abstract **Forum**

Analysis of the content area – democracy – and the object of study – values – enable a diagnosis-analysis-synthesis approach to human behaviour, primarily by means of textual criticism. Some of the studied articles are classified as demagogically symbol-manipulative items for highlighting the writer's competence. Other articles are democratically actionable for developing research and education. It seems as if social science research often forms into mere talk for the Academy, but sometimes research also provides useful pieces of advice for the practitioner. A crucial divide runs between is-pragmatic and should-idealist approaches to knowledge. Successful articles portray actionable knowledge and striving articles illustrate textual knowledge.

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Democracy, method and valid knowledge

THOMAS HANSSON

A historical analysis of democratic education provides an initially idealist view. Socrates says in Plato's *The Republic*: «Virtue is the health, and beauty, and wellbeing of the soul.» From a more recent European perspective, Goethe (ref?) says: «It is not doing the things we like to do, but liking the things we have to do that makes life blessed.» Benjamin Franklin suggests that for US education, bad habits and vices of the mind are more easily prevented than cured. Bertrand Russell (1949, p. 7 f.) is back on Socrates' track, saying «The education we desire for our children must depend upon our ideals of human character, and our hopes as to the part they are to play in the community.» Finally, Loehrer (1998) verifies to the historical interest in human character, noting that in Ancient Greece they knew virtue had to be taught, they just didn't know how. Judging by the quotes it is reasonable to assume a shared theme on values in education and social science research.

Societies seem to strive for standardization of knowledge. Bernstein's (1975) theory, understood as a struggle between discourses, claims that codes of power are uncovered in a process by which knowledge is classified and framed. Bernstein and Solomon say that e.g. researchers and educators struggle for the means to control other people's attitudes, awareness, choice and decision-making:

The pedagogic device … for the materializing of symbolic control is the object of a struggle for domination, for the group who appropriates the device has access to a ruler and a distributor of conscious-

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ness, identity and desire. (Bernstein & Solomon, 1999, p. 268)

The contention of this human pre-occupation with power is that a divide emerges between idealist-textual and pragmatic-actionable research. The former illustrates declarative know-that knowledge for Self to reflect over. The latter demonstrates trans-disciplinary (Vavakova, 1998) and situated know-how socially robust (Nowotny, 1999) or accountable knowledge (Lindblad, 2005) for Other to act on. In our case focus is on a textual understanding of some social science articles.

Closely related to democracy in education are philosophical themes on ethics, morals, values and virtue. Moral education (Barrow, 2006; McGee & Leffel, 2005) and democratic approaches to research is just as important. Bredo (2002, p. 263) argues that research needs to be either of two things: «philosophically good and irrelevant to practitioners, or practically relevant but philosophically weak.» By adopting a critical approach to research, people question some of the traditional characteristics of the social sciences. It seems as if a variety of approaches decide the quality of research. But how do the emerging argumentative-descriptive patterns of research relate to democracy? From the face of it, many texts display a singular author's personal ambitions. Of course, such articles fail to promote 'actionable' knowledge (Pålshaugen, 2004).

Rather than separating some allegedly typical natural science objectives from subjective magic (Gieryn, 1983) in the social sciences, this text outlines successful, striving and popular texts. Social scientists are different too. For example, Sense (2004) holds a high level of methodological awareness. Equally, action researchers take on an ethical

pathos, i.e. a pursued vision, assuming that focused work on morals with-for practitioners promotes good behaviour in happy people. From the contention of a democratic method emerge cognitive and practical difficulties in perceiving and conceiving of moral issues in research and education, i.e. to provide valid textual information and to implement moral values by means of actionable knowledge.

In short, researchers and educators need to decide if they should stick to the old way of assessing the students' learning as regards to subject matter knowledge or if they should include development of moral attitudes in their practices. Only the critical researcher acknowledges the need to share his methodological approach by presenting kinds of knowledge in his publications.

Value issues in education imply a normative argumentation. This comes with the territory. But the theme also covers an epistemological, ontological, methodological and axiological structuring of processes and results. After introducing the theme, previous research and problem statement, this text supplies an analytic structure for assessing the quality of texts; here defined as usability for researchers and educators. The framework supports approaches categorised as applied research and basic research methodologies. There is an outline of variables for analysing Old and New Education Discourses plus conceptions of knowledge. Then there is a classification of several articles. Concluding remarks summarize the findings, suggesting that texts focusing on contexts of (i) justification and (ii) investigation fail to meet the readers' justified demands on textual quality. However, analysis of the context of (iii) presentation reveals ways for social science to contribute to actionable knowledge.

