Educational theory and empirical research for educational development

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Empirisk dannelsesforskning - fra pædagogik til uddannelsesvidenskab

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Empirical research on Bildung?

Bildung

a) Is Bildung a process or an activity concept or both?
b) Is Bildung addressing contents and aims of education?
   (example-principle, particularity-universality, contents-competencies, Bildungsinhalt-Bildungsgehalt)

Both a) and b) seem to lack reference to ”educational intervention” i.e. the how of teaching?

Bildung is an ongoing process. ”Education” an intervention in the subject’s open relation to herself, to others, and to the world.
So, how can we think educational theory?

Looking back...
... at "My Way" – Two questions from the beginning

1. The "Outer World" and the School - "School-Society"

1985-1986 Explaining school achievement with homebackground

- Multivariate Structural Equation Modeling (LISREL)
- Bronfenbrenner: Student’s experience of influence was missing
- Not the numbers are a problem – it is what we do with them

2. The "Student’s Inner World" and Teaching – "Teacher-Student"

1987-1992 Phenomenography – Phenomenology – the content

- Context and history a problem in phenomenology – hermeneutics
- Phenomenological learning research good – but teaching was missing
The two approaches reflect two core questions for educational theory

a) How do we define the relation between education and society -
   i.e. the relation between institutional education and other societal forms of practice (e.g. politics, economics, and culture)? How do societal interests transform into pedagogical school contents?

b) How do we explain pedagogical interaction -
   e.g. the relation between individuals in terms of pedagogical interaction, influence and human growth?

Teaching – Studying - Learning
Education a *hermeneutic, mediational practice*

a) mediation between the school’s outer world and students inner world

b) mediation between knowledge (epistemic fields) and values...

...aiming at
i) supporting individual’s growth and ii) preparing for ”societal change”
a) Reflective School Didactics (1997)

b) Non-affirmative general education introduced in Nordic countries (Uljens, 1998)

c) German vs Nordic Didaktik in (Uljens, 1997, ed)
Politics - Culture - Economy

District and school leadership!

1.

Context

School

Teacher & Student

Activity
Experiences
Reflection

Preunderstanding

Policy Research

Curriculum Theory

Evaluation

E1

E2 b

E2 a

S1

P1

P2 a

P2 b

P3

Intentic

A. Educational practice

B. Dialogue
- Communities of Practice

C. Research and development

Bildung within and between
a) reflection & practice and b) theory & research

Activity
Experiencing
Intention & tradition
Reflection

Reflected experience
Subjective theories

- Problematization and approaching
- To reflect other(s) practices
- And theory in relation to subjective experience

a. Shared practice
b. Theory

Contributing to theory and shared experience
Problematizing

Epistemology, research and developmental work

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### Dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of context</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School as context</td>
<td>Organization of the school</td>
<td>Buildings, technical aids, materials</td>
<td>The curriculum of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The local culture</td>
<td>The local culture generally</td>
<td>Parental participation, commercial interests</td>
<td>Educational ideals of home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The formal local</td>
<td>Board of education, local school-</td>
<td>Economical resources, continuing education</td>
<td>Municipal curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>context</td>
<td>administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The national context</td>
<td>Legislation, disposition of time</td>
<td>Primary education, teaching materials</td>
<td>National curriculum, school subjects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIG. 3.3.** Four contexts and their dimensions framing the teaching–studying–learning process in classrooms in the institutionalized school.
Policy positions and movements

Curriculum and governance: centralised

1. Nation-state based Curriculum + Teacher Controlled Evaluation

2. Decentralisation & deregulation compensated by professionalization – Qalittaive Research


4. Research-based Theory & Data Informed school & professional Development Reprofessionalisation?

Curriculum and governance: decentralised

Evaluation and assessment:
- Social democratic welfare state – “Bildung”
- Social liberal market state – “Outcomes”

The role of education in economic and societal development

From
“National Industrial Economy”

To
“Global Knowledge Economy”

The agenda of neoliberal, global, post-industrial, knowledge economies and information societies has changed the:

1. Role of the state and interstate relations
2. Ethos of knowledge, education & research
3. Governance of schools and universities
   = knowledge production and economics
Teachers, principals and superintendents operating in the tension between:

a) different epistemological rationalities:
   - Evidence from Policydriven Evaluation – competition
   - Evidence from Independent University Research – reflection
   - Evidence from Experiential Professional Practice – experience

b) increasingly stronger, political-ethical interests:
   - A more centralized and increasingly detailed curriculum & evaluation
   - Parental interests – privatization of schooling
   - Public Policy interests (Stronger Top-Down policy instrumentalises leadership - new managerialism)
Different levels – different processes

1st order Educational Leadership
Teachers “leading students’ studying (learning)” (Teaching-Studying-Learning)

2nd order Educational Leadership
Principals “leading teachers’ teaching”

3rd order Educational Leadership
Superintendents “leading leaders’ leadership”

4th order Educational Leadership
National — politics, laws & budget & curriculum & organization/system

5th order Educational Leadership
Transnational & International — EU (Also OECD, World Bank, WTO, UN, etc.)
The Object of Non-Affirmative Curriculum Research

a) The contents of curricular policies (aims, subject matter/contents and methods of education, including evaluation) at different levels (= Didaktik)

b) The historical and contemporary study of the various kind of policy and leadership activities and processes over time regarding initiation, implementation, enactment, development, and evaluation of curriculum (curriculum theory, policy enactment, discursive institutionalism)

c) Horizontal curriculum policy-borrowing between and within nations-states, and (policy research)

d) Vertical educational processes reflecting the dynamics between and within different levels of policy work, educational leadership and teaching, from the transnational level to the classroom level (leadership, policy)
Policy and curriculum research

(a) the *initiation* phase of curriculum as policy = *policy research*. In *political* processes, learning certainly occurs, yet political influence is not the same as pedagogical influence.

(b) the *implementation/enactment* of curriculum is also led by and as educational/pedagogical activity = *education research*. 
A. Non-hierarchical relation between societal forms of practice

A non-hierarchical view on the relation between politics, economy, education explains discursive spaces where the aims, content and methods of Bildung are kept open, avoids a technological view of pedagogical work.
Non-hierarchical and non-affirmative educational theory

(Fichte, Schleiermacher, Hegel, Snellman)

A. Non-hierarchical relation between societal forms of practice.
   - Education both sub- and super-ordinate in relation to economy, politics, ethics, law.
   - Creates discursive spaces at different levels and contexts.

B. Non-affirmative education
   - Denies education as pure confirmation of external normative ideals or norms derived from existing reality.
   - Normative positions turn education into technology.
2a. Summons to self-activity
(education as intervention, invitation, challenge)
in a non-affirmative fashion
- eg. to problematising the Bildungsgehalt in the Bildungsinhalt.
Recognises the learner and the world, but does not affirm the learner or the world.

2b. ’Bildsamkeit’ (intentional learning, studying)
The Other’s intentional engagement in reflective practice.
The three "births" of man

1. To the world
   - Immediate Self/Object consciousness
     (Spontaneity-Receptivity)
   - Pre-linguistic, corporeal intersubjectivity

2. To the culture
   - Empirical identity
   - Language, Cultural intersubjectivity

3. To freedom
   - Self forming identity
   - Self-reflection
   - Tradition aware and reflexive intersubjectivity
     (ex. res publica, science, art)

Recognitions:

1. Need for Care
   - Self-confidence
   - Love

2. To be seen as unique
   - Self-Esteem
   - Solidarity

3. Mutual recognition of rights
   - Self-respect
   - Justice
Definitions

The subject’s empirical experience of autonomy/freedom (self-confidence, self-esteem, self-respect) is *intersubjectively mediated* through recognition and summoning the Other to self-activity (Bildsamkeit).

These classical concepts still powerful and relevant for understanding teaching and leadership.

