually closer to the source of an important information, persons or institutions (e.g. jobs) than parents or other relatives)

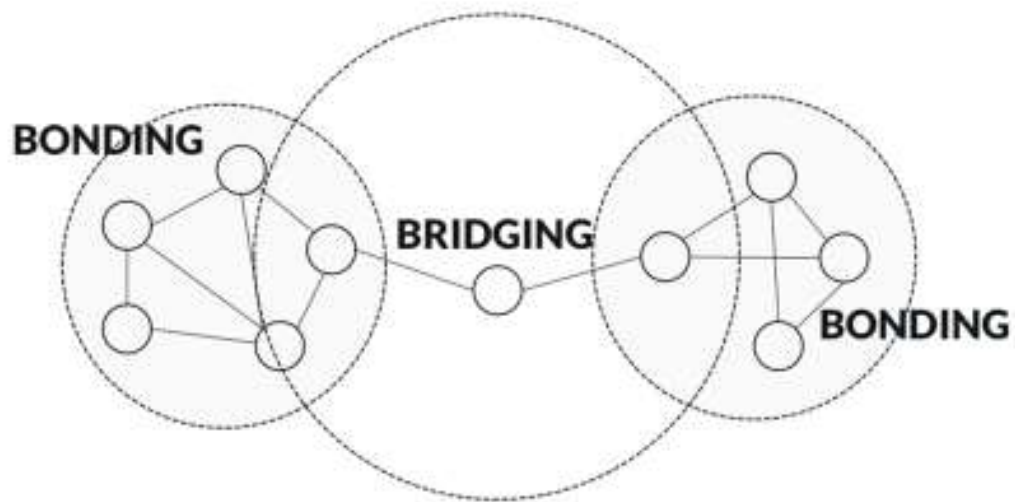
most part of a society or population. The other context is characterised with crises or extraordinary situations that hit one part of society or population (needy, new immigrants and other marginalised groups).		solving a problem that occurs, for example, with pupil's achievements in the class, including his/her homework.		
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Power point Example

NEUROHEADWAY

Neuroscience Into Education

Keeping our world together
... Bonding-Bridging-Bonding ...



On the other hand

The real social world does not work as a watch



Social bonds – separated in-groups

- Bonding ties by far prevail over bridging ties. This is the main social problem and also the source of many other problems – wherever „others” (out-groups) are seen as culprits for our misfortunes ...



Significance of bonding and other ties

- Bonding is necessary and unavoidable, yet not sufficient, for personal growing.
- The bonding ties – parent-child, brothers and/or sisters, sometimes uncle/aunt-nephew-niece...- make tissue of our family.
- Nevertheless, we need other ties as well, i.e. some external and supportive ties (also called „weak ties”) in community.

Varieties of social bonding

The young people gangs



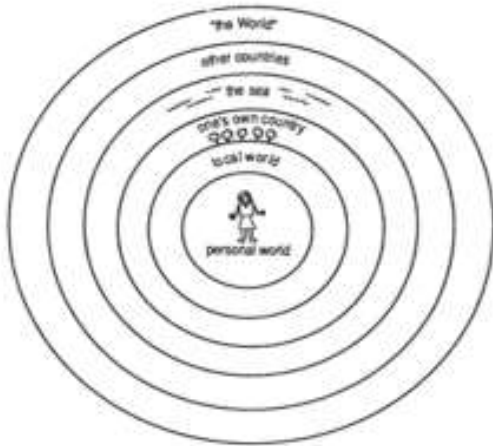
Imagined bonding: belonging to nation

Nation is „imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Benedict Anderson)

- Nation is thus viewed as our extended family



Expansion of the sense of belonging



To reinforce the expansion of social senses we need *bridging ties*

- Associational links / civic ties - e.g. amateur groups
- Markets with buffers – e.g. projects for unemployed
- Porous borders – e.g. free passages for people living on both sides
- Places of reconciliation – e.g. parallel (hi)stories



- Good vibrations through songs, pictures, dances, concerts, humour, movies – e.g. projects in arts for peace



Teachers Evaluation and Handouts

NHW Module BONDING AND BRIDGING– Evaluation or what we have learned in this module

1. Bonding and bridging ties are equally important in a balanced personal and social life.
2. Importance of bridging ties increases with age and personal growth.
3. Bridging ties are also called *weak ties*. Nonetheless, they are not literally weak and often are more instrumental to adults than bonding ties (also called *strong ties*, as are familial and friendship ties).
4. The lack of the bridging (and the linking) ties in a plethora of bonding ties, causes cleavages and non-functional conflicts, including wars, between different "tents", i.e. social units or countries, which conflicts also cause mental imbalance.
5. New immigrants are particularly vulnerable groups cut off from both bonding and bridging ties, which causes psychological distress and personal disorder.
6. Internet may be a source for gathering face-to-face group that develops internal bonding ties, i.e. friendships with heightened we-feeling. In the same time such group make a working group as well (e.g. choir). This substantiates the fact than no social tie is sustainable without working or economic relations fitting individual members' needs and interests.
7. Sometimes nation or religion is imagined as a community based on bonding ties, although in reality people can never meet most members of the imagined community.
8. It is similar with cosmopolitanism. Actually, many people like the whole world as they like their families or themselves. However, it is a long way to go from imagined to practically interlinked world community.
9. /Depending on contents and size of exercise, in addition some details may be added, which may be taken as most important results of the exercise/