Problem statement and research questions

Formulating a problem statement based on the preceding introduction is far from a straightforward business. It is still possible to supply «usable scientific knowledge» (van Dijkum 2001, p. 297) by an honest interpretation of methodological approaches to social science. From this follows the problem statement: How could social science research be properly assessed?

It is an undisputable fact that researchers who venture new projects face many challenges. They need to produce knowledge, attract an audience and inspire applications based on their findings. It is also true that a lot of good writing equals valuable research. But there is another side to popular texts. Phillips (1992, p. 117) warns against naïve attitudes in assessing the value of research, saying: «under appropriate circumstances any nonsense at all can be judged as 'credible'». Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 114; italics in original) follow suit, arguing: «[Q]ualitative analyses can be evocative, illuminating, masterful and downright *wrong*.»

Pfeffer (1995, p. 684) accuses work in organizational theory of having very little long-term impact on research, because the underlying methodology is invisible, incomprehensive, illegitimate or impractical. Ernø-Kjølhede, (medförfattare?) (2001) argue in favour of a combined academic-theoretical and societal-practical paradigm for democratic research. Leydesdorff (2000) presents co-operative research as a resource for innovation. None of these inspirations for enabling, acquiring and sharing knowledge seem to cover the needs of democratic research. Therefore the ambition here is to adopt a critical approach to current (lack of) methodological clarity in social science research.

Paraphrasing an inspirational article about the unfolding of 'messy method' (Mellor, 2001, p. 475), the narrow purpose of this article is to study if textual accounts of social science research demonstrate «a sufficient level of care in developing methods of research and seeking a wider critique.» A much wider purpose is to explore if democracy in research and education is based on current practices. Van Dijkum (2001, p. 294) concludes that «the standard methodology of the social sciences functioned more as an impediment than as a framework to guide the growth of scientific knowledge.» This fair warning needs to be taken seriously.

Analytic structure

This article purports to analyse democratic aspects of social science research and national education. They are activity systems and hence defined by their inherent or loosely coupled (Orton & Weick, 1990) quality. In the following, the suggested systemic paradigm accounts for general activity theory where Leontev (1978) introduces a developmental trajectory of activity-awareness-personality.

Engeström (1987) portrays a complementary systemic view by a congenial assembly of variables, i.e. subject, instrument, object, objective, division of labour, rules and regulations plus the flock. General systems theory (and organisational systems thinking) helped the structuring of an analytic design for assessing contemporary arguments, classifications and discourses.

Traditionally, researchers define methods for operating the *context of investigation* by producing diagnosis-intervention-change and by creating data through action learning, critical inquiry or future workshop. This aspiration is combined with methods for understanding the *context of justification* by analysing the data through hermeneutic, inductive or deductive method. To the suggested structure could be added a third understand-

ing of a method for designing the *context of presentation,* disseminating results by separating textual from actionable knowledge.

The first approaches to method are well known. The third one, context of presentation, illustrates how research and education can be studied. There is a configurative process of producing, processing and disseminating knowledge in the context of presentation. Figure 1 suggests that, for research

and education equally, there is also a structure for separating democratic–actionable knowledge from reflective textual knowledge. One layer harbours actionable knowledge usually generated by applied social science research. The other layer contains textual knowledge typically generated by basic social science research.
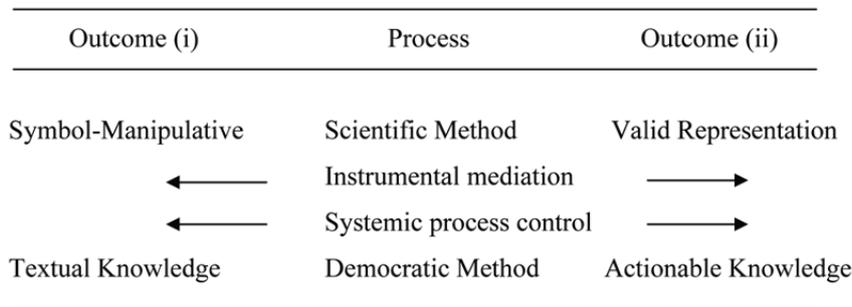
Outcome (i)	Process	Outcome (ii)
Symbol-Manipulative	Scientific Method	Valid Representation
←	Instrumental mediation	→
←	Systemic process control	→
Textual Knowledge	Democratic Method	Actionable Knowledge

