2 Policy, Knowledge and Promoting a Democratic Stance

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In recent years, the mission for schools to provide good conditions for students to acquire knowledge has been emphasised in international and national educational policies – not least based on international knowledge measurements such as Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and comparisons of results. This focus on knowledge has been interpreted in different ways in different international and national policy arenas. Meanwhile, the role of schools in maintaining democracy in Western countries has largely been taken for granted. Extensive research (e.g. Grek, 2019; Lingard & Lewis, 2017; Lingard & Ozga, 2007) has shown that, for example, the education policy stated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has centred mainly on competencies for future working life needed for nations to cope with global competition. Because of the economic implications of education, the OECD actively engages in education policy issues at the transnational arena. Socioeconomic considerations characterise the OECD's views on both the aim of education and the governance of schools. Different countries have been influenced by this dominating international discourse when framing their own national education policies in their own unique ways (Wahlström, 2020a). However, there have been significantly fewer studies on the translations from policy to the concepts of knowledge that form the basis for curricula. Curriculum reforms do not start from zero. Instead, transnational reforms add and change earlier traditions of knowledge and school conceptions when new policy ideas enter historical knowledge traditions and education cultures in different countries. The framework Education 2030 is a recent example of overarching goals that might potentially influence the policy of curricula in several Western countries. Therefore, curriculum research needs to take an interest in both policy reforms and knowledge traditions.

In this chapter, the purpose is to explore the boundaries of three different concepts of knowledge and how different elements of a transnational education framework, Education 2030, become adaptable, or unadaptable, to a certain knowledge concept. The notion of citizenship education is specifically highlighted in the analysis of both the transnational policy framework and the different concepts of knowledge. In the first section, the OECD framework of Education 2030 (OECD, 2018) is introduced. In the next section, the historical traditions and characters of three different concepts of knowledge with relevance for curricula and teaching are presented together with an analysis of the policy framework in relation to the different knowledge

concepts. In the third and final section, the character of the policy framework and the educational implications of connections and boundaries between the different knowledge concepts are discussed.

The OECD Framework of Education 2030

The OECD looked ahead to 2030 and launched a framework titled *The Future of Education and Skills 2030*. According to the OECD (2018) itself, the framework is an attempt to offer a response to the overarching question of how education ‘can equip learners with agency and a sense of purpose, and the competencies they need, to shape their own lives and contribute to the lives of others’ (p. 2). It sounds like a reasonable democratic basis for a national compulsory education, but is it what it purports to be? Moreover, what forms of knowledge does the framework implicitly advocate?

The aim of the OECD framework Education 2030 is to support national governments to find answers to two questions: ‘What knowledge, skills, attitudes and values will today’s students need to thrive and shape their world?’ and ‘How can instructional systems develop these knowledge, skills, attitudes and values effectively?’ (OECD, 2018, p. 2). Thus, the central pedagogical questions are the *what* and the *how* of future education. As is often the case in international policy documents, the main argument for the proposed policy is challenges attributed to the rapid change of society. The OECD identified environmental, economic and social challenges. The environmental challenges include climate change and the handling of natural resources. The economic challenges raise the question of what it means to be human when biotechnology and artificial intelligence are gaining influence. Finally, the social challenges consist of issues related to migration, urbanisation and inequalities in life chances and living standards. The framework Education 2030 distinguishes four different types of knowledge: disciplinary knowledge on subject-specific concepts and detailed content; interdisciplinary knowledge, which is transferring concepts and content across subjects; epistemic knowledge, which represents an understanding of how expert practitioners work and think, helping students use this understanding for solving community problems; and procedural knowledge, which focuses on the *how* question and helps students identify and solve problems (OECD, 2019b).

The OECD (2018) claimed that an overarching purpose for meeting these challenges can be summarised with the term *well-being*. The OECD’s concept for stimulating well-being is ‘inclusive growth.’ In addition to preparing students for working life, Education 2030 argues for the need to ‘equip students with the skills they need to become active, responsible and engaged citizens’ (OECD, 2018, p. 4). A core concept for the 2030 framework is ‘student agency,’ which aims to express students’ engagement in society in working for its improvement (OECD, 2019a). Student agency also denotes the need of students to play an active role in deciding what to learn and how to learn. The assumption is that the emphasis on agency, as well as *co-agency*, helps individual learners develop agency in the broader terms of being an

engaged citizen. An inference drawn in the framework is that a personalised learning environment, supporting and motivating each student, is crucial for evolving agency. The OECD has suggested a constrained curriculum to ensure the depth and the quality of students' learning. The knowledge concept suggested is competencies, comprising 'the mobilisation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to meet complex demands' (OECD, 2018, p. 5). For learners to develop in this direction, the term *transformative competencies* has been introduced. It suggests that students should be able to act creatively, reconcile tensions and take responsibility. According to the OECD (2018), the assessment methods need to be expanded and renewed to also cover outcomes and actions that cannot be measured today.