NHW **Bridging and bonding** – handouts

S2 – For definitions, meanings and application of social ties / social capital (bonding, bridging, linking...) see:

- Alva G. Greenberg, Thomas P. Gullotta, Martin Bloom (2016), *Social Capital and Community Well-Being*, New York: Springer, pp. 60-65.

In main, bonding ties are in-group ties (starting with family as the basic container of such ties). Often, family ties are projected onto larger groups, in the first place ethnic or religious, sometimes also social classes, whereas members of such large groups will never see most of the other members, in fact millions and millions of them, but still believe that they live under the same "tent" from the time immemorial.

On the other hand, bridging ties are inter-group ties. Most often these are made out thanks to entrepreneurial or enthusiastic individuals or teams. A large set of such ties that connect many in-groups (based on bonding) designates *society*, rather than *community*. In sociology, this is one of the most important distinctions, whereby the former designate social ties based on self-interest, whereas the latter are based on emotional attachments. Of course, this distinction is primarily analytical, serving to purpose of research. In social reality, which is more complex, interests and emotions are often mingled. For example, representation of marriage or family as a bonding group based merely on emotional ties is a romantic stereotype rather than plausible sociological vision. The same is true for business links between individuals, for example, that allegedly constitute any societal link. Such links may look based on pure self-interest, but are emotional as well – at least because no business is immune of personal distress, especially in times of crises... In other words, in most ties we engage both rationally and passionately, although in different portions.

S4 – An excellent explanation of ethnic conflicts as result of the lack of associational / civic / bridging ties is provided in this book:

- Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civil Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 2002.

Generally speaking, the lack of bridging ties and concordant organisations, respectively, is enormous, as different markets (of jobs, commodities, services) alone cannot, in particularly in downward economic cycles (crises), compensate for the lack of other civic ties, such as free civic associations, amateur clubs, trans-ethnic political parties and trade-unions, various sports, etc. In them people of different backgrounds, take part and they work together on common programmes with overarching goals.

S5 – On the strength of the "weak ties" ("strong ties" are coterminous with bonding ties) see:

- Mark Granovetter, The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited (1983)
<https://www.cs.kent.ac.uk/people/staff/saf/.../Weak%20Ties.pdf>

S9 – Clarifications of some intergroup links:

- Civic associations significance is elaborated with annotation under S4

- "Buffers" for markets' errors refer to policy measures (mostly governmental) set out to soften bad consequences of economic crises. Measures comprise temporary financial compensations for the loss of jobs, then introducing vocational training for new jobs, sometimes providing support from mental health specialists, then various family insurances, etc. If these supports fail, people hit by crises rather retreat to their in-group, i.e. bonding ties, that are prone to populist movements prone to blame immigrants or other nations and their states for such people's predicaments.
- Porous borders mostly exist in *shared cities* in which people from two or more different states and/or nations live in the same cities separated by the state border cutting across cities. Mayors and local administrations are willing to support the commerce and other activities across the state borders within the cities. Some examples of successful shared cities in Europe are: Belfast and Ulster (in Northern Ireland, which used to be divided and replete with violence on ethnic basis), Uzhgorod (with the triple border of Ukraine, Poland and Hungary), Narva (border between Estonia and Russia), Frankfurt Oder / Slubice (border between Germany and Poland).

More on shared cities see in: Robin Wilson (2003). *A City for all our Citizens: Reflections on 'Shared Cities'*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, Directorate General IV: Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport -

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/Source/Completed/Dialogue/DGI_V_CULT_PREV_SHARED_CITIES\(2003\)2_Wilson_E.PDF](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/Source/Completed/Dialogue/DGI_V_CULT_PREV_SHARED_CITIES(2003)2_Wilson_E.PDF)