Figure 1. Relations, processes and outcomes of research

Figure 1 indicates that successful articles promote actionable knowledge by means of New Education Discourse with a democratic sequencing of *Instrument-Representation-Objective-Other-Self* variables. Striving articles promote textual knowledge through Old Education Discourse, prioritising an opposing sequence of *Self-Objective-Representation-Other-Instrument* variables. It is a relevant objective to consider influences of *Self, Other/Object, Instrument, Representation* acting on the agent's method, the situated design, pragmatic strategy, operational practice or theoretical approach to research and education. The conclusion about textual analysis is that a researcher's choice of method is based on the quality of the data, i.e. how the representation of a research object is arranged.

The problem of unsuccessful texts often results from the researcher's ontological sense–making of the world. Choice of ap-

propriate method also relates to the nature of an epistemological understanding of how a researched phenomenon could best be designed, analysed and explained. Finally, the researcher's preferences and behaviour is based on methodological calculations influenced by reflection and experience of researchable and teachable phenomena. If people acknowledged New Education Discourse as a critical factor for human behaviour, implications of justice, freedom, equality and honesty in texts would be apparent. A theory about actionable knowledge, moral education and democratic research centres round this contention.

First, democratic behaviour begins with an individual researcher's deliberate choice or informed decision about his own behaviour. But also, a researcher's moral standard is reflected in his inner attitudes and in his outward actions. So, virtue is coupled with the researcher's or the educator's character ex-

pressed in singular conduct for managing research and education respectively. Second, virtuous behaviour contains essential elements of duty and desire. Already Goethe (ref?) suggested that virtuous action involves a learnt ability to balance what a person wants, for example as a researcher or educator, with what that person must do as a citizen or a pupil.

Third, democratic researchers are driven by virtuous behaviour. They develop a sense of what ought to be done. Their sense of virtue is often expressed as an obligation towards Other and a yearning to do well as an inclination for Self. Four, in a democratic society the researchers' awareness functions as an ethical guide for what they actually do. The conclusion is that systemic research and education practices present a moral area of textual experimentation and social science discovery. Historically, democratic contexts of investigation, justification and presentation provide feedback for people to adjust their personal ethics, be they researchers, educators, students or citizens. At the end of the day, relational obligations between people regulate their personal inclinations in an interactive process where continuous negotiation decides the outcomes.

The context of investigation

Half a century ago, Bode, Mosteller, Turkey and Winsor (1949) said that the complexities and narrow specialization of modern science calls for generalist knowledge. Trans-disciplinary researchers would be concerned with systems problems on how to apply, manage, analyse and disseminate research. Bode, Mosteller, Turkey and Winsor (1949, p. 555; italics T.H.) continues: «The generalist would be able to assist in the design of experiments – *still a fairly weak spot in most of the social sciences.*»

Over the years, there have been excellent examples of active experimentation. Based

on the results of mother-child experiments, Lev Vygotsky argued (Christiansen, 1996) that man is an instrument (text-language) and tool-using (typewriter-book) creature. According to general activity theory, mediating systemic practices promote true motives in the moral agent, thus helping him/her develop higher mental functions during reflective outside-in internalisation and proactive inside-out externalisation of democratic attitudes, values and actions.

Although the original meaning of *méthodos* (gr.) is «road», here the meaning «cognitive instrument» is a more appropriate translation. One way of understanding method builds on rhetoric skills or an author's ability to persuade versus convince people to accept a proposal. Method understood in this sense, becomes an approach for getting one's way with others. Sometimes method even equals a symbol-manipulative technique for domination. The coercive principle, so smartly deployed as textual manipulation, is simple indeed. And as an instrumental method, it encompasses a polarising choice of selected argumentation. An example from an upper secondary school Maths class suggests that students prefer quick-fix answers. Rather than appreciating an in depth explanation, the student prefers hands-on instruction, saying to the teacher: «You talk too much, just show me what to do!»