Three Different Concepts of Knowledge

In a sense, there are as many versions of knowledge in classrooms as there are teachers, because each teacher has his or her own unique way to select and prioritise teaching content and to decide which teaching approach best suits each different element of a subject matter. However, to conceptualise the meaning of knowledge and its implications for curricula and teaching practices, there is a need to distinguish between some distinct basic forms of the concept of knowledge. During the 2000s, the question of knowledge has been at the centre of the debate about curriculum policies, not least since Michael Young (2008a, 2013) revitalised the discussion of the concept of knowledge as a necessary basis for curriculum reforms. Young's claim for the conceptualisation of knowledge as 'social realism' has both received support (Mitchell & Lambert, 2015; Wheelahan, 2010) and inspired arguments for other traditions of knowledge that should form the groundwork for schools' knowledge bases (Biesta, 2014; Deng, 2020; Wahlström, 2020b). In the following, three traditions of knowledge are introduced and compared in relation to the proposed framework of Education 2030. The focus is on the *what* and the *how* of education, because these aspects of knowledge conceptualisations are highly integrated. A third aspect of the analysis is the kind of citizenship education that the different forms of knowledge allow for.

The Knowledge Concept of Social Realism

Theorist of sociology of education Michael Young (2008b) noted that the *what* of education was not really questioned until the 1970s. The curriculum theory question of what is educationally worthwhile knowledge was mainly taken for granted. With the 'new sociology' in the 1970s, this obviousness became questioned (Young, 1971). One characteristic of the new sociology was the introduction of aspects of power and ideology into the discussions on the knowledge base of curricula and content selection. The 'new' in sociology at the time was the argument that curricula reflected a social and political discourse representing certain values, ideas and interests, rather than something given. Thirty years later, Young (2008b) stated that

the new sociology treated knowledge as interchangeable, underestimating the need to identify the social basis of knowledge structures themselves. The structural differentiation establishes boundaries between theoretical and practical knowledge and between curricular and everyday knowledge. These structures, Young (2008b) argued, have educational implications because the social structures of knowledge also represent necessary conditions for the acquisition of knowledge.

Instead of viewing knowledge in education as a social construction, Young, in the 2010s, argued for what he described as *social realism*. There is, Young (2008b) argued, a fundamental distinction between skills and competencies on the one hand (vocational education) and acquiring knowledge on the other. Drawing on the sociologist Emile Durkheim, the distinction between knowledge and experience is one of structural differentiation, which means that knowledge and experience are based on different forms of social organisation in society. Young placed this analytical distinction between knowledge and experience as a principled basis for distinguishing between school knowledge and other knowledge achieved outside school. School knowledge primarily has its roots in the academic disciplines and is characterised by its differentiation. Young's conclusion was that the fundamental educational problem is the discontinuity between the culture of curricula and the culture of the students. Thus, the educational question is how to make knowledge (that counts) accessible for the majority of students. Young (2008b) termed his theory of social realism a knowledge-based approach to curriculum, which implies that curriculum in itself should be understood as an independent social institution, separate from the needs of teachers, students and policy-makers. Social realism, thus, can be interpreted as a counter-movement to a perceived international trend where the priorities of schooling are displaced from a focus on acquisition of knowledge students otherwise do not have access to, to a focus on the school's role to equip young people as future citizens in a broader meaning.