- Museums of reconciliation deal with troubled past, when violent conflicts took many victims among members of different nationalities. The parallel histories (more precisely, "the multi-perspective historiography") is a method used in such museums, in which different versions of the past are presented. This also implicates that no side claims to be closer to the truth, which is characteristic of groups based on bonding ties. This is the most sensitive and in the same time most difficult part in the process of building bridging ties between different peoples and thus re-establishing trust among the parties. This is the case of the former Yugoslavia, South Caucasus and Sri Lanka in which wars between members of different nationalities were fought in the near past. Troubled past is also collectively memorised due to atrocities in the second world war, which were committed not only by leaders of Nazi Germany (mostly over Jewish people), but also by local military and political groups in several European countries (from France over former Soviet Union to civil war factions in the former Yugoslavia).
- Using arts, in particular music, to stimulate gathering different people in post-conflict areas is relatively a new method that rendered successful in post-conflict processes. See:
- Craig Zelizer, *The Role of Artistic Processes in Peace-Building in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, *Peace and Conflict Studies*: Vol. 10: No. 2, 2003. <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/pcs/vol10/iss2/4>

S10 – "Neighbourhood mothers" is frequent form of bridging ties in multi-ethnic communities. Furthermore, people with good connexions, "ambassadors" to hardly accessible people (in deprived areas), are often used as mediators in research and policy doing with people who live practically in isolation, with a few or no social ties whatsoever. On these policies undertakings and importance of

shared or third spaces for reaching /linking with/ to politicians or higher officials in community (for to make the whole action more effective) see:

Annika Agger & Jesper O. Jensen, Area-based Initiatives—And Their Work in Bonding, Bridging and Linking Social Capital. *European Planning Studies*, 2015, Vol. 23, No. 10, 2045–2061, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2014.998172>

An important precondition for generation of trust in the networks /both bonding and bridging/...is the creation of "third places" ... where citizens with the same interests can interact, or where municipal representatives can meet face-to-face with local citizens and stakeholders. Building such relations enables the local community and individuals to obtain a more direct link to municipal administrations.(p. 2059)

Therefore, *linking* is an extension of the bridging ties, which enable people to knock on the door of an important person or institution.

Last, but not least, class and school, respectively, can be taken as a shared or third place as well. School is not and should not be a place of segregation or exclusion among children and teachers whatsoever.

S11 – The Internet facilitated the establishment of a university choral community that acts as a bonding group. In other words, a face-to-face (social) network assisted in creating a corporeal, immediate face-to-face group. The example is taken from:

- John O'Flynn, Strengthening choral community: The interaction of face-to-face and online activities amongst a college choir. *International Journal of Community Music* 8: 1, pp. 73–92, doi: 10.1386/ijcm.8.1.73_1

S12 – See more in a study in Netherlands, a country that is becoming more and more pluralistic due to influxes of new people. They strive for their recognition as new citizens and neighbours:

- Peter Scholten and Ronal Holzhacker, Bonding, bridging and ethnic minorities in the Netherlands: changing discourses in a changing nation. *Nations and Nationalism* 15 (1), 2009, 81–100.

The changes in discourses on ethnic minorities reflect larger changes in the way the Dutch national imagined community was defined. Traditionally, this imagined community was based on pluralism and tolerance. The Netherlands was a nation of communities, of Liberals, Catholics, Protestants, Socialists and, since the post-war period, of ethnic minorities. Around the turn of the millennium, however, in an epoch of globalisation and migration, the Dutch evinced a renewed concern with redefining the national imagined community in cultural terms. (pp. 97-98)

In other words, the newcomers / immigrants want to be respected as regular members of the plural Dutch society. However, they are not or not yet respected as such. This reaction reminds to a strong reflex of groups based on bonding ties, which are afraid of newcomers as intruders in their homeland. Remember that such reflex is strongest in times of economic crises when there is a shortage of governmental funds and also of new jobs opportunities on the market. Basically, various groups in the context of the crisis behave like people

who live in their own tents (see slide 4) and cherish their own myths about dangers that come (only) from the foreign worlds.

S13 – The causal link between status of immigrants and their mental health is revealed in:

- Charisse M. Johnson et al. The role of social capital in explaining mental health inequalities between immigrants and Swedish-born: a population-based cross-sectional study. *BMC Public Health* (2017) 17:117 DOI 10.1186/s12889-016-3955-3

The results show that refugees generally had greater odds of psychological distress than non-refugees compared to their respective Swedish-born counterparts. Among immigrant men, both refugees and non-refugees had significantly greater odds of psychological distress than Swedish-born men. Only refugee women in Sweden 10 years or more had significantly greater odds of psychological distress compared to Swedish-born women. The mediation analysis demonstrated that indicators of social capital mediated the association for all immigrant men (except non-refugees in Sweden 3-9 years) and for refugee women in Sweden 10 years or more. While bonding social capital showed the greatest mediatory role among the three social capital types, adding them together had the strongest explanatory effect. (p. 1 – Abstract)

S14 – The painting may be interpreted as an illustration of the fact that numerous groups based on bonding ties prevail over bridging ties (in the picture there is no transversal ties between circles). Furthermore, the former have many different colours and flags, so to speak, but are firmly closed (within their own spaces figured out as squares) to other groups.

S15 – All three topical terms – bonding and bridging with linking – might be discussed in a prolonged activity of pupils (as exemplified in a separate file)