This coarse instrumental principle reflects a Cartesian dualism, currently adopted in many professions. Fore example, journalists describe pieces of news in black-or-white; logicians explore rational arguments by inherent true-false quality; educators confuse real world experiences with schoolbook knowledge; and researchers fall short in their attempts at separating between textual or actionable knowledge and quantitative or qualitative research. The given *nomos-logos* pairs could be complemented by an equally legitimate *ethos-pathos* dimension for con-

ceiving of either the significance of social science methods or Didactics. The frequently deployed qualitative-quantitative paradigm (Newman & Benz, 1998) on e.g., validity of data producing-collecting-categorizing procedures complements a similar structure for explaining kinds of research by committed, ethical and creative input.

Social science studies recognize successful dialogical, situated and action-oriented influences the actual outcomes of research. But epistemology seems to dominate work in the Academy. The argument is that valid knowledge could be obtained by defining the researcher's attitudes, principles, positioning, decision-making and preferences, i.e. by providing both epistemology and ontology. The same applies for democratic education because similar levels of professional work relate to the researcher's and the educator's ideographic background, upbringing, schooling, character or personality.

Other professional choices are more 'is-objective' epistemological than 'should-personality' ontological oriented. However, the harmful effects of traditionally accepted dichotomizations undermine a relevant understanding of first values, then methodology and finally detailed technical methods for managing research and education.

There is in fact a method of fundamental measurement preceding the researcher's access to empirical data. The process of discovery and evidence begins with the construction of a theoretical-practical-creative framework. It is followed by a process for the use of the frame after it has been constructed. By following Reese's (1943, p. 6) approach, such a form of representation in the contexts of investigation and justification is given as either quantitative data by numbers or as qualitative interpretation by internally assessed axiological value. This is where the controversy between is-descriptive and should-argumentative accounts of research methods and education practices begins.

The context of justification

The value of research can be argued in many ways. Reed and Biott (1995, p. 200) suggest that one asset lies in its usefulness in «informing practice» and another asset lies in «generating debate». Other researchers deplore the lack of systemic investigation into pedagogic effectiveness. Mortimore (2000) finds gaps between what practitioners need and what research supplies. For example, there is little evidence of improvement in instructional research, in pupils' ability to learn to learn or in the transfer of skills.

Research into teaching, studying and learning contexts is important because the researchers' and the educators' ontological, epistemological, methodological and axiological profiles certainly influence progress. Consequently, the kind of knowledge that assumed democratic approaches to inquiry, study and investigation produce and disseminate is more often symbol-manipulative for promoting Self than actionable for helping Other. This difference is important because the choice of method for dealing with e.g. confounding variables, determine the outcomes of research. It is time research uncovered the hidden values of the allegedly democratic texts that are currently being published.

For this text, there is a background to the deployed procedure for classifying successful, striving and popular texts. Student teachers need to learn to deal with deliberation, citizenship and empowerment related to insoluble ethical classroom dilemmas. During an in-dept study of the literature related to values in education, I came across a number of relevant publications. The purpose was to find literature that would help design

coursework on democracy and intercultural competence for Nordic teacher education institutions (Nordplus-Valid 1022/2006 ??? ??? ??? ??). I was struck by the lack of methodological-procedural-operational-actionable knowledge in the publications.

Most people would agree that moral education should result in virtuous behaviour. However, and in order for research and education to deliver democratic values, researchers and educators need to learn to diagnose their subjects' and their pupils' moral profile, status and development. They need to intervene in a suitable manner, and analyse the outcomes of applied methods. Categories of moral reasoning and behaviour on democratic issues form a blended picture. Bertrand Russell's (1956) suggested similar categorizations of actionable-ontological 'knowledge by acquaintance' and textual-epistemological 'knowledge by description'. Find some extracted and categorized keywords in Table 1 as given in the texts.

Table 1. Classifying specific kinds of knowledge.