Social realism is based on the assumptions that the main role of school is to constitute a place for knowledge transmission, that some knowledge is more worthwhile than other knowledge and that differences between different forms of knowledge must constitute the basis for curricula. To this point, Young (2008b) formulated his now well-known expression of 'powerful knowledge.' The knowledge is powerful in the sense that it gives intellectual power to those who have access to it. In modern societies, such knowledge is specialised knowledge developed within different knowledge domains. Specialised knowledge constitutes the groundwork for reliable explanations about the world and provides the learners with an intellectual language, facilitating for engaging in public debates on moral, political and other issues. While context-dependent knowledge comprises everyday knowledge and common sense, context-independent knowledge is conceptual, specialised knowledge that is not related to particular cases. Knowledge that is independent of context is developed in communities of experts in fields such as science and technology and, because of its context independence, forms the

basis for generalisations. Teachers with specialised knowledge are required for the teaching of the school subjects. For social realists, the acquiring of specialised knowledge, based on differentiation from other forms of knowledge and vertically structured in reaching higher levels of abstraction, forms the basis for education. For social realists, there is a close relation between academic disciplines and school subjects, which connect university-based subject specialists with their school-based colleagues.

The Policy of Education 2030 from a Social Realist Perspective

If the policy framework of Education 2030 should be implemented in a curriculum based on the knowledge concept of social realism, only minor parts of the policy would fit in. The *what* question is most obvious. A small number of topics should be introduced in each grade to promote depth and quality of students' learning. Moreover, topics should be sequenced in a way that represents the logic of the academic disciplines in order for the students to develop their learning from basic to more abstract concepts. Disciplinary knowledge constitutes the foundation in an imaginary hierarchy with its subject-specific concepts and detailed content in specific disciplines (OECD, 2019b). So far, it is a logic of social realism that is emphasised. However, social realism has less to say about the question of *how*. Their main concern is that students get access to knowledge through the organisation of the national school systems and the content and structure of curricula, rather than about how the qualities of individual learning processes can actually be understood.

Young (2008a) took his point of departure in Durkheim's sociology of knowledge when developing the knowledge concept of social realism. Durkheim's starting point was the social reality of religion in primitive societies. The collective representation of religion was based on a collective meaning and not on individual minds. Durkheim thought that these collective representations constituted the 'paradigm of all advanced forms of theoretical knowledge' (Young, 2008a, p. 41). He made a clear distinction between the *profane* and the *sacred* orders of meaning, where profane referred to people's knowledge from their everyday lives and sacred to the world of religion, built on abstract understandings. The sacred system implies an objectivity because of its collective character and its social meaning external to individual perceptions. According to Young (2008a), Durkheim argued that the systems of the sacred were relatively stable over time and represented features of knowledge and truth. Thus, for Durkheim, religion appeared to be a model for abstract thoughts of modern science and social solidarity. The systems of the sacred, as well as the systems of theoretical knowledge, are characterised by their development within a social community and their separation from the practical everyday life. Since the concepts have developed beyond the systems of the practical, they can be used for making connections between objects and events. Moreover, these abstract concepts make it possible to anticipate future consequences by formulating

hypotheses. According to Young (2008a), Durkheim's sociology of knowledge distinguishes between the sacred and the profane, or between theory and common sense, in all societies. The theoretical concepts get their power from being unobservable. However, Durkheim said little about the process of developing knowledge.

Drawing on the roots of Durkheim's sociology of knowledge in social realism, the distinctions between theory and practice and between thought and action in social realism are emphasised. It is theoretically based knowledge (i.e. clearly structured specialised knowledge) that is understood as a starting point for understanding the world. According to social realism, the concept of *competence* in curricula can be related to policies of 'technical instrumentalists' and the needs of the economy (Young, 2008a, p. 20). Thus, core concepts from Education 2030 – such as transformative competencies, interdisciplinary knowledge and epistemic knowledge – have little to do with a knowledge-based curriculum from a social realist perspective.

The citizenship education that social realism opens up is an informed citizen taking part in common deliberations based on powerful knowledge in terms of specialised knowledge. It represents a perspective of academic rationalism of curricula (Deng & Luke, 2008). The assumption is that access to abstract theoretical knowledge is essential for an effective democracy (Wheelahan, 2010). The emphasis is on the citizenship of the adult.

The Knowledge Concept of Transactional Realism

In the same way as an organism always finds itself in a certain environment and tries to master that environment in order to survive, so too is the individual always already in an environment with which he or she communicates, interacts and adapts. There is not *an* individual interacting with *an* environment outside. Instead, transaction requires accepting the two in a common contingent system, focusing on different elements in different situations. For Dewey, the distinction between internal and external was not an ontological distinction – only a methodological one (Garrison, 2001). When thinking in terms of life functions, the distinction between outer and inner becomes blurred and unhelpful because it does not reflect the reality of living organisms. 'The higher the organism is in the evolutionary scale, the more complicated are the transactions in which it is involved' (Dewey & Bentley, 1991, p. 129). Dewey denied dualities between man and the world, between inner and outer and between subject and object. According to Dewey, there are no gaps to overcome; there are only new relationships to establish in an already common environment.