**The modern pedagogical paradox:**

Benner: Education is to recognize and treat the Other *as if s/he already would be* capable of what *s/he may become capable of* through own activity.
A definition: Non-Affirmative Education Theory conceptualises educational practice as

- as a critical-interpretative and cultural-historical - on different levels of the educational system,
- operating between and itself establishing knowledge practices and value-spheres (ethics and politics),
- where professional actors, through their roles and persons,
- based on a recognition of the Others potentiality, reality and possibility,
- aim at supporting teachers/principals/students by summoning (inviting, intervening, demanding, supporting, provocation) to engage in identifying, and transcending, one’s current perception and experiences,
- which may be done by e.g. developing structures for routines and for change,
- in order to create study (Bildsamkeit) opportunities,
- so that learners become able to act in the existing society and change it according to their interests.
Idea 2012:
Towards theoretically based and research supported school developmental educational agency – leadership and teaching

1. Can educational theory and leadership research find each other?

2. Maybe the educational leader is an interpreter – translating between the world, teacher and learner?

3. Can resources for leadership research be combined with school development and continuing education?

4. Can municipals, schools, state & universities cooperate on research-based school developmental work?

5. Teacher and principal education might include practising school based developmental teamwork connected to ongoing research projects.
Research program on Non-affirmative Bildung-theoretical Education

To (re)theorize and bridge Didaktik/Curriculum Theory and Educational Leadership by reconstructing and constructing a culturally aware, policy- and historysensitive ”modern” and theoretically coherent construct for understanding and supporting educational practices and research in and for democratic societies.

05.04.2018
Why bridging and (re)theorizing?

- Expansion and differentiation of education
- ’Globopolitan’ perspective
- Neo-liberal economist policy agenda
- Neo-conservativism
- If practices are collaborative and multiprofessional?
- Systems awareness – multiple conceptual perspectives needed
- Education in a world of learning?

(or just Google “uljens springer”)

05.04.2018

Åbo Akademi - Domkyrkotorget 3 - 20500 Åbo
Bridging Educational Leadership, Curriculum Theory, and Didaktik: Non-Affirmative Theory of Education (Springer Open)

Commentaries: Bill Pinar, Carolyn Shields, Tomas Englund

Part I Re-Theorizing the Field – Foundations to a Research Program
Michael Uljens and Rose Ylimaki

Part II Transnational Developments Challenging Leadership and Curriculum Work
Leif Moos, Gert Biesta, Joao Paraskewa

Part III Curriculum theory and Didaktik in US and Europe
Walter Doyle, Mariella Knapp and Stefan Hopmann, Tero Autio

Part IV Leadership, Didaktik and Curriculum Studies
Ira Bogotch, Dilys Schorman and Daniel Reyes-Guerra, Stephan Huber, Pierre Tulowitzki and Uwe Hameyer
Daniel Castner, Rosemary Gornik, James Henderson & Wendy Samford
Eva Forsberg, Elisabet Nihlfors, Daniel Pettersson & Pia Skott, William F. Pinar

Part V Discursive and Multi-level Perspectives
Michael Uljens and Helena Rajakaltio
Kirsten Sivesind and Ninni Wahlström

Part VI Conclusion
Reflections on the Research Program
Rose Ylimaki and Michael Uljens

05.04.2018
A reconstruction of modern education theory:

A Non-Hierarchical and Non-Affirmative Approach to Educational Work (Benner)

A: School-Society:
   Education – Politics – Economy – Culture

B: Agency:
   Leadership – Teaching – Studying – Learning

C:

Three dimensions:

1. Institutional
2. Historical
3. Cultural
Problems with **previous** positions
– do they offer solutions?

a) Functional-descriptive answers
   – Sociocultural reproduction models
     - Instrumental, technical, ideologically silent

b) Critical theory
   – Explicitely normative, counter hegemonic

c) Phenomenological-Hermeneutical Approaches

What about **object** theory then?
## Answers offered by Ed Leadership

**Gunter & Ribbins (2003):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual</th>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Humanistic</th>
<th>Critical</th>
<th>Evaluative</th>
<th>Instrumental</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concerned with issues of ontology and epistemology, and with conceptual clarification.</td>
<td>Concerned with providing a factual report, often in some detail, of one or more aspects of, or factors, relating to leaders, leading and leadership.</td>
<td>Concerned with gathering and theorising from the experiences and biographies of those who are leaders and managers and those who are managed and led.</td>
<td>Concerned to reveal and emancipate practitioners from injustice and oppression of established power structures.</td>
<td>Concerned to measure the impact of leadership and its effectiveness at micro, meso, and macro levels of interaction.</td>
<td>Concerned with providing leaders and others with effective strategies and tactics to deliver organisational and system level goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. The school-society relation in educational leadership