	Situated (Actionable)	**Reflective (Textual)**
Kohlberg	…	Assessment, Evaluation, Judgement
Rest	Sensitivity, Motivation,	Judgement, Character
Ims & Jakobsen	Education, Tools	Episteme, Phronesis, Techné, Citizen
Afdal	Formation, Choice	Emotion, Consequences
Loehrer	Examine, Experiment, Establish	Evaluate, Embody
Romanian Data	Will-power, Hard Work	Rules, Fundamental Values
Welsh Data	Reward, Persuasion, Exercises	Imitation, Moral Reflection
Swedish Data	Experience, Social Support	Social Mission
US-Data	Nursing, Communication	Psychology, Judgement, Conceptualising
		Complexity, Critical Thinking
UNESCO	Being, Living, Doing	Knowing

Table 1 illustrates situated *Decision, Action* and *Initiative* in a New Education Discourse. The situated-actionable dimensions are motivational and they cover collective *choice, decision, action, examination, experimentation* and *establishing* of democratic values. Proponents of reflective Old Education Discourse focus on individual *Imagining, Thinking* and *Understanding.* Reflective-textual knowledge (Bengtsson, 2001) is a silent dimension (Norberg, 2006) in teaching and learning. Such Old Education Discourse consists of assessment, evaluation and judgement.

The context of presentation

Research and education form socially complicated activities. They constitute multi-variable systemic practices. And they inspire approaches like applied-basic, political-empirical, quantitative-qualitative and Philosophy-education. The study of social systems is laden with personal choices related to values, activity, awareness and identity. Ideally, research explores a particular issue for a community of practitioners. Ideally too, research and education take on a critical perspective of previous knowledge and (re)present new

data in an objective way. But it is an unethical thing for research to pretend to deliver valid knowledge and merely supply symbol-manipulative text. Likewise, it is an unethical thing for education to pretend to deliver curricula but merely offer personal argumentation. In the following I classify as a successful text, an article that made the researcher's systemic method explicit. Articles that failed to address the problem of curricular and didactic design was classified as striving texts. A popular article was classified as half-successful because of its enticing rhetoric, thematic relevance and attractive style of presentation.

A Successful (School Yard) Example
It is an ethical dilemma to select, classify and rank social science articles. The dilemma is solved only if analyses provide the criteria for assessing the chosen texts. In a successful text, Husu (2003, p. 311 f.) explores teachers' professional ethics, i.e. research and Didactics combined, by supplying an account of «narrative interview» and a «qualitative reading guide method». The purpose of Husu's study is to contribute to a body of 'actionable' knowledge. Husu's design enables him to «pay attention to the nature of education practice and the distinctive language and values through which such practice can be understood and evaluated.» The design also enables the reader to recognize, reflect and try out new solutions to a familiar problem. In order to justify his choice of method, Husu explains some ethical dimensions that the researcher needs to be practical about. A descriptive account of an urgent moral theme introduces a procedure for creating, collecting, analysing and understanding empirical data that constitutes actionable knowledge. This is a valuable contribution because future research has an opportunity to learn how to shape a positive tradition for a community of practitioners by way of

democratic method. The actionable text provides a situated account of the researcher's deliberate input for producing, analysing and presenting conditions, processes and findings. Researchers and educators learn how character is formed by application of democratic method. The article provides an opportunity to understand how method equals know-how about correlation of empirical data to the practitioners' needs.

The details of Husu's (2003) research design form a method for understanding data in the context of justification because a narrative interview and a tripartite division of the field define the framework. This is a three step analytical procedure. First, a basis for ethical reasoning is established by identification of a ban on smoking. Second, suggestions are made about how the teacher should act in encountering the dilemma by interpreting a code of professional ethics, standards, explicit accounts or appropriate guidelines. Third, teachers realise that they must act on a shared code of conduct rather than an individual code of power. Finally, they translate professional ethics into pedagogical practice.

As to the method for interpreting and understanding narrative data in Husu's study, two researchers' readings establish a three-fold understanding. An account of the researchers' interpretative procedure is given in minute detail. Husu's (2003, p. 317) presentation contains excerpts from a relevant school case. A female teacher's utterances illustrate her background beliefs as an influence to clear statements and specific interpretations of the narrative interview. First she says: «I don't see any concrete way to influence our school community.» Then there is the researchers' interpretation: The teacher's immediate moral intuitions and stirrings about the situation seem helpless. The procedure is repeated for utterances and interpretations on ethic of rules and principles

plus dilemma management. The deployed method for understanding a moral dilemma about the implementation of ban on smoking resulted in the conclusion that reasoning, judgement and action form a local-actionable theory for colleagues, students, parents and researchers.