In relation to the process of transaction, Dewey did not distinguish between common sense and science. The difference between the two is instead a difference of reflective inquiry, of thinking. As Garrison (1994) pointed out, to insist on the perspective of transaction is to insist that we are participants in an ongoing development of the world, rather than spectators of a finished world. This means that there is no way to step outside our existence in the

world; we will always act as part of the physical and social world, influencing and being influenced by it.

Considering the dependence of life in even its physical and physiological aspects upon being parties in transactions in which other human beings and “things” are also parties, and considering the dependence of intellectual and moral growth upon being a party in transactions in which cultural conditions partake – of which language is a sufficient instance – the surprising thing is that any other idea has ever been entertained.

(Dewey, 1991b, p. 243)

Even if Dewey was surprised that other understandings of human conditions for living and developing could be expressed, other ideas have dominated the knowledge debate. In the quotation cited earlier, Dewey stated that through the processes of transactions, the human being exists, and through these processes, each individual develops habits (common sense), knowledge and moral values (growth). This is why Dewey did not distinguish between common sense and knowledge and why he used the concept of *experience* instead of knowledge. They are all outcomes of transactions with the individual acting as a part.

An experience is a result of acting and its consequences. There are two phases in experiences: one active and one passive phase. We act on something and undergo the consequences of our action. Through experiences, relationships with other humans and physical things are established; we know something about them. The term of transaction implies that every experience affects the one who has acted and undergone the experience and that the outcome of an experience affects subsequent experiences because there is a principle of continuity intrinsic in every experience. The space of thinking occurs in the intersection between an action and its consequences. In this way, habits are established – that is, attitudes and knowing necessary for handling all the conditions which we meet in living (Dewey, 1991a). For an experience to be reflective, there needs to be intentional thinking for discovering specific connections and relationships between our actions and the consequences we undergo. Consequently, reflective experiences contain an uncertain or problematic situation, a tentative interpretation of the situation, a careful consideration to clarify the problem, a provisional inference of how to solve the situation and an acting based on the provisional inference and, finally, the conclusions drawn from the consequences of the acting. Already attained knowledge deepens reflective thinking and the quality of the experience. For an experience to be educative, it needs to enhance and deepen succeeding experiences (Dewey, 1991a). Using the concept of experience in a context of meaning making and gaining knowledge has caused a lot of trouble, not the least for Dewey himself, because experience is usually thought of as being a personal or subjective concern. However, Dewey (1991b) insisted that when

you want to emphasise the interconnectedness of all concerns and affairs, the concept of experience ‘serve[s] the purpose better than any word that is yet available’ (p. 248, footnote).

An objection often expressed is that when a person gains knowledge in terms of experiences, it is not possible for him or her to know anything for sure because experiences are thought of as being predominantly subjective. Dewey’s (1917/1985) answer was that the concept of experience is an expression of humans’ transactions with a ‘genuinely objective world’ (p. 6). Humans are already involved with reality in their environment through constantly ongoing transactions; thus, the philosophical problem is not how individuals can achieve knowledge about reality, as in the philosophy of consciousness. Instead, the philosophical problem is, according to Dewey, how we can learn something from the transactions with the realities in our environment. To do that, we need to act together with other humans to get a shared intersubjective world, and the way we get something in common is through the process of communication. The term *communication* should not be understood as passing on information but rather as a practical coordination of our own interactions with others to be able to create meaning of the world. Knowledge is fallible because we can never be sure that the actions and conclusions developed in the past will be adequate for the problems we will meet in the future (Biesta & Burbules, 2003). The meaning of experience does not constitute the difference between common sense and science – between the designations ‘water’ and ‘H₂O’ – so what demarcates the two, then? Actions in terms of transactions are involved in both. However, while transactional inquiries in common sense are important for the needs of everyday life, transactional inquiries in science are conducted for the sake of advancing the system of knowings and knowns. The distinction lies in what is done and known (development of new knowledge), why it is done and known (the advancement of knowing) and where (within academy) and by whom (scientists) it is done and known. The outcomes of science are abstractions and theories, even if the scientific work in itself is based on practical work – testing, reading, writing, thinking – a work usually labelled as intellectual (Dewey, 1991b).