1. "Reproduction” oriented
   - Transformational & Transactional & Interpretational
   - Instrumental and evaluative
   - Descriptive-empiricist
   - Perspective internal to the organisation
   - Policy neutral

2. "Transformation” oriented
   - Transformative (emancipatory) approaches (e.g. Shields)
   - Historical perspective present & policy reflective

B. What exactly does pedagogical interaction and influence mean?

Influence seldom explicated theoretically
Increasingly multi-level oriented
Ed Leadership not based on theory of education and theory of teachers’ professional development
Part II.

The dilemma – Scylla and Charybdis

1. **How to avoid to**
   a) reduce empirical research into technical rationality and
   b) avoid to instrumentalize education research in the service of some ideology/policy?

2. **How can non-affirmative theory of education be applied?**
Position 4:

*Research based knowledge & policy based data made used of in “school improvement & professional development” as an intertwined (interrelated) process:*

1. Experience- and policy based developmental work
2. Research- and evidence-based developmental work
3. New arenas
4. Development-oriented and interventional research
5. Basic research on scientific grounds

National authorities - Superintendent - Principal - Teachers
Examples of non-affirmative research in Didaktik:

1. Empirical studies on multilevel processes

   a) “What happened in Åland?” – Regional level

   b) The curriculum reform process in Finland 2016 – National level

   c) International Comparative Curriculum Research – Finland-Australia - Transnational level

2. Research supported educational development

   a) SKUTT – Data-informed School Development

   b) District leaders as research-development leaders

   c) Higher Education Learning Lab (HELLA)
SKUTT
Multilevel and -professional
Development of Leadership, Pedagogy
and School Culture
Icke-affirmativ skolutveckling

SKUTT 2014
Kunskapsbaserat ledarskap av den pedagogiska verksamhetskulturen

SKUTT? = ”SKOLUTVECKLINGSELEMENT”

SYFTE:
1) Att synliggöra det pedagogiska ledarskapet och skolans verksamhetskultur ur lärar-, rektors- och skoldirektörserspektiv.

2) Att använda SKUTT som underlag för pedagogisk dialog och utveckling.
10 principer i SKUTT

1. **Bottom-up/Top-down:** Utvecklingsarbetet tar utgångspunkt i de behov och utvecklingsintresse som finns i den enskilda skolan och kommunen och som beaktar nationell policy.

2. **Multipla kunskapskällor** (beprövad erfarenhet, design- och aktionsforskning samt utvärderingsinformation)

3. **Fleråriga skol- och kommunbaserade utvecklingsprojekt** (t.ex. Rolf Sundqvist, Pedersöre)

4. **Forskningsgrundat och -understött.** Projektet är förankrat i och bedriver pedagogisk ledarskaps- och skolutvecklingsforskning. Teoriutveckling, policyanalys, interventionsforskning.

5. **Distribuerad delaktighet i planering.** Projektet och själva mätinstrumentet har vuxit fram i samverkan med skolchefer, skolledare och genom forskning.

6. **Pedagogiskt designade interventionsprogram** planeras tillsammans med pedagoger, ledare, forskare och fortbildning.

7. **Helhetssyn och nätverk.** Många parter och intressegrupper inkluderas i utvecklingsarbetet.

8. **Utvecklingsfokusering.** Skolutveckling är ett närvarande moment i skolornas och kommunernas arbete.

9. **Erbjuda och vidareutveckla konkreta instrument** för det strategiska pedagogiska arbetet.

10. **Internationellt samarbete på olika nivåer och av olika slag.**