This is a successful article because of the choice of a relevant theme, transparent methodology, comprehensive method, relevant evidence and clarity of the data. The contexts of investigation, justification and presentation are congenial and they are given in minute detail. Also, focus is on the object/objective of study rather than the author. This article illustrates New Education Discourse with an emphasis on Instrument-Representation-Objective-Other-Self in the given order. Another successful article with an almost identical profile is Chaiklin's (2002) general activity approach for explaining interactions between a teacher and some students during a Maths class.

A Striving Theme (on Education and Democracy)

For these articles I conclude that politically ambitious articles merely contribute to textual knowledge. Also, the authors of the less successful, striving articles seem to take on an elitist role, embracing (LaPlace, 1814; in Newman, 1988, p. 1301) «the greatest bodies of the universe, and those of the lightest atom». The alternative to such approaches is within reach. After the Great War people knew that citizens could be manipulated for the wrong reasons. Kurt Lewin (1947) developed models of action research for the promotion of actionable knowledge. His method was deployed for legitimately influencing citizens by democratic means.

Contrary to work done by Coughlan and Shani (2005) or Walker and Haslett (2002) many social scientists today act as politically inspired journalists, prophets or magicians rather than as facilitators of co-operative interaction. In such articles there is a lack of recognition for the fact that unpredictable complexity characterises social systems. It has been known for years that harmful emphasis on the language of education (Scheffler, 1978), educational concepts (Soltis, 1978) or education policies (Green, 1980) produces but textual knowledge. In fact, emphasis on abstract political science corrupts the idea of a democratic New Education Discourse. Also, actionable approaches combine the researched object with appropriate method, whereas textual knowledge presentations are detrimental to education practices. Consequently, it is hard for such articles to balance hands-on methodological instruction with reflective contemplation.

First, however, let's compare two examples in the field of democratic education. At the 2005 NERA-conference Lindblad (2005) addressed current Nordic problems, stating a need for research to produce socially robust knowledge. By means of participation in the production of such knowledge, researchers must develop their expertise as producers of trans-disciplinary knowledge. The role for actors on this arena is to examine and discuss how research may produce the proper tools for promoting education and citizenship. This year's NERA conference (2006) also covered a democratic theme. Nel Noddings, set the agenda by presenting «Education and Democracy in the 21st Century». Her key-note is a sophisticated piece of work.

However, the conference delegates should have been warned about the fact that Noddings' views on education and democracy is influenced by a different discourse, a foreign cultural background and the US way of life. As Europeans, we seem to prefer to relate collective responsibility to societal development. North-Americans on the other hand emphasise individual freedom to make in-

formed decisions and participate in deliberative communication. Concepts like *empowerment* and *democracy* take on a whole different meaning for US citizens. In spite of this, Noddings suggests a school-internal method for promoting deliberative democracy in education. Her pieces of advice are merely supported by reference to other people's research.

Noddings' normative inspirations, idyllic conceptions and linear cause-effect reasoning suggest that teaching, studying and learning promote democracy. But long ago, researchers concluded that education is a reflection of society rather than an arena for transforming people's behaviour. Besides, the old idea that classical schooling has a formative effect on young people's morals is outdated.

However, it is true that activity systems like research and education are influenced from the outside – but only if they were organised and managed as semi-permeable social systems. Then again, a method for organising and managing communicative systems of research and education should be transparent and repeatable for analysis, closure or improvement. This lack of evidence-based method is apparent in Noddings' normative statement that traditional curricula are inadequate for maintaining liberal democracies. Her separation between traditional and liberal schools, covering 'real science' and 'popular science', is hard to assess, try out or verify. As practitioners and researchers we need to learn by what method Noddings has come to her conclusion about the relation between kinds of schools and knowledge, but the evidence, rationale or feasibility of the statement is missing. Therefore, the keynote illustrates Old Education Discourse with an emphasis on Self-Objective-Representation-Other-Instrument in the given order.