The Policy of Education 2030 from a Transactional Realist Perspective

In Education 2030, the disciplinary knowledge lays the groundwork for interdisciplinary knowledge, relating concepts from one discipline to another. Moreover, disciplinary knowledge is understood in this framework as raw material, from which new knowledge can be developed. This view of knowledge echoes John Dewey’s argument of knowledge as retrospect if not combined with reflecting on challenges in actual and future situations. ‘The value of knowledge is subordinate to its use in thinking’ because ‘we live not in a settled and finished world, but in one which is going on, and where our main task is prospective’ (Dewey, 1916/2008, p. 158). Interdisciplinary

knowledge fits more easily in the tradition of transactional realism. In the OECD interpretation of epistemic knowledge, the understanding of how experts within disciplines think and work was emphasised. This kind of knowledge is expected to help students understand how knowledge can be developed and applied to different situations, which is similar to the experiential form of knowledge represented in transactional realism. Procedural knowledge has to do with knowledge of methods and thinking for problem-solving – that is, what steps and actions are needed for reaching a solution to a problem. While the concepts of disciplinary, interdisciplinary and epistemic knowledge have answered the didactic question of *what*, procedural knowledge represents an answer to the didactic question of *how*.

The overarching goal of education as a response to challenges in society formulated in Education 2030 could be understood in accordance with a curriculum based on transactional realism. Even the meaning of transformative competencies – in terms of being creative, reconciling tensions and dilemmas and taking responsibility – could constitute a potential answer to education as moral growth. However, if ‘a personalised learning environment’ (OECD, 2018, p. 4) represents a cognitive and constructivist view of the self-authoring learner gaining new knowledge through the internalisation of the inner schemes of knowledge that are already known, the learner is an autonomous individual separated from context, unlike the transactional individual in transactional realism. In the latter, individuals make meaning of the world through a common participation in communication with others. In transactional realism, knowledge emerges through transactional processes, in the intersection between an individual, other humans and objects.

The citizenship education that transactional realism opens up for is the unpacking of the *what* in education regarding the relationships between facts and different aspects of their consequences for individuals and society. Regarding transactional realism, Dewey (2008, p. 370) claimed that all education, to be called education, aims at developing individuals’ moral character and the social aims of society. He expressed moral responsibility in the very last sentence of his text *Democracy and Education*: ‘[i]nterest in learning from all the contacts of life is the essential moral interest.’ It is a social reconstructionist perspective of curricula built on experiential knowledge (Deng & Luke, 2008), represented by transactional realism. The focus is on the students as citizens, connecting their own experiences with others’ experiences in terms of knowledge.

The Knowledge Concept of Bildung

The idea of *Bildung* has its roots in the neo-humanist tradition flourishing in Germany in the period between 1770 and 1830. In English, *Bildung* can be understood in terms of ‘culture’ and ‘cultivation.’ The *Bildung* theorists were interested in the question of how to link the individual with his or her cultural heritage – in their case, texts from ancient Greece and Rome.

The engagement in and learning from culture was seen as a reciprocal process of actualising the individual character of the self and of re-understanding the meaning and wisdom embedded in human cultural expressions. In such educative experiences, both the subject and the subject matter are transformed. In Wilhelm von Humboldt's theory of *Bildung*, there was no split between the individual and humanity at large. In each human self, there is an embryo of the universal humanity as an inner destiny. The idea of *Bildung* is for the individual to interact in educative ways with things and persons with varied cultural and individual expressions as a way of reaching an inner freedom of the self (Løvlie, 2002). Because the self is always already involved in the world, the individual should not be understood as a separate satellite. As Løvlie and Standish explained (2002, p. 319), '*Bildung* starts with the individual embedded in a world' where self and the other 'are already connected in their common, self-expressive nature.' For neo-humanists, education takes the form of character formation through encounters with the arts, literature and philosophy. However, education is never about the individual alone; it is always about the relation between the self and the wider world, the culture, through transformation. In this process of transformation of the self, there is always a simultaneous process of transformation of culture. Thus, the term *Bildung* is about self-transformation through the relationship between the self and a historical and cultural world.

In the history of education, two views of *Bildung* became predominant in the 19th century: *Bildung* as self-formation and *Bildung* as the acquisition of an institutionalised canon of cultural traditions. Therefore, Bauer (2003) argued that the understanding of the meaning of *Bildung* needed to go back to the 'classic' meaning of *Bildung* from the mid-18th century to be relevant in educational discussions today. During that period, the term *Bildung* was conceptualised as creative, critical and transformative processes that changed the relationship of self and world during a historical period of changing social and material conditions. Klafki (2000) also emphasised that terms such as *self-determination*, *emancipation* and *autonomy* from the classic texts needed to be read together with terms such as *humanity*, *humankind*, *humanness*, *objectivity* and the *general* from the same texts.

This means that reasonableness, capacity for self-determination, and freedom of thought and action are attained *only* in the processes of acquiring and examining the content of something that does not at first come from the person himself or herself, but is the objectification of activities in the culture – and this in the widest sense: in the objectification of activities in which possibilities of human self-determination, the development of human reason, human freedom, or else their opposites, have taken shape.

(Klafki, 2000, p. 88)

In short, the content of *Bildung* is focused on the question of what objectification of human history is best suited to support the individual's *Bildung*.

In education, the development of the uniqueness of each person can be realised only in communication with others, ‘where they – in their individuality – bring themselves into such communication and give each other recognition’ (Klafki, 2000, p. 93). The meaning of self-determination is to take a moral responsibility and to provide a readiness for moral action.

The concept of Didaktik in the German-speaking European countries connects to the basic ideas of *Bildung* in terms of developing one’s own unique self. Thus, the task of school education is to introduce a content for students which promotes and expands their *Bildung* in terms of individuality and sociality. This means that Didaktik – with its triadic relation between content, teacher and learner – can provide students with tools to help students open up the world and be open to the world, but Didaktik and teaching cannot provide the students with *Bildung* in any direct way. Therefore, at the centre of Didaktik is the content, the tool to the world. Any content needs to be understood in terms of how this specific content can contribute to a student’s understanding of mankind, of the world or of him or herself. In Didaktik, the central focus is the encounter between a unique individual and specific content. Thus, the meaning and the value of the content cannot be expressed by the teacher alone; it can be understood only in a student’s interpretation of the content through the student’s interactions with the content and the teacher (Hopmann, 2007).

The Policy of Education 2030 from a Perspective of Bildung

In both transactional realism and *Bildung*, the intersubjective nature of knowing is emphasised. The learner is always already included in a social and physical context the individual interacts with, is influenced by and develops their knowledge in relation to. In transactional realism, this context is the environment, with an overarching understanding of the need to form communities for encountering the inevitable challenges of any society. In *Bildung*, the common context is constituted by the cultural environment. Thus, in these two understandings of knowledge, the self and the other are already connected in a common context. In both concepts, an individual learns from contact with both the past and the present, through direct communication and through text, art and other media. In *Bildung*, knowledge emerges in terms of an individual’s self-cultivation and self-determination. The purpose of the cultivation of oneself is to develop a sense of moral responsibility for oneself, as well as in relation to others and to a common society. In this aspect, *Bildung* resonates with the term *learner agency* in Education 2030, as

a personalised learning environment that supports and motivates each student to nurture his or her passions, make connections between different learning experiences and opportunities, and design their own learning projects and processes in collaboration with others.

(OECD, 2018, p. 4)

The central interest in *Bildung* and Didaktik is the content – more particularly, the meaning of the content for the individual student. In this way, a personalised concept of learning agency can make sense. The emphasis is on disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge, including culture and the arts. The focus is not so much on epistemic knowledge – that is, learning from the practices of the experts – as on how insights from the historical and current cultural environments can provide insights for dealing with the present and future world. The important aspect is that the content contains an important or engaging message to each student, helping students develop their inner potential and take moral responsibility when acting in the world.

The citizenship education addressed in the knowledge concept of *Bildung* is the understanding of *Bildung* as a creative and transformative process, which changes the relationships between the self and a changing social and material world (Bauer, 2003). Thus, there are certain similarities between *Bildung* and transactional realism: the intersubjective meanings of cultivation and experience, the contingent and searching quality of knowing, the interest for others from a position that is not one's own and the transformation of individuals and society by seeing things with new eyes and asking new questions (Wahlström, 2007). However, the emphasis on self-determination points at an individualised curriculum based on humanism (Deng & Luke, 2008), which makes citizenship education more obscure in comparison to the individual self-actualisation. Citizenship education based on *Bildung* has its central interest directed towards reciprocal moral growth for individuals and culture. As in transactional realism, the focus is on the students as citizens here and now.