There is another striving article with a lack of methodological transparency. «Active Citizenship and the Learning Society» (Jarvis, 2000) is an inspiring enough theme. However, just like the previous struggling article, conceptual fuzziness adds to the confusion. One example is the use of 'learning society', which is an anomalistic concept as only individuals learn. Jarvis (2000, p. 19) corrupts the difference between the inclusive (author plus readers) and exclusive (author alone) meaning of 'we', by suggesting «we need to get behind the language that we use». It is usually the author's job to clarify the process stages through which 'active citizenship' allegedly leads to 'learning society'.

It seems as if Jarvis methodology is based on a pre-designed fatalistic worldview and hence of small value to democratic development in research and education. The article displays a problem-oriented picture of how the author perceives of the ways of the world. Most readers would classify Jarvis' rationale as self-reflective and symbol manipulative rather than symbolically analytic. Contrary to Russell's (1949) philanthropic analysis of relations between collective authority and individual freedom, Jarvis focuses on an ontological presentation of Self rather on an methodological understanding of how to promote democracy for Other in the context of presentation. The result is an outline of Western determinist ideology rather than a future-oriented plan to help a local theory develop into collective democracy. The article illustrates Old Education Discourse emphasising Self-Objective-Other with a lack of (method) Instrument and (data) Representation.

The striving articles deal with concepts and politics rather than actionable findings or methods for promoting citizenship, democracy and emancipation. If the reader wanted a critical background description of liberal democracy, Wallerstein's (1998) Utopistics takes

on a systemic perspective on objective, valid and actionable insights into the forces of market-oriented capitalism operating as a catalyst for material growth and/or ecological decline.

A Popular (Rhetoric) Contribution

At this point, we need to acknowledge the importance of rhetoric in the presentation of research findings. In disseminating research an author must tell a compelling story (Daft, 1985) and shape it as text. S/he needs to account for the story told in the data, the story told in the theory and the story told about the research process. Also, in sharing research the author has to impose a linear rhetoric on his work, moving from either theory to data, in a theory-method-data-findings sequence, or from data to theory, in a method-data-findings-theory sequence.

During the processes of turning ideas into text, it matters little if the preceding research is an inductive bottom-up or a deductive top-down approach. The researcher must still (a) follow linear storyline constraints, (b) choose either an inductive or deductive rhetoric and (c) stay loyal to either their theory or their data. But when only the researcher's findings are disseminated in a text, things begin to get complicated.

A record number (about 9.000 readers) downloaded Åsberg's (2001) «Det finns inga kvalitativa metoder – och inga kvantitativa heller för den delen. Det kvalitativa-kvantitativa argumentets missvisande retorik» (There are neither qualitative nor quantitative methods. The misdirected rhetoric of the qualitative-quantitative argument) in the years 2004–2005. The article covers a conceptual analysis of quantitative and qualitative method. Fair enough, the author's objective is to analyse what kind of knowledge that social scientists produce. The argument (Åsberg, 2001, p. 270) is that research needs to be liberated from the stig-

matising rhetoric of the quantitative-qualitative paradigm.

Contrary to this ambition, the popular article resembles the striving rather than the successful ones. This is so because of a combination of polarization, inconsistency and abstraction. If the attraction of the article were the result of the researcher's rhetoric, issues of methodology in social science research publications is in need of repair, because Åsberg falls victim to the same mistake as he criticizes other for making. That is, he illustrates a dubious rhetoric called «the non-informativeness of negations» as one paragraph alone contains two negated propositions per sentence. It is hard to estimate the communicative value of the passage. I doubt that the reader could logically, pragmatically or otherwise extract any sense out of the paragraph, especially as the reader is justified in expecting to be informed as to why the qualitative interview is a paradox. Instead s/he is being served a litany of negations as to why e.g. consumer control, apply for the qualitative interview.

First of all, advertising agencies would *not* go on interviewing *unless* the procedure did *not* allow – on a basis of what they discover – for prediction or control of consumer behaviour. Second, such behaviour would *not* be paradoxical if people did *not* initially ascribe to the interview data a strange, deep, progressive quality. Interview data do *not* per se stand in opposition to nomotetic interest in knowledge, simply because the form of the data does *not* hold any decisive implications for the Philosophy of Science. Besides, interview method, i.e. a way of collecting data, does *not* mean that only so called qualitative data can be collected. (Åsberg, 2001, p. 283; translation and italics T.H.)