Three Concepts of Knowledge – Three Relations to the World

Unlike in the framework of key competencies (OECD, 2005, p. 7), where it was stated that '[a]ll OECD societies agree on the importance of democratic values,' there is no explicit value base in democracy in Education 2030. The justification for the latter framework is the environmental, economic and social changes. A new concept in comparison with the framework for key competencies (OECD, 2005) has been accentuated in Education 2030: well-being. Well-being is used as an overarching goal for both material resources – such as income, earnings and housing – and for quality of life, including health, civic engagement, social life, security, education and environment. In fact, the term *well-being* seems to cover almost all aspects of life. Education for well-being is said to prepare people not only for work but also to 'become active, responsible and engaged citizens' (OECD, 2018, p. 4). What is missing is a much-needed analysis of what is meant by well-being in relation to school and curricula. A concept covering all aspects of life risks becoming blank, without power to point out any direction for priorities and values in education. It also risks being interpreted as objective well-being in economic terms rather than being perceived as subjective well-being (Tesar & Peters, 2020). Thus, it raises the question about who

and what decides if education is conducive for individual and social well-being? The term *well-being* can be understood as an expansion of the former educational goals for coping with working life (see OECD, 2005) to future goals of covering all parts of life. To the question ‘What kind of citizen?’, the answer is a personally responsible adult citizen (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Thus, the policy concept of well-being is not a new term for democracy or social justice; it rather points in an individual direction of ‘being well’ in one’s own life.

In the analysis of a proposed policy framework for education in relation to actual concepts of knowledge, the different characters of policy goals and goals of knowledge become clear. While the former express what we want from the world, the latter explain what we can know about the world. There are both gaps and connections between the three different concepts of knowledge analysed in this chapter. Both transactional realism and *Bildung* have philosophical roots, while social realism is rooted in a sociological tradition. Both transactional realism and *Bildung* take their starting points in the whole, in the individual as already embedded in the environment (transactional realism) or culture (*Bildung*), by which both humans and environment/culture are being transformed through their interactions. Social realism, however, starts off from a division between mind and object, theory and practice.

Young (2008b) referred, in his concept of social realism, mainly to Emile Durkheim’s lectures on sociology and pragmatism in Paris in 1913. In these lectures, the target of criticism was pragmatism – but rather the pragmatism of William James than of John Dewey (Rusche & Tilman, 2007). According to Young (2008b), Durkheim made a clear distinction between knowledge and experience, which can be traced back to the distinction between the sacred and the profane systems of meaning. While Dewey argued that consciousness emerges when agents confront action-problematic situations, Durkheim insisted that thought and action were opposed and that action could not give rise to consciousness (Gross, 1997). Another critique of pragmatism arose by understanding the word ‘practical’ in a narrow sense, in terms of what is useful for success in the everyday world. In Durkheim’s and other critics’ views, practice has nothing to do with the operations of thought. For pragmatists, however, theories are practical in the sense that they create a coherent organisation of ideas in our minds, through which the knower can move efficiently. Moreover, a problematic situation does not relate only to a physical problem; it may relate to intellectual or moral problems that need to be problematised. For pragmatists, theory comes late in inquiry as the gradual accumulation of knowledge, while Durkheim thought of theory as being a driving force in advancing knowledge which should be introduced at an early stage as an active instrument for discovering the causal network that underlies phenomena (Rusche & Tilman, 2007). Where transactional realism goes beyond dualisms, social realism strives to maintain boundaries and structures. What transactional realism and social realism have in common is the belief that knowledge is socially

constructed and fallible. What separates them is the meaning of experience and the degree to which scientific knowledge can be understood as being independent of context.

The kind of knowledge underpinning curricula becomes important in relation to how education can contribute to developing an interest of society and the handling of its challenges. *Bildung* offers the world to students by focusing on content with which the learner can engage. It is not possible to predict in advance what they will learn. Transactional realism presents the world as incomplete and unresolved, focusing on inquiry, reflective thinking and interactive communication. The goals of education are preferably formulated during the process of learning. Social realism describes the world to students with a focus on scientific knowledge. Learning goals are predictable, and access to knowledge represents the crucial link to the common world.

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