The headline of Åsberg's article suggests a «complementary contradiction» between qualitative and quantitative methods. However,

the contents of the article lack a significant third, be it creativity, aesthetics or ethics. If creativity were missing in the analysis, self-control would be the obvious complement. If aesthetics were missing in the method, tradition, awareness and personality would make up a complementary triad. And finally, if ethics were missing in the 'dress' of the article, the author's purpose would collapse.

I argue that the latter is the case, because the author operates from a blind spot, thus making the same mistake as the one he criticises other researchers for making. Only data can be quantitative or qualitative. Newman and Benz (1998) have already comprised a synthesising approach called 'interactive continuum' to Åsberg's (2001) 'false dichotomy' between quantitative and qualitative research.

However, the article is a justified attempt at clarifying the students' need to learn about democratic and actionable method. But where the reader craves for a methodological foundation, the author emphasises a narrow nomos-understanding of a method for generating qualitative data. A lot of valid knowledge could have been gained had the author focused on what constitutes a democratic method of measurement, diagnosis or intervention. Such a focus would have enabled the reader to benefit from descriptive activities related to the context of investigation. The way things are now, the reader gets an argumentative rhetoric in the context of presentation. The article illustrates a mix of Old and New Education Discourse, emphasising Objective-Other-Self-Instrument variables with attached (French Philosophy) references to *Representation*.

Summarizing the results

A valid discourse for balancing between approaches to trans-disciplinary (ethics and curriculum combined) democratic research refrains from the current trend in society to 'textualise' knowledge. In this study, successful articles illustrate a methodological account of education and research. They are positioned at a qualitatively higher level than the striving and popular articles. Successful articles represent New Education Discourse with a focus on initiative, action, commitment and experimentation. The less attractive articles fail, mostly due to methodological confusion and focus on Self. The striving and popular article's lack of explicit method represents Old Education Discourse with a focus on abstraction, reflection and judgement. Successful articles focus the research Object and Other, a researchable Objective and a repeatable Method. Successful articles supply actionable knowledge for the reader to try out, verify and experience. Striving and popular articles focus on the researcher's implicit acquaintance and a much too wide political-rhetoric objective.

Concluding remarks

The glory days of Philosophy of Education (Brosio, 2006) were when John Dewey was the hero. Today the social sciences are trapped in tensions between what is required for academic legitimacy and necessary for popular support. This combination of Philosophy and Education has proven difficult to combine. One reason is that Philosophy tends to be abstract and set at a distance from education practice. Education on the other hand is practical and suspicious of abstraction. Consequently, the trans-disciplinary combination is most of the time either philosophically valuable but irrelevant to practitioners, or practically relevant but philosophically useless. Lack of synthesis between Anglo-American analytic and Central European hermeneutic traditions emerges from preceding analyses shaped as narrow problem-solving within a given conceptual frame-

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work in the former tradition and a focus on expansive interpretations in the latter tradition. The inability of the approaches to integrate the efforts of both these camps has resulted in side-tracking work on e.g., the language of education, education concepts, education policy or literary theory. Current traditions define a split in Philosophy of Education where the defenders of the quantitative camp take the norms of natural science objectively and literary theorists assume all such universal laws and reasoning to be inventions of harmful authority. Mixing up ontological questions like «How should we lead our lives» with methodological questions like «How should we educate students» has had a bad influence on the development of an emerging trans-disciplinary science of Philosophy and education. One way of bridging the diverging 'schools' would be to claim a new position for research by addressing 'normative' should-questions. However, it is often easier to retreat into analysis of some textual thought about epistemology than to propose actionable solutions to difficulties embedded in research on democracy, ethics, morals or values. This is the reason why confusion between the primarily normative role of Philosophy – on how to lead good lives – and the primarily descriptive role of education – about how to educate students – has appeared.

Proponents of a trans-disciplinary science follow suit to a tradition beginning with John Dewey's approach to philosophical professionalism or professional ethics by introducing pragmatic co-operation for 'knowledge enabling' between researchers, teachers and students. Rather than retreating into analysis of esoteric thoughts, we need to deliver hands-on solutions – here given as descriptive-actionable knowledge – for just (!) research and education.

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